

DRAFT



**ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
FOR THE PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION, OPERATION, AND
MAINTENANCE OF THE NEW LAREDO AIR BRANCH FACILITY
U.S. BORDER PATROL, LAREDO SECTOR, TEXAS**

APRIL 2021



DRAFT
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
FOR
THE CONSTRUCTION, OPERATION, AND MAINTENANCE
OF THE NEW LAREDO AIR BRANCH FACILITY
U.S. BORDER PATROL, LAREDO SECTOR, TEXAS

INTRODUCTION: United States (U.S.) Customs and Border Protection (CBP) prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) that addresses the potential effects, beneficial and adverse, resulting from the proposed construction of a new Air Branch facility in Laredo, Texas.

The proposed Air Branch Facility would replace the existing 14,000 ft² Air Branch facility (hangar and office workspace) which is undersized and does not support current assigned personnel or air assets. The overcrowded conditions do not provide the safest and most secure working environment for personnel. The Laredo Air Branch, a component of CBP's Air and Marine Operations (AMO) is unable to expand operations or support surge capacity to meet mission requirements at the current facility. Additionally, the current facility does not meet CBP facility standards. The new Laredo Air Branch facility and associated supporting infrastructure are designed to alleviate overcrowded conditions and to allow room for current and planned future growth.

The proposed new facility would include some or all of the following components:

- 14,000 square foot (ft²) administrative operations building
- 31,500 ft² maintenance hangar facility
- 17,000 ft² storage hangar facility
- 70,000 ft² aircraft parking apron and ramp
- One (1) exterior aircraft wash/rinse rack
- Hazardous material storage area
- Storage canopy
- Enhanced lighting
- Parking area to accommodate 10 government-owned vehicles, 75 agent vehicles, five (5) visitor vehicles, one (1) oversized vehicle, one (1) fuel truck, and three (3) fuel trailers
- Signage
- Security fencing
- Sidewalks and curbs
- Storm drainage
- Additional site improvements

PROJECT LOCATION: The proposed Laredo Air Branch facility would be constructed in the western portion of the Laredo International Airport in Laredo, Texas. The proposed facility would be located east of and adjacent to an existing aircraft parking ramp and bordered by Thomas Avenue on the west.

PURPOSE AND NEED: CBP proposes to construct, operate, and maintain a new Laredo Air Branch facility in the United States Border Patrol (USBP) Laredo Sector in support of CBP's mission to manage operational control of the border. CBP AMO provides air support to USBP Laredo Sector ground units and other law enforcement agencies to interdict foreign national smuggling operations and to detect and report other illegal air or ground activities. The purpose

of the Proposed Action is to alleviate overcrowded conditions that exist at the current leased facility, provide sufficient space to house existing personnel and air assets, and allow adequate space for enforcement flexibilities.

The current Laredo Air Branch facility consists of a 14,000 ft² hangar and office work space. The current facility's size is insufficient to support currently assigned staff and air assets. Approximately 50 CBP and contract personnel occupy the space which leads to overcrowded conditions, compromising the safety and health of the staff. Further, the current facility configuration does not meet AMO facility standards.

The new facility would replace the existing deficient facility located at the Laredo International Airport. The new facilities would be able to accommodate the existing personnel and air assets, as well as allow for growth in staffing due to future operational demands placed upon the facility.

The need for the Proposed Action includes provision of the following:

- Appropriate facilities to allow CBP AMO to operate more efficiently, safely, and securely - resulting in more effective deployment of required assets in the area of responsibility (AOR) to support the USBP Laredo Sector;
- Facilities that enable CBP to attain and maintain compliance with CBP facility standards; and
- Facilities necessary for increased effectiveness of an expanded number of CBP personnel and air assets (e.g., administrative building; maintenance hangar; storage hangar; aircraft parking apron and ramp; exterior aircraft wash/rinse rack; parking area; and additional facilities including hazardous material storage, storage canopy, enhanced lighting, signage, security fencing, sidewalks and curbs, storm drainage, and additional site improvements).

ALTERNATIVES: CBP analyzed two alternatives in this EA. Alternative 1 is the Proposed Action. The Proposed Action would construct a new Laredo Air Branch facility on an approximately 13-acre parcel of land in the western portion of the Laredo International Airport in Laredo, Texas. Based upon potential site designs, it has been determined that a 13-acre project site is sufficient to construct the main administrative building and associated infrastructure including, but not limited to, a maintenance hangar, storage hangar, and aircraft parking apron and ramp.

Alternative 2 is the No Action Alternative, which would preclude the construction, operation, and maintenance of a new Laredo Air Branch facility. The existing facility would continue to be inadequate for the support of operations within the Laredo Sector AOR, and would have to accommodate the Laredo Air Branch operations, but would not be able to do so while operating in an effective manner. Consequently, this alternative would hinder AMO's ability to respond to high levels of illegal border-related activity. The No Action Alternative does not meet the purpose and need for the proposed project, but was carried forward for analysis, as required by the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations. The No Action Alternative describes the existing conditions in the absence of the Proposed Action.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES: No effects would occur on protected species and critical habitat, cultural resources, or floodplains, as none were found within the boundaries of the Proposed Action. Effects on biological resources such as soils, vegetation, and wildlife would range from negligible to minor, temporary to long-term. The Proposed Action would have negligible impacts on ground water resources (i.e., water used for municipality purposes) due to the increase in usage in the Laredo area. No impacts are expected to surface waters as none are present. No jurisdictional wetlands or waters of the United States would be impacted by construction of the new Laredo Air Branch facility. No impacts would occur on Land Use as the project area is located within Laredo International Airport property.

Temporary and negligible to minor increases in air pollution, noise, and traffic would occur during construction activities. Vehicular traffic would increase near the proposed site to transport materials and work crews during construction activities. Negligible increases in demands on utilities would be expected as a result of the new Laredo Air Branch facility. Construction of the new facility would create temporary and minor impacts on roadways and traffic during construction.

The Proposed Action would have negligible impacts on socioeconomics through increased taxes, salaries, and the purchase of supplies during construction and operation of the new facility. Further, the Proposed Action would not result in disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects on minority populations or low income populations.

BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES: Best Management Practices were identified for each resource category that could be potentially affected. Many of these measures have been incorporated as standard operating procedures by CBP in similar past projects. The BMPs to be implemented are found below and in Section 4.0 of this EA.

GENERAL PROJECT PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

1. If required, night-vision-friendly strobe lights necessary for CBP operational needs will use the minimum wattage and number of flashes per minute necessary to ensure operational safety.
2. Avoid contamination of ground and surface waters by storing concrete wash water, and any water that has been contaminated with construction materials, oils, equipment residue, etc., in closed containers on-site until removed for disposal. This wash water is toxic to wildlife. Storage tanks must have proper air space (to avoid rainfall-induced overtopping), be on-ground containers, and be located in upland areas instead of washes.
3. Avoid lighting impacts during the night by conducting construction and maintenance activities during daylight hours only. If night lighting is unavoidable, 1) use special bulbs designed to ensure no increase in ambient light conditions; 2) minimize the number of lights used; 3) place lights on poles pointed down toward the ground, with shields on lights to prevent light from going up into sky, or out laterally into the landscape; and 4) selectively place lights so they are directed away from all native vegetative communities.

4. CBP will avoid the spread of non-native plants by not using natural materials (e.g., straw) for on-site erosion control. If natural materials must be used, the natural material would be certified weed and weed-seed free. Herbicides not toxic to listed species that may be in the area can be used for non-native vegetation control. Application of herbicides will follow federal guidelines and can be used according to and in accordance with label directions.
5. CBP will ensure that all construction will follow Department of Homeland Security (DHS) *Directive 025-01* for Sustainable Practices for Environmental, Energy, and Transportation Management.
6. CBP will place drip pans under parked equipment and establish containment zones when refueling vehicles or equipment.

SOILS

1. Clearly demarcate the perimeter of all new areas to be disturbed using flagging or temporary construction fencing. Do not allow any disturbance outside that perimeter.
2. The area of disturbance will be minimized by limiting deliveries of materials and equipment to only those needed for effective project implementation.
3. Within the designated disturbance area, grading or topsoil removal will be limited to areas where this activity is needed to provide the ground conditions necessary for construction or maintenance activities.
4. Rehabilitation will include revegetating or the distribution of organic and geological materials (i.e., boulders and rocks) over the disturbed area to reduce erosion while allowing the area to naturally vegetate.

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

1. Materials used for on-site erosion control will be free of non-native plant seeds and other plant parts to limit potential for infestation.
2. Identify by its source location any fill material, sandbags, hay bales, and mulch brought in from outside the project area. These materials will be free of non-native plant seeds and other plant parts to limit potential for infestation.
3. Native seeds or plants will be used to revegetate temporarily disturbed areas.
4. Obtain materials such as gravel, topsoil, or fill from existing developed or previously used sources that are compatible with the project area and are from legally permitted sites. Do not use materials from undisturbed areas adjacent to the project area.

5. To prevent entrapment of wildlife species, ensure that excavated, steep-walled holes or trenches are either completely covered by plywood or metal caps at the close of each workday, or provided with one or more escape ramps (at no greater than 1,000-foot intervals and sloped less than 45 degrees) constructed of earthen fill or wooden planks.
6. Each morning, before the start of construction or maintenance activities, and before such holes or trenches are filled, ensure they are thoroughly inspected for trapped animals. Ensure that any animals discovered are allowed to escape voluntarily (by escape ramps or temporary structures), without harassment, and before construction activities resume, or are removed from the trench or hole by a qualified person and allowed to escape unimpeded.
7. The Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) (16 U.S.C. 703-712, [1918, as amended 1936, 1960, 1968, 1969, 1974, 1978, 1986 and 1989]) requires that federal agencies coordinate with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) if a construction activity would result in the take of a migratory bird. If construction or clearing activities are scheduled during nesting season (March 15 through September 15) within potential nesting habitats, surveys will be performed to identify active nests. If construction activities will result in the take of a migratory bird, then coordination with the USFWS and Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) will be required and applicable permits would be obtained prior to construction or clearing activities. Other mitigation measures that would be considered are to install visual markers on any guy wires used, and to schedule all construction activities outside of the nesting season, negating the requirement for nesting bird surveys.
8. CBP will not, for any length of time, permit any pets inside the project area or adjacent native habitats. This BMP does not pertain to law enforcement animals.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

1. In the event that unanticipated archaeological resources are discovered during construction or any other project-related activities, or should known archaeological resources be inadvertently affected in a manner that was not anticipated, the project proponent or contractor shall immediately halt all activities in the immediate area of the discovery and take steps to stabilize and protect the discovered resource until it can be evaluated by a qualified archaeologist.
2. In the event that human remains are inadvertently discovered all ground-disturbing activity would cease immediately. The Project Manager would immediately notify CBP. CBP would notify state police within 24 hours of the discovery and follow their directions for securing the site pending examination of a medical examiner/coroner. Law enforcement and the coroner would determine whether or not the discovery constitutes a crime scene. CBP would coordinate with the state police and the coroner regarding where construction activities can resume. No work may proceed without the written authorization of CBP. CBP would notify the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the Texas Historical Commission or Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, any impacted

Indian Tribe, and any impacted federal agency of the discovery in writing within two business days. NAGPRA would be followed if the discovery is determined to be of Native American origin. CBP's established standard operating procedures for inadvertent discoveries would be adhered to in all cases.

AIR QUALITY

1. Soil watering will be utilized to minimize airborne particulate matter created during construction activities. Bare ground may be covered with hay or straw to lessen wind erosion during the time between facility construction and the revegetation of temporary impact areas with a mixture of native plant seeds or nursery plantings (or both). All construction equipment and vehicles will be kept in good operating condition to minimize exhaust emissions.

WATER RESOURCES

1. Wastewater is to be stored in closed containers on-site until removed for disposal. Wastewater is water used for project purposes that is contaminated with construction materials or from cleaning equipment and thus carries oils or other toxic materials or contaminants as defined by federal or state regulations.
2. Avoid contamination of ground and surface waters by collecting concrete wash water in open containers and disposing of it off-site.
3. Avoid contaminating natural aquatic and wetland systems with runoff by limiting all equipment maintenance, staging, and laydown and dispensing hazardous liquids, such as fuel and oil, to designated upland areas.
4. Cease work during heavy rains and do not resume work until conditions are suitable for the movement of equipment and materials.
5. Erosion control measures and appropriate BMPs, as required and promulgated through a site-specific Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and engineering designs, will be implemented before, during, and after soil-disturbing activities.
6. Areas with highly erodible soils will be given special consideration when preparing the SWPPP to ensure incorporation of various erosion control techniques, such as straw bales, silt fencing, aggregate materials, wetting compounds, and rehabilitation, where possible, to decrease erosion.
7. All construction and maintenance contractors and personnel will review the CBP-approved spill protection plan and implement it during construction and maintenance activities.

8. Wastewater from pressure washing must be collected. A ground pit or sump can be used to collect the wastewater. Wastewater from pressure washing must not be discharged into any surface water.
9. If soaps or detergents are used, the wastewater and solids must be pumped or cleaned out and disposed of in an approved facility. If no soaps or detergents are used, the wastewater must first be filtered or screened to remove solids before being allowed to flow off-site. Detergents and cleaning solutions must not be sprayed over or discharged into surface waters.

NOISE

1. Avoid noise impacts during the night by conducting construction and maintenance activities during daylight hours only.
2. All Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA) requirements will be followed. To lessen noise impacts on the local wildlife communities, construction will only occur during daylight hours. All motor vehicles will be properly maintained to reduce the potential for vehicle-related noise.

SOLID AND HAZARDOUS WASTES

1. BMPs will be implemented as standard operating procedures during all construction activities, and will include proper handling, storage, and/or disposal of hazardous and/or regulated materials. To minimize potential impacts from hazardous and regulated materials, all fuels, waste oils, and solvents will be collected and stored in tanks or drums within a secondary containment system that consists of an impervious floor and bermed sidewalls capable of containing the volume of the largest container stored therein. The refueling of machinery will be completed in accordance with accepted industry and regulatory guidelines, and all vehicles will have drip pans during storage to contain minor spills and drips. Although it is unlikely that a major spill would occur, any spill of reportable quantities will be contained immediately within an earthen dike, and the application of an absorbent (e.g., granular, pillow, sock) will be used to absorb and contain the spill.
2. CBP will contain non-hazardous waste materials and other discarded materials, such as construction waste, until removed from the construction and maintenance sites. This will assist in keeping the project area and surroundings free of litter and reduce the amount of disturbed area needed for waste storage.
3. CBP will minimize site disturbance and avoid attracting predators by promptly removing waste materials, wrappers, and debris from the site. Any waste that must remain more than 12 hours should be properly stored until disposal.

4. All waste oil and solvents will be recycled. All non-recyclable hazardous and regulated wastes will be collected, characterized, labeled, stored, transported, and disposed of in accordance with all applicable federal, state, and local regulations, including proper waste manifesting procedures.
5. Solid waste receptacles will be maintained at the project site. Non-hazardous solid waste (trash and waste construction materials) will be collected and deposited in on-site receptacles. Solid waste will be collected and disposed of by a local waste disposal contractor.
6. Disposal of used batteries or other small quantities of hazardous waste will be handled, managed, maintained, stored, and disposed of in accordance with applicable federal and state rules and regulations for the management, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials, hazardous waste, and universal waste. Additionally, to the extent practicable, all batteries will be recycled locally.
7. All rainwater collected in secondary containment will be pumped out, and secondary containment will have netting to minimize exposure to wildlife.
8. A properly licensed and certified hazardous waste disposal contractor will be used for hazardous waste disposal and manifests will be traced to final destinations to ensure proper disposal is accomplished.

ROADWAYS AND TRAFFIC

1. Construction vehicles will travel and equipment will be transported on established roads with proper flagging and safety precautions.

FINDING: On the basis of the findings of this EA, which is incorporated by reference, and which has been conducted in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), CEQ regulations, DHS Directive Number 023-01, Rev.01, and DHS Instruction Manual 023-01-001-01, Rev. 01, Implementation of the NEPA and after careful review of the potential environmental impacts of implementing the proposal, we find there would be no significant impact on the quality of the human or natural environments; therefore, there is no requirement to develop an Environmental Impact Statement. Further, we commit to implement BMPs and environmental design measures identified in the EA and supporting documents.

Mackenzie Spradlin
Director
Facilities Division
Air and Marine Operations (AMO)
U.S. Customs and Border Protection

Date

John Dickerson
Acting Director
Facilities Management and Engineering Division
U.S. Customs and Border Protection

Date

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Lead Agency: Department of Homeland Security
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April 2021

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) is the law enforcement component of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) responsible for securing the border and facilitating lawful international trade and travel. U.S. Border Patrol (USBP) is the uniformed law enforcement component within CBP responsible for securing the Nation's borders against the illegal entry of people and goods between ports of entry.

CBP is proposing to construct, operate, and maintain a new Air Branch facility at the Laredo International Airport in Laredo, Texas. The Air Branch Facility would replace the existing 14,000 ft² Air Branch facility (hangar and office workspace) which is undersized and does not support current assigned personnel or air assets. The overcrowded conditions do not provide the safest and most secure working environment for personnel. The Laredo Air Branch, a component of CBP's Air and Marine Operations (AMO) is unable to expand operations or support surge capacity to meet mission requirements at the current facility. Additionally, the current facility does not meet CBP facility standards. The new Laredo Air Branch facility and associated supporting infrastructure are designed to alleviate overcrowded conditions and to allow room for current and planned future growth.

PROJECT LOCATION

The proposed Laredo Air Branch facility would be constructed in the western portion of the Laredo International Airport in Laredo, Texas. The proposed facility would be located east of and adjacent to an existing aircraft parking ramp and would be bordered by Thomas Avenue on the west.

PURPOSE AND NEED

CBP AMO proposes to construct, operate, and maintain a new Laredo Air Branch facility in the USBP Laredo Sector in support of CBP's mission to manage operational control of the border. CBP AMO provides air support to USBP Laredo Sector ground units and other law enforcement agencies to interdict foreign national smuggling operations and to detect and report other illegal air or ground activities. The purpose of the Proposed Action is to alleviate overcrowded conditions that exist at the current leased facility, provide sufficient space to house existing personnel and air assets, and allow adequate space for enforcement flexibilities.

The current Laredo Air Branch facility consists of a 14,000 ft² hangar and office work space. The current facility's size is insufficient to support currently assigned staff and air assets. Approximately 50 CBP and contract personnel occupy the space which leads to overcrowded conditions, compromising the safety and health of the staff. Further, the current facility configuration does not meet CBP facility standards.

The new facilities would replace the existing deficient facility located at the Laredo International Airport. The new facilities would be able to accommodate the existing personnel requirement and air assets, as well as allow for growth in staffing due to future operational demands placed upon the station.

The need for the Proposed Action includes provision of the following:

- Appropriate facilities to allow CBP to operate more efficiently, safely, and securely - resulting in more effective deployment of required assets in the area of responsibility (AOR) to support the USBP Laredo Sector;
- Facilities that enable CBP to attain and maintain compliance with CBP facility standards; and
- Facilities necessary for increased effectiveness of an expanded number of CBP personnel and air assets (e.g., administrative building; maintenance hangar; storage hangar; aircraft parking apron and ramp; exterior aircraft wash/rinse rack; parking area; and additional facilities including hazardous material storage, storage canopy, enhanced lighting, signage, security fencing, sidewalks and curbs, storm drainage, and additional site improvements).

PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

The Proposed Action and one alternative (No Action Alternative) were identified and considered during the planning stages of the proposed project. The Proposed Action consists of the construction of a new Laredo Air Branch facility on an approximately 13-acre parcel of land at the Laredo International Airport to meet the purpose of and need for the project. As required by National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations, the No Action Alternative reflects conditions within the project site should the Proposed Action not be implemented. One potential air facility site was carried forward for evaluation in this EA.

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT AND CONSEQUENCES

No effects would occur on protected species and critical habitat, cultural resources, or floodplains, as none were found within the boundaries of the Proposed Action. Effects on biological resources such as soils, vegetation, and wildlife would range from negligible to minor, temporary to long-term. The Proposed Action would have negligible impacts on ground water resources (i.e., water used for municipality purposes) due to the increase in usage in the Laredo area. No impacts are expected to surface waters as none are present. No jurisdictional wetlands or waters of the United States would be impacted by construction of the new Laredo Air Branch facility. No impacts would occur on Land Use as the project area is located within Laredo International Airport property.

Temporary and negligible to minor increases in air pollution, noise, and traffic would occur during construction activities. Vehicular traffic would increase near the proposed site to transport materials and work crews during construction activities. Negligible increases in demands on utilities would be expected as a result of the new Laredo Air Branch facility.

Construction of the new facility would create temporary and minor impacts on roadways and traffic during construction.

The Proposed Action would have negligible impacts on socioeconomics through increased taxes, salaries, and the purchase of supplies during construction and operation of the new facility. Further, the Proposed Action would not result in disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects on minority populations or low income populations.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Based upon the analyses of this Environmental Assessment (EA) and the Best Management Practices (BMPs) to be implemented, the Proposed Action would not have a significant effect on the environment. Therefore, no further analysis or documentation (i.e., Environmental Impact Statement) is warranted. CBP, in implementing this decision, would employ all practical means to minimize the potential for adverse impacts on the human and natural environments.

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1.0 PURPOSE OF AND NEED FOR THE PROPOSED ACTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

United States (U.S.) Customs and Border Protection (CBP) is preparing an Environmental Assessment (EA) that will address the potential effects, beneficial and adverse, resulting from the proposed construction, operation, and maintenance of a new Air Branch facility at the Laredo International Airport in Laredo, Texas. The proposed Air Branch Facility would replace the existing 14,000 ft² Air Branch facility (hangar and office workspace) which is undersized and does not support current assigned personnel or air assets. The existing Air Branch Facility is located in the western portion of the Laredo International Airport between Maher Avenue and a parking ramp (Figure 1-1). The overcrowded conditions do not provide the safest and most secure working environment for personnel. The Laredo Air Branch, a component of CBP's Air and Marine Operations (AMO) is unable to expand operations or support surge capacity to meet mission requirements at the current facility. Additionally, the current facility does not meet CBP facility standards. The new Laredo Air Branch facility and associated supporting infrastructure are designed to alleviate overcrowded conditions and to allow room for current and planned future growth.

1.2 PROJECT LOCATION

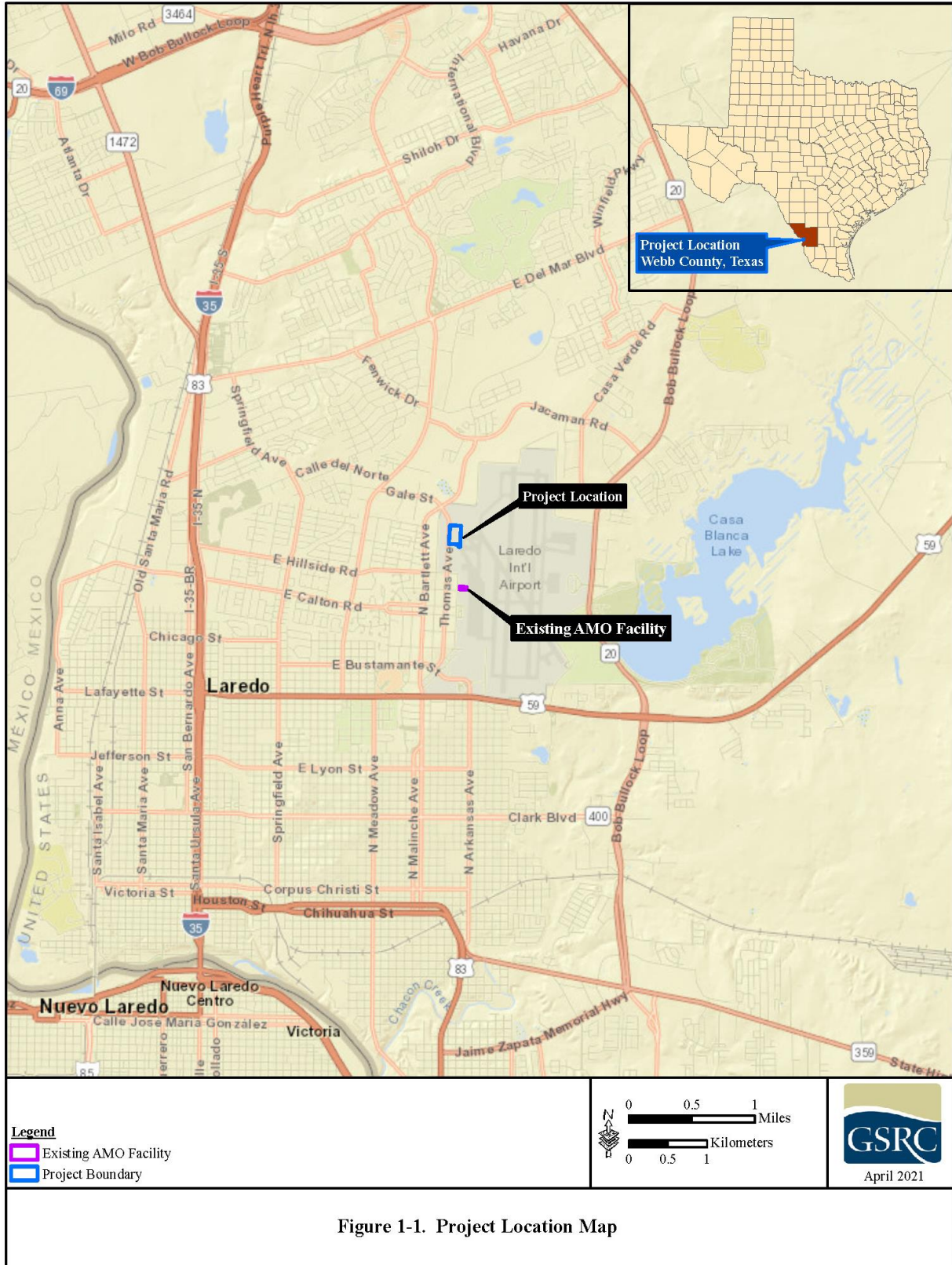
The proposed Laredo Air Branch facility would be constructed in the western portion of the Laredo International Airport in Laredo, Texas. The proposed facility would be located east of and adjacent to an existing aircraft parking ramp and would be bordered by Thomas Avenue on the west (Figure 1-1).

1.3 PURPOSE OF THE PROPOSED ACTION

CBP proposes to construct, operate, and maintain a new Laredo Air Branch facility in the U.S. Border Patrol (USBP) Laredo Sector in support of CBP's mission to manage operational control of the border. CBP AMO safeguards the nation by anticipating and confronting security threats through aviation and maritime law enforcement expertise, innovative capabilities, and partnerships at the border and beyond. CBP AMO provides air support to USBP Laredo Sector ground units and other law enforcement agencies to interdict foreign national smuggling operations and to detect and report other illegal air or ground activities. The purpose of the Proposed Action is to alleviate overcrowded conditions that exist at the current leased facility, provide sufficient space to house existing personnel and air assets, and allow adequate space for enforcement flexibilities.

1.4 NEED FOR THE PROPOSED ACTION

The current Laredo Air Branch facility is located within Laredo International Airport and consists of a 14,000 ft² hangar and office work space. The current facility's size is insufficient to support currently assigned staff and air assets. Approximately 50 CBP and contract personnel occupy the space which leads to overcrowded conditions, compromising the safety and health of the staff. Further, the current facility configuration does not meet AMO facility standards.



The new facilities would replace the existing deficient facility located at the Laredo International Airport. The new facility would be able to accommodate the existing personnel and air assets, as well as allow for growth in staffing due to future operational demands placed upon the facility.

The need for the Proposed Action includes provision of the following:

- Appropriate facilities to allow CBP AMO to operate more efficiently, safely, and securely - resulting in more effective deployment of required assets in the area of responsibility (AOR) to support the USBP Laredo Sector;
- Facilities that enable CBP to attain and maintain compliance with CBP facility standards; and
- Facilities necessary for increased effectiveness of an expanded number of CBP personnel and air assets (e.g., administrative building; maintenance hangar; storage hangar; aircraft parking apron and ramp; exterior aircraft wash/rinse rack; parking area; and additional facilities including hazardous material storage, storage canopy, enhanced lighting, signage, security fencing, sidewalks and curbs, storm drainage, and additional site improvements).

1.5 SCOPE OF ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS AND DECISIONS TO BE MADE

The scope of this EA will include an evaluation of the effects on the natural, cultural, social, economic, and physical environments resulting from the construction, installation, operation, and maintenance of a new Laredo Air Branch facility within the Laredo Sector AOR (see Figure 1-1). This analysis does not include an assessment of operations conducted in the field and away from the Laredo Air Branch facility. The potentially affected natural and human environment is limited to resources associated with the City of Laredo and Webb County, Texas. Most potential effects will be limited to the construction site and immediately adjacent resources.

This EA will document the significance of the environmental effects of the Proposed Action. The environmental analysis will allow decision makers to determine if the Proposed Action would or would not have a significant impact on the natural, cultural, social, economic, and physical environment, as well as whether the action can proceed to the next phase of project development or if an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is required. The process for developing the EA allows for input and comments on the Proposed Action from the concerned public, interested non-governmental groups, and interested government agencies to inform agency decision making. This EA will be prepared as follows:

1. Conduct interagency and intergovernmental coordination for environmental planning. The first step in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process is to solicit comments from federal, state, and local agencies, as well as federally recognized tribes about the proposed project to ensure that their concerns are included in the analysis.
2. Prepare a draft EA. CBP will review and address relevant comments and concerns received from any federal, state, and local agencies or federally recognized tribes during preparation of the draft EA.

3. Announce that the draft EA has been prepared. A Notice of Availability (NOA) will be published in the *Laredo Morning Times* newspaper on XX, XX, 2021 (Appendix A) to announce the public comment period and the availability of the draft EA and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) if applicable.
4. Provide a public comment period. A public comment period allows for all interested parties to review the analysis presented in the draft EA and provide feedback. The draft EA will be available to the public for a 30-day review beginning on XX, XX, 2021 at the Joe A. Guerra Laredo Public Library, 1120 Calton Road, Laredo, Texas. The draft EA will also be available for download from the CBP internet web page at the following URL address: <http://www.cbp.gov/about/environmental-cultural-stewardship/nepa-documents/docs-review>.
5. Prepare a final EA. A final EA will be prepared following the public comment period. The final EA will address relevant comments and concerns received from all interested parties during the public comment period.
6. Issue a FONSI. The final step in the NEPA process is the signature of a FONSI if the environmental analysis supports the conclusion that impacts on the quality of the human and natural environments from implementing the Proposed Action would not be significant. Therefore, no EIS would be prepared.

1.6 APPLICABLE ENVIRONMENTAL GUIDANCE, STATUTES, AND REGULATIONS

CBP follows applicable federal laws and regulations for environmental protection and management. This EA was developed in accordance with the requirements of NEPA; updated regulations issued by the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) published in 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Parts 1500-1508 and 1515-1518 (CEQ 2020); Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Directive Number 023-01, Rev.01; and DHS Instruction Manual 023-01-001-01, Rev. 01, Implementation of the NEPA; and other pertinent environmental statutes, regulations, and compliance requirements. The EA is the vehicle for compliance with all applicable environmental statutes, such as the Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973; 16 United States Code (U.S.C.) Part §1531 et seq., as amended; and the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966, 16 U.S.C. §470a et seq., as amended.

1.7 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

In accordance with 40 CFR §1501.9, 1503, 1506.6, and 1508.1 (k), CBP initiated public involvement and agency scoping activities to identify significant issues related to the Proposed Action. CBP is consulting, and will continue to consult, with appropriate local, state, Tribal, and federal government agencies throughout the EA process. Formal and informal coordination has been conducted with the following agencies and included in Appendix A:

Federal Agencies:

- United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)
- United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA)
- United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)
- Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)
- Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

State Agencies:

- Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD)
- Texas Historical Commission (THC)
- Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT)
- Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ)

Federally Recognized Tribes:

- The Comanche Nation
- Mescalero Apache Tribe of the Mescalero Reservation
- Tonkawa Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma
- Apache Tribe of Oklahoma
- Wichita and Affiliated Tribes

Local:

- Webb County
- City of Laredo
- Laredo International Airport

2.0 PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

The Proposed Action and one alternative (No Action Alternative) were identified and considered during the planning stages of the proposed project. The Proposed Action consists of the construction of a new Laredo Air Branch facility and associated infrastructure that meet the purpose of and need for the project. As required by NEPA and CEQ regulations, the No Action Alternative reflects conditions within the project area should the Proposed Action not be implemented. One potential site location was carried forward for evaluation in this EA.

2.1 PROPOSED ACTION

The Proposed Action would construct a new Laredo Air Branch facility on an approximately 13-acre parcel of land at the Laredo International Airport in Laredo, Texas (Figure 2-1).

2.1.1 Proposed Air Branch Facility Design

The new Laredo Air Branch facility in Laredo, Texas would alleviate overcrowded conditions and allow room for current and planned future growth in personnel and additional hangar space would accommodate future operations. The new facility would include an administrative operational space, hangar space, aircraft and vehicle parking, and additional site improvements. The new facilities are being designed to meet CBP facility standards. Figure 2-2 presents a conceptual plan for the facility layout. Figure 2-3 presents the location of the proposed Air Branch facility in relation to the current facility.

The proposed new facility would include some or all of the following components:

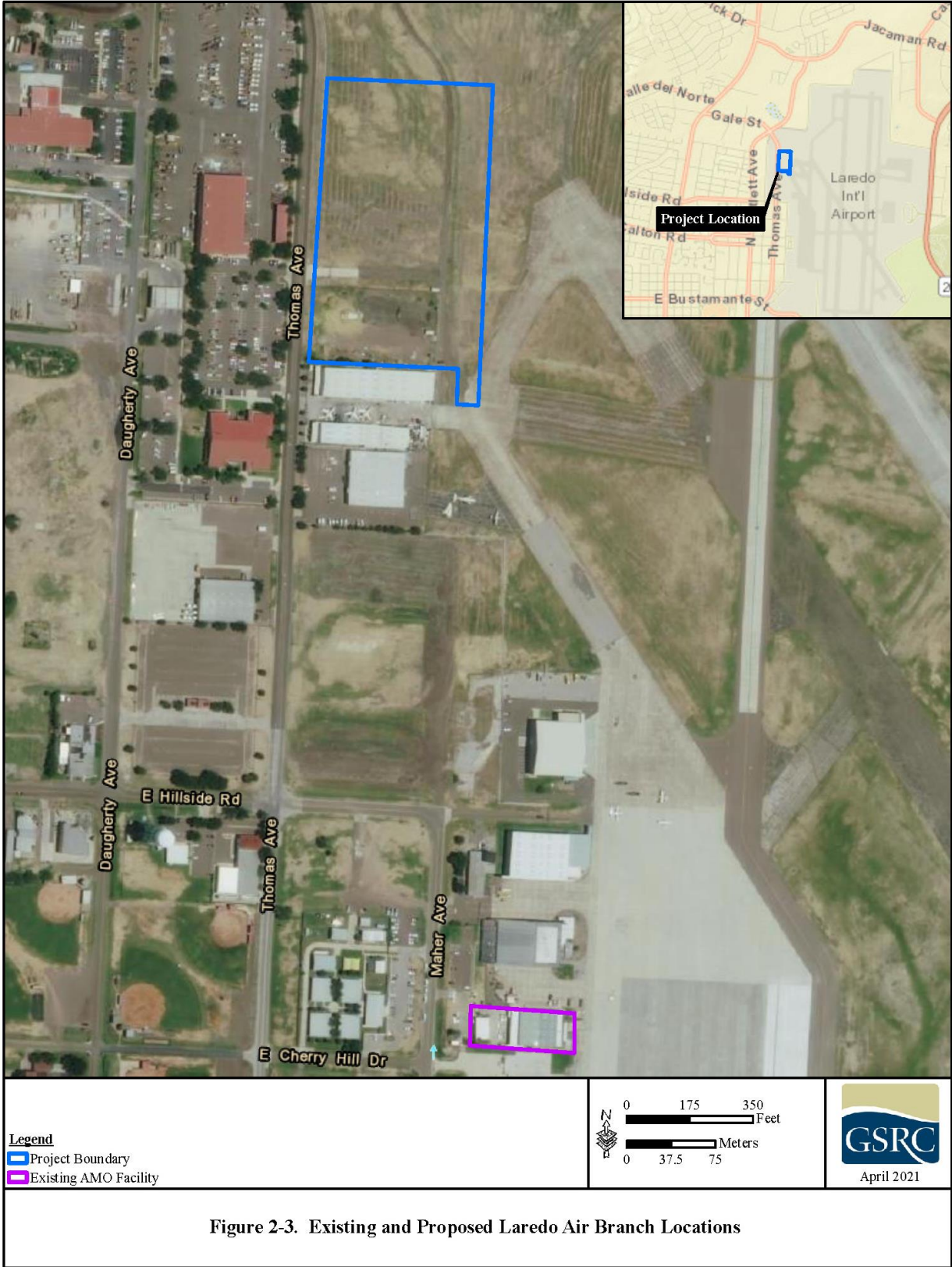
- 14,000 square foot (ft²) administrative operations building
- 31,500 ft² maintenance hangar facility
- 17,000 ft² storage hangar facility
- 70,000 ft² aircraft parking apron and ramp
- One (1) exterior aircraft wash/rinse rack
- Hazardous material storage area
- Storage canopy
- Enhanced lighting
- Parking area to accommodate 10 government-owned vehicles, 75 agent vehicles, five (5) visitor vehicles, one (1) oversized vehicle, one (1) fuel truck, and three (3) fuel trailers
- Signage
- Security fencing
- Sidewalks and curbs
- Storm drainage
- Additional site improvements

2.2 NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

The No Action Alternative would preclude the construction, operation, and maintenance of a new Laredo Air Branch facility. The existing Air Branch facility would continue to be inadequate for the support of personnel and air assets. Consequently, this alternative would hinder CBP's ability to expand operations or support surge capacity to meet mission requirements.



Figure 2-1. Project Area Map



The No Action Alternative does not meet the purpose and need for the proposed project, but will be carried forward for analysis, as required by CEQ regulations. The No Action Alternative describes the existing conditions in the absence of the Proposed Action.

2.3 ALTERNATIVES SUMMARY

The two alternatives selected for further analysis are the Proposed Action (Preferred Alternative) and the No Action Alternative. The Proposed Action fully meets the purpose of and need for the project, and the preferred construction site offers the best combination of terrain, environment, land ownership, and operational requirements to serve as an Air Branch facility at the Laredo International Airport. An evaluation of how the Proposed Action meets the project’s purpose and need is provided in Table 2-1.

Table 2-1. Alternatives Matrix of Purpose of and Need for Alternatives

Purpose and Need	Proposed Action	No Action Alternative
Provide appropriate facilities to allow CBP to operate more efficiently, safely, and securely - resulting in more effective deployment of required assets in the AOR to support the USBP Laredo Sector.	Yes	No
Provide facilities that enable CBP to attain and maintain compliance with CBP facility standards.	Yes	No
Provide facilities necessary for increased effectiveness of an expanded number of CBP personnel and air assets (e.g., administrative building; maintenance hangar; storage hangar; aircraft parking apron and ramp; exterior aircraft wash/rinse rack; parking area; and additional facilities including hazardous material storage, storage canopy, enhanced lighting, signage, security fencing, sidewalks and curbs, storm drainage, and additional site improvements).	Yes	No

2.4 RECENT, ONGOING, AND REASONABLY FORESEEABLE PROJECTS WITHIN THE GEOGRAPHIC BASELINE OF THE PROPOSED ACTION

Recent, ongoing, and reasonably foreseeable proposed projects were identified in the development of this EA. These projects include CBP projects, as well as other agencies that could have projects within the geographic baseline of the Proposed Action. If a proposed project presumptively would have effects that are reasonably foreseeable and have a close causal relationship with the Proposed Action or alternatives it is included in the affected environment and consequences section of this EA. However, if the effects of the proposed project are remote in time, geographically remote, or would be a result of a lengthy causal chain the proposed project was not included in the affected environment and consequences section of this EA per 40 CFR §1508.1(g).

The following projects were reviewed and CBP has determined that the effects of these projects are remote in time, geographically remote, or would be a result of a lengthy causal chain and are not included in the environmental consequences section of this EA.

CBP Projects

- Maintenance and repair of tactical infrastructure along the U.S./Mexico international border in the El Paso, Big Bend, Del Rio, Laredo, and Rio Grande Valley (RGV) sectors.
- Construction and maintenance of 32 Remote Video Surveillance Systems (RVSS) towers and associated roads within the Falfurrias, Brownsville, Harlingen, Fort Brown, and Kingsville Station's AORs.
- Construction and maintenance of 40 RVSS and three relay towers and associated roads within the Rio Grande City, McAllen, and Weslaco Stations' AORs.
- Construction and maintenance of 70 RVSS and 14 relay towers and associated roads within the Laredo North, Laredo South, Laredo West, Zapata, Cotulla, Hebbronville, and Freer Stations' AORs.
- Construction of approximately 65 miles of border wall in the RGV Sector.
- Construction of the Freer Checkpoint Health and Life Safety Improvements on a 10-acre site including signage and safety measures to address access and egress traffic, additional secure parking, equipment storage, relocating vehicle lift inspection equipment, and a vehicle impound area.

CBP determined not to include these ongoing and planned projects for discussion in the environmental consequences section of this EA because the potential effects of these projects are geographically remote (i.e., over 20 miles), remote in time, or the result of a lengthy causal chain when considering effects relating to the Proposed Action.

Other Agency Projects

In 2008, the Texas Transportation Commission created the I-69 Advisory and five I-69 Segment Committees to increase citizen and community input in the planning of I-69 in Texas. Segment Five Committee encompasses portions of U.S. Highway 59, U.S. Highway 77, U.S. Highway 281, and State Highway 44 and includes the counties of Duval, Jim Wells, Live Oak, McMullen, Nueces, San Patricio, Webb, and Zapata (TxDOT n.d.). Within Duval County, approximately 32.8 miles of U.S. Highway 59 and approximately 20.6 miles of SH 44 will be improved to prepare for the implementation of I-69 (TxDOT 2018). Within Webb County, approximately 53.5 miles of U.S. Highway 59 will be improved to prepare for the implementation of I-69 (TxDOT 2018). As of 2018, no funding or programming has been completed for any portion of Segment five that is within 20 miles of the Proposed Action; therefore, the potential effects from the improvement of U.S. Highway 59 near the proposed BPS are considered remote in time and would be from a lengthy causal chain.

3.0 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

3.1 PRELIMINARY IMPACT SCOPING

This section describes the natural and human environments that exist within the region of influence (ROI) and the potential impacts of the No Action Alternative and the Proposed Action outlined in Section 2.0 of this document. The ROI for the Laredo Air Branch facility is the City of Laredo and Webb County, Texas. The Proposed Action would be located on lands owned by the Laredo International Airport. Only those issues that have the potential to be affected by any of the alternatives are described, per CEQ guidance (40 CFR § 1501.9 [3]).

Some topics are limited in scope due to the lack of effect from the Proposed Action on the resource or because that particular resource is not located within the project site (Table 3-1).

Table 3-1. Resources Analyzed in the Environmental Impact Analysis Process

Resource	Potential to Be Affected by Implementation of the Proposed Action	Analyzed in This EA	Rationale for Elimination
Wild and Scenic Rivers	No	No	No rivers designated as Wild and Scenic Rivers (16 U.S.C. § 551, 1278[c], 1281[d]) are located within or near the project site
Land Use	Yes	Yes	Not Applicable
Geology	No	No	No geologic resources would be affected
Soils	Yes	Yes	Not Applicable
Prime Farmlands	No	No	No prime farmlands would be affected
Water Resources	Yes	Yes	Not Applicable
Floodplains	No	Yes	Not Applicable
Vegetative Habitat	Yes	Yes	Not Applicable
Wildlife Resources	Yes	Yes	Not Applicable
Threatened and Endangered Species	No	Yes	Not Applicable
Cultural, Archaeological, and Historical Resources	No	Yes	Not Applicable
Air Quality	Yes	Yes	Not Applicable
Noise	Yes	Yes	Not Applicable
Utilities and Infrastructure	Yes	Yes	Not Applicable
Radio Frequency Environment	Yes	Yes	Not Applicable
Roadways and Traffic	Yes	Yes	Not Applicable
Aesthetic and Visual Resources	No	No	No aesthetic or visual resources would be affected
Hazardous Materials	Yes	Yes	Not Applicable
Unique and Sensitive Areas	No	No	No unique or sensitive areas would be affected
Socioeconomics	No	Yes	Not Applicable
Environmental Justice and Protection of Children	No	Yes	Not Applicable

Per 40 CFR §1508.1(g), effects are defined as changes to the human environment from the proposed action or alternatives that are reasonably foreseeable and have a close causal relationship to the proposed action or alternatives, including those effects that occur at the same time and place as the proposed action or alternatives and may include effects that are later in time or farther removed in distance from the proposed action or alternatives.

For this EA, per 40 CFR §1508.1(g), effects are not considered if they are remote in time, geographically remote, or would be as a result of a lengthy causal chain. They were also not considered if CBP has no ability to prevent the effect or if the effect would occur regardless of the Proposed Action. Also, per 40 CFR §1501.3(b)(2), CBP has considered as appropriate to the Proposed Action whether effects would be short-term, long-term, beneficial, or adverse. CBP also considered the effects on public health and safety and whether effects would violate federal, state, tribal, or local law protecting the environment.

Effects include ecological (such as the effects on natural resources and on the components, structures, and functioning of affected ecosystems), aesthetic, historic, cultural, economic (such as the effects on employment), social, or health effects. Effects may also include those resulting from actions that may have both beneficial and detrimental effects, even if on balance the agency believes that the effect would be beneficial. As discussed in this section, the alternatives may create temporary, short-term, long-term, or permanent effects.

Whether an effect is significant depends on the potentially affected environment and degree of effects of the action (CFR 1501.3(b)). The potentially affected environment refers to the setting in which the impact occurs and may include society as a whole, the affected region, the affected interests, and the locality. Effects on each resource can vary in degree or magnitude from a slightly noticeable change to a total change in the environment. For the purpose of this analysis, the intensity of effects would be classified as negligible, minor, moderate, or major. The intensity thresholds are defined as follows:

- Negligible: A resource would not be affected or the effects would be at or below the level of detection, and changes would not be of any measurable or perceptible consequence.
- Minor: Effects on a resource would be detectable, although the effects would be localized, small, and of little consequence to the sustainability of the resource. Mitigation measures, if needed to offset adverse effects, would be simple and achievable.
- Moderate: Effects on a resource would be readily detectable, long-term, localized, and measurable. Mitigation measures, if needed to offset adverse effects, would be extensive and likely achievable.
- Major: Effects on a resource would be obvious and long-term, and would have substantial consequences on a regional scale. Mitigation measures to offset the adverse effects would be required and extensive, and success of the mitigation measures would not be guaranteed.

The following discussions describe and, where possible, quantify the potential effects of each alternative on the resources within or near the project site. It is assumed that the entire tract of land where the Proposed Action is located would be used by CBP resulting in a permanent

impact of 13 acres. All construction activities, staging areas, and final siting of the various Laredo Air Branch facility components would occur within the 13-acre tract of land.

3.2 LAND USE

Existing land use in Webb County is predominantly agricultural, with much of it classified as rangeland. A total of 656 farms are located within Webb County. These farms encompass approximately 1,844,858 acres, which is approximately 85 percent of the approximately 2,151,348 acres in the county. Most farmland is pastureland, with 92 percent of the acreage in farms being classified as pastureland. Cropland accounts for only 2 percent of the farmed acreage (U.S. Department of Agriculture [USDA] 2017).

Land use other than agricultural includes urban development and recreational. Laredo is the major urban center and the county seat of Webb County. A major recreational area in the county is the Lake Casa Blanca International State Park, which is located in Laredo. There are also numerous parks, greenways, and recreational paths around the city. Several residential and commercial areas are in close proximity to the project area.

3.2.1 Alternative 1: Proposed Action

Implementation of the Proposed Action would not change the land use in the project area. However, because the Proposed Action is located entirely within the Laredo International Airport the impacts associated with the Proposed Action would not have an impact on land use as much of the area in the vicinity of the project area has previously been developed as part of the airport.

3.2.2 Alternative 2: No Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative would have no impacts, either beneficial or adverse, on the area's land use. The site could be potentially developed at some time in the future, regardless of whether AMO uses the site, or the site could remain as mowed, maintained grasslands.

3.3 SOILS AND PRIME FARMLAND

There are three soil types associated with the new Laredo Air Branch facility: Copita fine sandy loam (CpB), 0 to 3 percent slopes; Verick fine sandy loam (VkC), 1 to 5 percent slopes; and Nido-Rock outcrop complex (NDF), hilly.

The Copita series consists of moderately deep, well drained loamy soils on uplands. These soils are formed in calcareous, loamy sediments or residuum over sandstone and interbedded sandstone with slopes ranging from zero to three percent (USDA 2020). The Verick series consists of shallow, well drained, loamy soils on uplands. These soils are formed in calcareous loamy residuum over sandstone with slopes that range from one to five percent (USDA 2020). The Nido series consists of very shallow, well drained, loamy soils on uplands. These soils are formed in calcareous residuum over sandstone and in loamy sediment interbedded with sandstone. Slopes range from three to 20 percent (USDA 2020). No soils in the project area are considered prime farmland soil.

3.3.1 Alternative 1: Proposed Action

Under the Proposed Action, approximately 13 acres of soils (3.7 acres of Vkc, 0.8 acres of NDF, and 8.5 acres of CpB), of which none are considered prime farmland soils, would be permanently disturbed or removed from biological production at the new Laredo Air Branch facility. The impact from the disturbance and removal from biological production of approximately 13 acres of soil would be negligible due to the amount of the same soils throughout the Area of Potential Effects (APE). Upon completion of construction, all temporary disturbance areas would be revegetated with a mixture of native plant seeds or nursery plantings or allowed to revegetate naturally, if applicable.

3.3.2 Alternative 2: No Action Alternative

No ground-disturbing activities would occur as a result of this alternative. Therefore, the No Action Alternative would have no impacts, either beneficial or adverse, on soils.

3.4 VEGETATIVE HABITAT

The project area is located in the South Texas Brush Country as characterized by TPWD (TPWD 2020a). This ecoregion occurs from east of the Rio Grande and south of the Balcones Escarpment. The average temperature is 73 degrees Fahrenheit, with an average annual rainfall ranging from 16 inches in the west to 30 inches in the east. The South Texas Brush Country Ecoregion is a diverse ecoregion because it has elements of three converging vegetative communities: Chihuahuan Desert to the west, Tamaulipan thornscrub and subtropical woodlands along the Rio Grande, and coastal grasslands to the east. It is transected by numerous arroyos and streams and is generally covered in low-growing thorny vegetation (TPWD 2020a). Within the project area, the habitat is highly disturbed and the primary vegetation communities are mowed, maintained grasslands and bare ground.

Biological surveys of the project area occurred in June 2020. A complete list of flora species observed during biological surveys of the project area is included in Table 3-2.

Table 3-2. Plants Observed During the Laredo Air Branch Project Biological Resources Surveys

Common Name	Scientific Name	Common Name	Scientific Name
Annual ragweed	<i>Ambrosia artemisiifolia</i>	Lehmann lovegrass	<i>Eragrostis lehmanniana</i>
Sugar hackberry	<i>Celtis laevigata</i>	Prostrate sandmat	<i>Euphorbia prostrata</i>
Buffelgrass	<i>Cenchrus ciliaris</i>	Common sunflower	<i>Helianthus annuus</i>
Baby white aster	<i>Chaetopappa ericoides</i>	Devil's bouquet	<i>Nyctaginia capitata</i>
Old man's beard	<i>Clematis drummondii</i>	Texas palafox	<i>Palafoxia texana</i>
Croton	<i>Croton</i> sp.	Mexican palo verde	<i>Parkinsonia aculeate</i>
Honeyvine	<i>Cynanchum leave</i>	Stinking passionflower	<i>Passiflora foetida</i> var. <i>gossypifolia</i>
Bermuda grass	<i>Cynodon dactylon</i>	Common purslane	<i>Portulaca oleracea</i>
Trailing indigo bush	<i>Dalea greggii</i>	Honey mesquite	<i>Prosopis glandulosa</i>
Prostrate bundleflower	<i>Desmanthus virgatus</i>	Chinese lantern	<i>Quincula lobate</i>
Big-head rabbit-tobacco	<i>Diaperia prolifera</i>	Russian thistle	<i>Salsola kali</i>
Kleberg's bluestem	<i>Dichanthium annulatum</i>	Silverleaf nightshade	<i>Solanum elaeagnifolium</i>
Texas ebony	<i>Ebenopsis ebano</i>	Skeleton-leaf goldeneye	<i>Viguiera stenoloba</i>

3.4.1 Alternative 1: Proposed Action

The Proposed Action would have a permanent, minor impact on vegetation in the project area as this area has previously been disturbed, possesses limited native vegetation, and is mowed and maintained. Approximately 13 acres of degraded habitat would be impacted as a result of the construction of the proposed Laredo Air Branch facility. The vegetative species that would be impacted by the construction of the Laredo Air Branch facility are both locally and regionally common, and the permanent loss of the limited amount of acreage would not adversely affect the population viability of any plant species in the region. In order to ensure that the Proposed Action does not actively promote the establishment of non-native and invasive species in the area, BMPs (described in Section 5.0) would be implemented to minimize the spread and reestablishment of non-native vegetation. Upon completion of construction, all temporary disturbance areas would be revegetated with a mixture of native plant seeds or nursery plantings or allowed to revegetate naturally. These BMPs, as well as measures protecting vegetation in general, would reduce potential impacts from non-native invasive species to a negligible amount.

3.4.2 Alternative 2: No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, no impacts on vegetative habitat would occur as construction activities would not be completed.

3.5 WILDLIFE RESOURCES

The APE is within the Southwest Plateau and Plains Dry Steppe and Shrub Province (United States Forest Service [USFS] 2015). Common mammals within this province include coyote (*Canis latrans*), ringtail (*Bassariscus astutus*), American hog-nosed skunk (*Conepatus leuconotus*), white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*), Mexican ground squirrel (*Spermophilus mexicanus*), Texas pocket gopher (*Geomys personatus*), southern plains woodrat (*Neotoma micropus*), raccoon (*Procyon lotor*), gray fox (*Urocyon cinereoargenteus*), bobcat (*Lynx rufus*), collared peccary (*Pecari tajacu*), striped skunk (*Mephitis mephitis*), nine-banded armadillo (*Dasypus novemcinctus*), eastern cottontail (*Sylvilagus floridanus*), desert cottontail (*Sylvilagus audubonii*), fulvous harvest mouse (*Reithrodontomys fulvescens*), and hispid cotton rat (*Sigmodon hispidus*) (TPWD 2019).

Bird species are especially abundant in this region as the Central and Mississippi flyways converge in south Texas. Additionally, south Texas is the northernmost range for many of the Neotropical species of Central America. Approximately 500 avian species, including Neotropical migratory songbirds, shorebirds, raptors, and waterfowl can occur in south Texas. Common birds that frequent south Texas include the plain chachalaca (*Ortalis vetula*), green kingfisher (*Chloroceryle americana*), common nighthawk (*Nyctidromus albicollis*), elf owl (*Micrathene whitneyi*), white-winged dove (*Zenaida asiatica*), tropical kingbird (*Tyrannus melancholicus*), buff-bellied hummingbird (*Amazilia yucatanensis*), green jay (*Cyanocorax yncas*), long-billed thrasher (*Toxostoma longirostre*), white-collared seedeater (*Sporophila torqueola*), groove-billed ani (*Crotophaga sulcirostris*), great kiskadee (*Pitangus sulphuratus*), and olive sparrow (*Arremonops rufivirgatus*) (TPWD 2016).

Common reptiles and amphibians include the blue spiny lizard (*Sceloporus serrifer*), Laredo striped whiptail (*Aspidocelis laredoensis*), prairie racerunner (*Aspidocelis sexlineata viridis*),

Texas spiny softshell turtle (*Apalone spinifera emoryi*), Rio Grande cooter (*Pseudemys gorzugi*), Rio Grande leopard frog (*Lithobates berlandieri*), Rio Grande chirping frog (*Eleutherodactylus cystignathoides*), Gulf Coast toad (*Incilius valliceps*), and the giant (marine) toad (*Rhinella marina*) (TPWD 2019).

Biological surveys of the project area occurred in June 2020. A list of wildlife species observed during biological surveys is included in Table 3-3.

Table 3-3. Wildlife Observed During the Laredo Air Branch Project Biological Resources Surveys

Common Name	Scientific Name
Birds	
Black-chinned hummingbird	<i>Archilochus alexandri</i>
Great egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>
Crested caracara	<i>Caracara cheriway</i>
Killdeer	<i>Charadrius vociferus</i>
Lesser nighthawk	<i>Chordeiles acutipennis</i>
House finch	<i>Haemorhous mexicanus</i>
Barn swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>
Laughing gull	<i>Leucophaeus atricilla</i>
Northern mockingbird	<i>Mimus polyglottos</i>
House sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>
Cassin's sparrow	<i>Peucaea cassinii</i>
Great-tailed grackle	<i>Quiscalus mexicanus</i>
Lesser goldfinch	<i>Spinus psaltria</i>
Northern rough-winged swallow	<i>Stelgidopteryx serripennis</i>
Scissor-tailed flycatcher	<i>Tyrannus forficatus</i>
Tropical kingbird	<i>Tyrannus melancholicus</i>
White-winged dove	<i>Zenaida asiatica</i>
Mourning dove	<i>Zenaida macroura</i>
Butterflies	
Hackberry emperor	<i>Asterocampa celtis</i>
Fatal metalmark	<i>Calephelis nemesis</i>
Ceraunus blue	<i>Hemiargus ceraunus</i>
Little sulphur	<i>Pyrisitia lisa</i>

3.5.1 Alternative 1: Proposed Action

The permanent loss of approximately 13 acres of mowed and maintained grasslands would have a long-term, negligible impact on wildlife. The wildlife habitat present in the project area is both locally and regionally common, and the permanent loss of approximately 13 acres of mowed and maintained grasslands would not adversely affect the population viability or fecundity of any wildlife species in the region. Upon completion of construction, all temporary disturbance areas would be revegetated with a mixture of native plant seeds or nursery plantings or allowed to revegetate naturally.

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) requires that federal agencies coordinate with USFWS if a construction activity would result in the “take” of a migratory bird. In accordance with compliance measures of the MBTA, BMPs identified in Section 5.0 would be implemented if construction or clearing activities are scheduled during the nesting season (typically March 15 to September 15).

Lighting could attract or repel various wildlife species within the vicinity of the project area. While the number of lights to be installed as part of the Laredo Air Branch facility is not presently known, artificial lighting concentrated around a single 13-acre developed area would not significantly disrupt activities of wildlife populations across the region, since similar habitat is readily available to the north, east, west, and south for wildlife relocation. Additionally, the facility would be located adjacent to the already well-lit Laredo International Airport; therefore, the effect of increased lighting as a result of the Proposed Action is considered minimal. Construction activities would be limited primarily to daylight hours, whenever possible; therefore, construction impacts on wildlife would be minor, since the highest period of movement for most wildlife species occurs during nighttime or low daylight hours.

Noise from construction activities would have moderate and intermittent impacts on the wildlife communities located adjacent to the project area; however, this impact would be temporary and only occur during construction. Noise generated by the Laredo International Airport currently influences the behavioral responses of wildlife in the area. BMPs, as outlined in Section 5.0, would reduce noise associated with operation of the construction equipment and everyday vehicle traffic associated with the new Laredo Air Branch facility. Additional BMPs would be implemented to reduce disturbance and loss of wildlife, such as surveys during the nesting season prior to construction activities, and covering or providing an escape ramp for all steep-walled holes or trenches left open at the end of the construction workday.

3.5.2 Alternative 2: No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, no construction activities would take place; therefore, no impacts to wildlife resources would occur.

3.6 THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES

The ESA was enacted to protect and recover imperiled species and the ecosystems upon which these species (endangered and threatened) depend for their survival. All federal agencies are required to implement protective measures for designated species and to use their authorities to further the purposes of the ESA. The Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Commerce (marine species) are responsible for the identification of threatened or endangered species and development of any potential recovery plan. The USFWS is the primary agency responsible for implementing the ESA and is responsible for birds and other terrestrial and freshwater species. USFWS responsibilities under the ESA include (1) the identification of threatened and endangered species; (2) the identification of critical habitats for listed species; (3) implementation of research on, and recovery efforts for, these species; and (4) consultation with other federal agencies concerning measures to avoid harm to listed species.

An endangered species is a species officially recognized by the USFWS as being in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range. A threatened species is a species likely to become endangered within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range. Proposed species are those that have been formally submitted to Congress for official listing as threatened or endangered. Species may be considered eligible for listing as endangered or threatened when any of the five following criteria occur: (1) current/imminent destruction, modification, or curtailment of their habitat or range; (2) overuse of the species for commercial, recreational, scientific, or educational purposes; (3) disease or predation; (4) inadequacy of existing regulatory mechanisms; and (5) other natural or human-induced factors affecting their continued existence.

In addition, USFWS has identified species that are candidates for listing as a result of identified threats to their continued existence. The candidate designation includes those species for which USFWS has sufficient information to support proposals to list as endangered or threatened under the ESA; however, proposed rules have not yet been issued because such actions are precluded at present by other listing activity. Although not afforded protection by the ESA, candidate species may be protected under other federal or state laws.

Federally Listed Species

There are a total of five federally-listed endangered species known to occur within Webb County (USFWS 2020). A list of these species is presented in Table 3-4. Biological surveys of the proposed Laredo Air Branch site were conducted by Gulf South Research Corporation (GSRC) in June 2020. These investigations included surveys for all federal and state-listed species potentially occurring at or near the proposed Laredo Air Branch site. During the investigations, no federally-listed species were observed. CBP has coordinated with USFWS regarding the potential impacts as they relate to the construction of the Proposed Action (see Appendix A).

State-Listed Species

TPWD lists several state-listed species that may also occur within or near the project areas in Webb County (TPWD 2020b). No state-listed species were observed during biological surveys (TPWD 2020b). Appendix B has a complete list of all state-listed species with the potential to occur in Webb County.

Critical Habitat

The ESA also calls for the conservation of what is termed critical habitat; the areas of land, water, and air space that an endangered species needs for survival. Critical habitat also includes such things as food and water, breeding sites, cover or shelter, and sufficient habitat area to provide for normal population growth and behavior. One of the primary threats to many species is the destruction or modification of essential habitat by uncontrolled land and water developments. There is no designated critical habitat within Webb County for any of the federally listed species (USFWS 2020).

Table 3-4. Federally Listed Species for Webb County, Texas

Common Name	Status	Habitat	Potential to Occur at Site	Effect Determination
Mammals				
Gulf Coast Jaguarundi (<i>Herpailurus yagouaroundi cacomitli</i>)	E	Dense, thorny scrub, especially near water.	No	No effect.
Ocelot (<i>Leopardus pardalis</i>)	E	Dense, thorny shrub lands of the Lower Rio Grande Valley and Rio Grande Plains. Deep, fertile clay or loamy soils are generally needed to produce suitable habitat.	No	No effect.
Birds				
Red Knot (<i>Calidris canutus rufa</i>)	T	Coastal habitats and islands.	No	No effect.
Piping Plover (<i>Charadrius melodus</i>)	T	Open sandy beaches or rocky shores.	No	No effect.
Clams				
Texas Hornshell (<i>Popenaias popeii</i>)	E	Crevices, undercut riverbanks, travertine shelves, and under large boulders in shallow, slow-running rivers.	No	No effect.
Flowering Plants				
Ashy Dogweed (<i>Thymophylla tephroleuca</i>)	E	Predominately shrub-invaded grasslands, preferring fine sand or sandy-loam soils.	No	No effect.

Source: USFWS 2020

Status Key: E = Endangered, T = Threatened

3.6.1 Alternative 1: Proposed Action

Under the Proposed Action, there would be no impacts on any threatened or endangered species or their habitat. The Proposed Action would have no effect on any federally or state listed species, as no individuals or habitat exist on-site.

3.6.2 Alternative 2: No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, there would be no impacts on threatened or endangered species or their habitats, as no construction activities would occur.

3.7 CULTURAL RESOURCES

Cultural resources include historic properties, archaeological resources, and sacred sites. Historic properties are defined by the NHPA as any prehistoric or historic district site, building, structure, or object included on, or eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), including artifacts, records, and material remains relating to the district, site, building, structure, or object (National Park Service [NPS] 2006a). To be considered eligible for the NRHP, a property would need to possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association and must also meet at least one of the following four criteria (NPS 2002):

- Be associated with events that made a significant contribution to the broad pattern of our history.
- Be associated with the lives of significant persons in our past.
- Embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
- Have yielded, or be likely to yield, information important in history or prehistory.

A Traditional Cultural Property (TCP) is a specific type of historic property that is eligible for inclusion in the NRHP because of its association with cultural practices or beliefs of a living community that are rooted in that community's history and are important in maintaining and continuing the cultural identity of the community (Parker and King 1998). Given the broad range in types of historic properties, historic properties can often include other types of cultural resources such as cultural items, archaeological resources, sacred sites, and archaeological collections.

Cultural items, as defined by the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), are defined as human remains, as well as both associated and unassociated funerary objects, sacred objects, and objects of cultural patrimony or objects that have an ongoing historical, traditional, or cultural importance to a Native American group or culture (NPS 2006b). Archaeological resources, as defined by the Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA), consist of any material remains of past human life or activities that are of archaeological interest and are at least 100 years of age. Such items include, but are not limited to, pottery, basketry, bottles, weapons, weapon projectiles, tools, structures or portions of structures, pit houses, rock paintings, rock carvings, intaglios, graves, human skeletal remains, or any portion or piece of those items (NPS 2006c). Sacred sites are defined by Executive Order (EO) 13007, *Indian Sacred Sites*, as any specific, discrete, narrowly delineated location on federal land that is identified by a Native American tribe or Native American individual determined to be an appropriately authoritative representative of a Native American religion as sacred by virtue of its established religious significance, or ceremonial use by a Native American religion, provided that the tribe or appropriately authoritative representative of a Native American religion has informed the federal land-owning agency of the existence of such a site (NPS 1996).

Existing Archaeological Site and Previously Conducted Archaeological Surveys

Seven archaeological investigations were previously conducted within a 1-mile radius of the proposed new Laredo Air Branch facility. The previously conducted investigations were predominantly pedestrian surveys but also included two testing and one monitoring projects. Archaeological and aboveground resources surveys of 13 acres encompassing the proposed Laredo Air Branch site were completed by GSRC in August 2020 (Lindemuth 2020). The investigation included a pedestrian survey of the area which was supplemented by the excavation of 28 shovel test pits, one of which tested positive for cultural material. Given the limited amount of material recovered, the find was recorded as an isolated occurrence. This investigation resulted in the identification of three archaeological sites. Those archaeological sites included two multicomponent sites which represented two historic road and prehistoric lithic scatters and one sparse prehistoric lithic scatter. All three archaeological sites are recommended ineligible for the NRHP. No additional archaeological work was recommended for the archaeological

sites recorded. Six previously recorded archaeological sites (41WB64, 41WB65, 41WB160, 41WB346, 31WB347, and 41WB349) and one Official Texas Historical Marker (OTHM; Marker number 14030) were noted within the 1-mile radius. None of the previously recorded sites, OTHM, or previously conducted investigations overlapped with the current 13-acre area of potential effect. Given the results of the archaeological survey it is anticipated that the proposed project will have no effect on cultural resources and no further work is recommended.

3.7.1 Alternative 1: Proposed Action

Archaeological and aboveground resources surveys were conducted for the Proposed Action site. None of the resources identified were determined to be eligible for the NRHP, and as a result, no historic properties, as defined by the NHPA, would be impacted by the Proposed Action. Therefore, no significant impacts to cultural resources would occur from the implementation of the Proposed Action.

A request for concurrence was sent to THC (Ms. Emily Dylla, PhD) on January 14, 2021. At the time of publication CBP had not received concurrence from THC.

3.7.2 Alternative 2: No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, no construction would occur; therefore, no impacts to cultural resources would be anticipated.

3.8 GROUNDWATER

The project area is located within the Yegua-Jackson aquifer, a minor aquifer that crosses 34 counties in the southeastern part of Texas (George et al. 2011). The aquifer covers 10,932 square miles from the Texas-Louisiana border to Mexico. The Yegua-Jackson aquifer has a reported annual groundwater availability of 100,988 acre-feet and an annual groundwater supply of 16,462 acre-feet per year (Texas Water Development Board [TWDB] 2017).

This aquifer is composed of interbedded sand, silt, and clay layers. The water quality varies greatly due to sediment composition in the aquifer formations; the Yegua-Jackson aquifer becomes highly mineralized with increased depth. However, groundwater is produced from the sand units within the aquifer which contains 50-1,000 milligrams per liter of dissolved solids. Shallow wells occur over most of the Yegua-Jackson aquifer for domestic and livestock purposes. In addition to livestock, water from this aquifer is also used for municipal, industrial, and irrigation purposes (TWDB 2020).

3.8.1 Alternative 1: Proposed Action

As mentioned previously, the annual groundwater supply is approximately 16,462 acre-feet per year, which is a total of approximately 5.36 billion gallons per year. Because the new Laredo Air Branch facility would be located within the Laredo International Airport, the same as the existing Laredo Air Branch facility, the net increase in groundwater use would be less than one percent of the annual groundwater available within the aquifer. It is anticipated that impacts on water availability would be long-term and negligible. No impacts on groundwater quality would occur.

3.8.2 Alternative 2: No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, no construction activities would occur; therefore, no impacts to groundwater would occur.

3.9 SURFACE WATER AND WATERS OF THE U.S.

The Clean Water Act (CWA) §303[d][1][A] requires that each state monitor surface waters and compile a "303[d] List" of impaired streams and lakes. The proposed Laredo Air Branch facility is located in southern Texas and is located in the Rio Grande Basin (U.S. Bureau of Reclamation [USBR] 2016). The Rio Grande River travels 1,900 miles from south-central Colorado to the Gulf of Mexico near Brownsville; the total drainage area is 182,200 square miles (USBR 2016). The TCEQ 2020 303(d) report lists no stream reaches and no impaired streams near the project site (TCEQ 2020).

Waters of the U.S. are defined within the CWA, and jurisdiction is addressed by USACE and USEPA. There could be temporary impacts to Waters of the U.S. if drainage structures within agricultural ditches need replacement. Wetlands are a subset of the Waters of the U.S. that may be subject to regulation under Section 404 of the CWA (40 CFR 230.3). Wetlands are those areas inundated or saturated by surface water or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Executive Order (EO) 11990, *Protection of Wetlands*, directs the avoidance of long- and short-term impacts associated with the destruction or modification of wetlands to the extent possible, and to avoid support of new construction in wetlands wherever there is a practicable alternative. The Proposed Action site is not located within or near a jurisdictional wetland or Waters of the U.S.

3.9.1 Alternative 1: Proposed Action

The Proposed Action may potentially have temporary, negligible impacts on surface waters as a result of increases in erosion and sedimentation during periods of construction. Disturbed soils and hazardous substances (i.e., antifreeze, fuels, oils, and lubricants) could impact water quality during a rain event. However, due to the lack of surface waters present at the proposed Laredo Air Branch facility and through the use of BMPs, these effects would be minimized. A Construction Stormwater General Permit would be obtained prior to construction, and this would require approval of a site-specific Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). A site-specific Spill Prevention, Control and Countermeasure Plan (SPCCP) would also be in place prior to the start of construction. BMPs outlined in these plans would reduce potential migration of soils, oil and grease, and construction debris into local surface waters. Once the construction project is complete, any temporary construction footprints would be revegetated with native vegetation, as outlined in the SWPPP, which would mitigate the potential of non-point source pollution to enter local surface waters. No Waters of the U.S. or wetlands exist within the project site; therefore, there would be no net loss of wetlands or Waters of the U.S., and the Proposed Action would be in compliance with EO 11990.

3.9.2 Alternative 2: No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, no construction would occur; therefore, no impacts to surface waters or Waters of the U.S. would occur.

3.10 FLOODPLAINS

A floodplain is the area adjacent to a river, creek, lake, stream, or other open waterway that is subject to flooding when there is a major rain event. Floodplains are further defined by the likelihood of a flood event. If an area is in the 100-year floodplain, there is a 1-in-100 chance in any given year that the area will flood. EO 11988, *Floodplain Management*, directs all Federal agencies to avoid if possible development and other activities in the 100-year base floodplain. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) floodplain maps were reviewed to identify if the project area is located within mapped floodplains. None of the project area is located within the 100-year floodplain; there is minimal flood hazard within the entire project boundary (FEMA 2016).

3.10.1 Alternative 1: Proposed Action

The Proposed Action would not increase the risk or impact of floods on human safety, health, and welfare, or adversely impact the beneficial values that floodplains serve. Additionally, the Proposed Action would not increase the duration, frequency, elevation, velocity, or volume of flood events because the project site is not located within a floodplain. Therefore, the Proposed Action would have no impacts on floodplains and would be in compliance with EO 11988.

3.10.2 Alternative 2: No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, no construction activities would occur; therefore, there would be no impacts on floodplains.

3.11 AIR QUALITY

The USEPA established National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for specific pollutants determined to be of concern with respect to the health and welfare of the general public. Ambient air quality standards are classified as either "primary" or "secondary." The major pollutants of concern, or criteria pollutants, are carbon monoxide (CO), sulfur dioxide (SO₂), nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), ozone (O₃), particulate matter less than 10 microns (PM-10), particulate matter less than 2.5 microns (PM-2.5), and lead. NAAQS represent the maximum levels of background pollution that are considered safe, with an adequate margin of safety, to protect the public health and welfare. The NAAQS are included in Table 3-5.

Areas that do not meet these NAAQS standards are called non-attainment areas; areas that meet both primary and secondary standards are known as attainment areas. The Federal Conformity Final Rule (40 CFR Parts 51 and 93) specifies criteria and requirements for conformity determinations of federal projects. The Federal Conformity Rule was first promulgated in 1993 by the USEPA, following the passage of Amendments to the Clean Air Act (CAA) in 1990. The rule mandates that a conformity analysis be performed when a federal action generates air pollutants in a region that has been designated a non-attainment or maintenance area for one or more NAAQS.

Table 3-5. National Ambient Air Quality Standards

Pollutant	Primary Standards		Secondary Standards	
	Level	Averaging Time	Level	Averaging Times
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	9 ppm (10 mg/m ³)	8-hour ⁽¹⁾	None	None
	35 ppm (40 mg/m ³)	1-hour ⁽¹⁾	None	None
Lead (Pb)	0.15 µg/m ³ ⁽²⁾	Rolling 3-Month Average	Same as Primary	Same as Primary
	1.5 µg/m ³ ⁽³⁾	Quarterly Average	Same as Primary	Same as Primary
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO ₂)	53 ppb ⁽⁴⁾	Annual (Arithmetic Average)	Same as Primary	Same as Primary
	100 ppb	1-hour ⁽⁵⁾	None	None
Particulate Matter (PM-10)	150 µg/m ³	24-hour ⁽⁶⁾	Same as Primary	Same as Primary
Particulate Matter (PM-2.5)	12.0 µg/m ³	Annual ⁽⁷⁾ (Arithmetic Average)	15.0 µg/m ³	Annual ⁽⁷⁾ (Arithmetic Average)
	35 µg/m ³	24-hour ⁽⁸⁾	Same as Primary	Same as Primary
Ozone (O ₃)	35 µg/m ³	24-hour ⁽⁸⁾	Same as Primary	Same as Primary
Sulfur Dioxide (SO ₂)	75 ppb ⁽¹⁰⁾	1-hour	0.5 ppm	3-hour ⁽¹⁾

Source: USEPA 2020a at <https://www.epa.gov/criteria-air-pollutants/naaqs-table>

Units of measure for the standards are parts per million (ppm) by volume, parts per billion (ppb - 1 part in 1,000,000,000) by volume, milligrams per cubic meter of air (mg/m³), and micrograms per cubic meter of air (µg/m³).

⁽¹⁾ Not to be exceeded more than once per year.

⁽²⁾ Final rule signed October 15, 2008.

⁽³⁾ In areas designated nonattainment for the Pb standards prior to the promulgation of the current (2008) standards, and for which implementation plans to attain or maintain the current (2008) standards have not been submitted and approved, the previous standards (1.5 µg/m³ as a calendar quarter average) also remain in effect.

⁽⁴⁾ The official level of the annual NO₂ standard is 0.053 ppm, equal to 53 ppb, which is shown here for the purpose of clearer comparison to the 1-hour standard.

⁽⁵⁾ To attain this standard, the 3-year average of the 98th percentile of the daily maximum 1-hour average at each monitor within an area must not exceed 100 ppb (effective January 22, 2010).

⁽⁶⁾ Not to be exceeded more than once per year on average over 3 years.

⁽⁷⁾ To attain this standard, the 3-year average of the weighted annual mean PM2.5 concentrations from single or multiple community-oriented monitors must not exceed 15.0 µg/m³.

⁽⁸⁾ To attain this standard, the 3-year average of the 98th percentile of 24-hour concentrations at each population-oriented monitor within an area must not exceed 35 µg/m³ (effective December 17, 2006).

⁽⁹⁾ (a) To attain this standard, the 3-year average of the fourth-highest daily maximum 8-hour average ozone concentrations measured at each monitor within an area over each year must not exceed 0.070 ppm. (effective December 28, 2015).

(b) The previous (2008) O₃ standards (0.075 ppm) additionally remain in effect in some areas.

⁽¹⁰⁾ The previous SO₂ standards (0.14 ppm 24-hour and 0.03 ppm annual) will additionally remain in effect in certain areas: (1) any area for which it is not yet 1 year since the effective date of designation under the current (2010) standards, and (2) any area for which an implementation plan providing for attainment of the current (2010) standard has not been submitted and approved and which is designated nonattainment under the previous SO₂ standards or is not meeting the requirements of a SIP call under the previous SO₂ standards (40 CFR 50.4(3)). A SIP call is an EPA action requiring a state to resubmit all or part of its State Implementation Plan to demonstrate attainment of the required NAAQS.

A conformity analysis is the process used to determine whether a federal action meets the requirements of the General Conformity Rule. It requires the responsible federal agency to evaluate the nature of a Proposed Action and associated air pollutant emissions and calculate emissions that may result from the implementation of the Proposed Action. If the emissions exceed established limits, known as *de minimis* thresholds, the proponent is required to perform a conformity determination and implement appropriate mitigation measures to reduce air emissions. The USEPA has designated Webb County as in attainment for all NAAQS (USEPA 2020b).

Greenhouse Gases and Climate Change

Global climate change refers to a change in the average weather on the earth. Greenhouse Gases (GHG) are gases that trap heat in the atmosphere. They include carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), nitrous oxide (N₂O), fluorinated gases including chlorofluorocarbons (CFC) and hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HFC), and halons, as well as ground-level O₃ (California Energy Commission 2007).

3.11.1 Alternative 1: Proposed Action

Temporary and minor increases in air pollution would occur from the use of construction equipment (combustion emissions) and the disturbance of soils (fugitive dust) during construction of the Laredo Air Branch facility. Particulate emissions would occur as a result of construction activities such as vehicle trips, bulldozing, compacting, truck dumping, and grading operations. Construction activities would also generate minimal hydrocarbon, NO₂, CO₂, and SO₂ emissions from construction equipment and support vehicles. Fugitive dust would be generated during these construction activities. Fugitive dust and other emissions would minimally increase during construction; however, these emissions would be temporary and return to pre-project levels upon the completion of construction. Emissions as a result of the Proposed Action are expected to be below the *de minimus* threshold (i.e., 100 tons per year) and therefore would not be considered significant. BMPs, such as dust suppression and maintaining equipment in proper working condition, would reduce the temporary construction impacts. Furthermore, as Webb County is in attainment for all NAAQS, impacts to air quality are expected to be minimal under the Proposed Action.

3.11.2 Alternative 2: No Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative would not result in any impacts on air quality because there would be no construction or demolition activities.

3.12 NOISE

Noise is generally described as unwanted sound, which can be based either on objective effects (e.g., hearing loss, damage to structures) or subjective judgments (i.e., community annoyance). Sound is usually represented on a logarithmic scale in a unit called the decibel (dB). Sound on the decibel scale is referred to as sound level. The perceived threshold of human hearing is 0 dB, and the threshold of discomfort or pain is around 120 dB (USEPA 1974). The A-weighted sound level (dBA) is a measurement of sound pressure adjusted to conform to the frequency response of the human ear.

Noise levels occurring at night generally produce a greater annoyance than do the same levels occurring during the day. It is generally agreed that people perceive intrusive noise at night as being 10 dBA louder than the same level of intrusive noise during the day, at least in terms of its potential for causing community annoyance. This perception is largely because background environmental sound levels at night in most areas are also about 10 dBA lower than those during the day. Long-term noise levels are computed over a 24-hour period and adjusted for nighttime annoyances to produce the day-night average sound level (DNL). DNL is the community noise metric recommended by the USEPA and has been adopted by most federal agencies (USEPA 1974).

3.12.1 Alternative 1: Proposed Action

The construction of the proposed Laredo Air Branch facility would require the use of common construction equipment. Table 3-6 describes noise emission levels for construction equipment that range from 47 dBA to 85 dBA at a distance of 50 feet (FHWA 2017).

Table 3-6. A-Weighted (dBA) Sound Levels of Construction Equipment and Modeled Attenuation at Various Distances¹

Noise Source	50 feet	100 feet	200 feet	500 feet	1000 feet
Bulldozer	82	76	70	62	56
Concrete mixer truck	85	79	73	65	59
Crane	81	75	69	61	55
Drill rig	85	79	73	65	59
Dump truck	84	78	72	64	58
Excavator	81	75	69	61	55
Front-end loader	79	73	67	59	53
Generator	47	41	35	26	20

Source: FHWA 2017

¹The dBA at 50 feet is a measured noise emission. The 100- to 1,000-foot results are GSRC modeled estimates.

Assuming the worst case scenario of 85 dBA from general construction equipment, the noise model predicts that noise emissions would have to travel 1,138 feet before they would be attenuated to acceptable levels equal to or below 57 dBA, which is the criterion for National Monument and Wildlife Refuges (23 CFR § 722, Table 3-6), or 482 feet to attenuate to 65 dBA, which is the criterion for residential receptors.

The project site is located within an area currently utilized as a commercial airport, and presents little risk of disrupting regular community activity. BMPs would be established, including the use of heavy equipment only in daylight hours, to reduce the level of noise impacts produced during construction. Therefore, construction noise impacts would be temporary and negligible. Noise levels associated with operations would be unaffected because the Proposed Action would not increase personnel or aircraft.

3.12.2 Alternative 2: No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, no construction would occur; therefore, no impacts on noise would occur.

3.13 UTILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

American Electric Power, Texas Central Company, distributes electrical energy on behalf of the various Retail Electric Providers operating within the project area. Commercial grid power is currently available and would be used to power the proposed Laredo Air Branch facility.

3.13.1 Alternative 1: Proposed Action

The Proposed Action would result in negligible effects on the availability of utilities throughout the APE because the current amperage available through the existing grid power system can withstand the anticipated electrical load of the proposed Air Branch facility. Additionally, the Laredo Air Branch facility would be tied into existing and available service transmission lines, potable water lines, and sewage lines. No additional utility facilities would be needed to accommodate the Proposed Action.

3.13.2 Alternative 2: No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, no construction activities would occur. The No Action Alternative would not affect the availability of utilities or require construction of additional facilities.

3.14 HAZARDOUS MATERIALS AND WASTE MANAGEMENT

Hazardous materials are substances that cause physical or health hazards (29 CFR 1910.1200). Materials that are physically hazardous include combustible and flammable substances, compressed gases, and oxidizers. Health hazards are associated with materials that cause acute or chronic reactions, including toxic agents, carcinogens, and irritants. Hazardous materials are regulated in Texas by a combination of mandated laws promulgated by the USEPA and the TCEQ.

On June 10, 2020, a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment was conducted for the proposed project site in accordance with the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) standard ASTM E-1528-13. This assessment was performed to evaluate any potential environmental risk associated with the construction and operation of the proposed Laredo Air Branch facility. The assessment included a search of Federal and state records of known hazardous waste sites, potential hazardous waste sites, and remedial activities and included sites that are either on the National Priorities List or being considered for the list. According to information gathered from document searches, interviews, and the site reconnaissance, recognized environmental conditions do not exist in the immediate vicinity of the subject property; therefore, no additional assessment is required (GSRC 2020).

3.14.1 Alternative 1: Proposed Action

Construction of the proposed Laredo Air Branch facility as described in the Proposed Action would involve the use of heavy construction equipment. There is a potential for the release of hazardous materials such as fuels, lubricants, hydraulic fluids, and other chemicals during construction activities. The impacts from spills of hazardous materials during construction would be minimized by utilizing BMPs such as fueling only in controlled and protected areas away from surface waters, maintaining emergency spill cleanup kits at all sites during fueling operations, and maintaining all equipment in good operating condition to prevent fuel and hydraulic fluid leaks.

All hazardous and regulated wastes and substances generated by operation of the new Laredo Air Branch facility would be collected, characterized, labeled, stored, transported, and disposed of in accordance with all federal, state, and local regulations, including proper waste manifesting

procedures. All other hazardous and regulated materials or substances would be handled according to materials safety data sheet instructions and would not affect water, soils, vegetation, wildlife, or the safety of AMO agents and staff. Therefore, hazardous and regulated materials and substances would not impact the public, groundwater, or general environment.

The potential impacts of the handling and disposal of hazardous and regulated materials and substances during construction activities would be insignificant when mitigation measures and BMPs as described in Section 4.0 are implemented.

3.14.2 Alternative 2: No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, no construction activities would occur; therefore, no existing hazardous materials risks would be encountered and no potential for hazardous materials spills during construction would be realized. No impacts from hazardous materials would result from the No Action Alternative.

3.15 ROADWAYS AND TRAFFIC

Laredo is the county seat of Webb County, and the city has several major highways and thoroughfares within its boundaries. Interstate 35 is the main north-south route in Webb County. It is the third-longest north-south Interstate Highway in the country, connecting Laredo, Texas to Duluth, Minnesota (TxDOT 2020a). The main east-west routes through Webb County are U.S. Highway 59 and State Highway 359. U.S. Highway 59 runs the length of the country from Lancaster, Minnesota to Laredo, Texas. Although U.S. Highway 59 runs north-south across the country, it runs east-west as it terminates in Webb County, Texas. The proposed Laredo Air Branch facility would be located approximately 2 miles northwest of U.S. Highway 59. According to TxDOT, the annual average daily traffic (AADT) for the section of U.S. Highway 59 nearest to the proposed site was 35,528 in 2019 (TxDOT 2020b).

No new public infrastructure would be required for ingress or egress at the proposed Laredo Air Branch facility. Additionally, Highway 59 is scheduled to be expanded to meet interstate standards and be incorporated into the Interstate 69 (I-69) system (TxDOT 2018). This system is intended to enhance transportation system operations and safety to accommodate growth and economic development, maintain mobility, address emergency evacuation needs, and facilitate the efficient movement of freight. The I-69 system within Texas would connect Laredo, Texas to Texarkana, Texas.

3.15.1 Alternative 1: Proposed Action

With the implementation of the Proposed Action, construction activities at the project site would have a temporary, negligible impact on roadways and traffic adjacent to the project site. An increase of vehicular traffic along U.S. Highway 59 would occur from supplying materials, hauling debris, and from work crews commuting to the project site during construction activities. The number of agents would not increase as a result of the Proposed Action; therefore, no additional traffic is anticipated with operations. Additionally, although the exact construction activities associated with U.S. Highway 59 to make it part of the I-69 system are unknown, it can be assumed that U.S. Highway 59 would be widened to accommodate more traffic and bring the highway up to interstate standards (TxDOT 2018). Therefore, traffic impacts associated with

construction of the Laredo Air Branch facility would be temporary and negligible and traffic levels would return to pre-construction levels following completion of construction.

3.15.2 Alternative 2: No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, no impacts to roadways and traffic would occur as the new facility would not be constructed.

3.16 SOCIOECONOMICS

This socioeconomics section outlines the basic attributes of population and economic activity in Webb County, Texas; specifically, Laredo, Texas. The proposed Laredo Air Branch facility would be designed to accommodate the existing staff of 50 CBP agents and support personnel, while providing sufficient space for future growth in staffing.

Affected Environment

Demographic data, shown in Table 3-7, provide an overview of the socioeconomic environment in the APE. In 2019, the city of Laredo had an estimated population of 262,491, and Webb County had an estimated population of 276,652 (U.S. Census Bureau 2019). From 2010 to 2019, the city of Laredo grew at an average annual rate of 1.26 percent, while Webb County grew at an average annual rate of 1.16 percent. In the same time frame, the population of Texas grew at an average annual rate of 1.7 percent, and the U.S. at a slower rate of 0.7 percent (U.S. Census Bureau 2019).

Table 3-7. Population, Income, Labor Force, and Unemployment for the Region of Interest

	2019 Population Estimate	Average Annual Growth Rate 2010-2019 (Percent)	Per Capita Income (Dollars) (2018)	Per Capita Income As a Percent of the United States (Percent)	Unemployment Rate (2018) (Percent)
Laredo, Texas	262,491	1.26	17,641	54	3.7
Webb County, Texas	276,652	1.16	17,326	53	3.7
Texas	28,995,881	1.70	30,143	92	3.8
United States	328,239,523	0.70	32,621	100	3.9

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2019, BLS 2020a, BLS 2020b, BLS 2020c, BLS 2020d

Per capita income in the APE is very low compared to Texas and the U.S., with average per capita income in Laredo and Webb County approximately 54 and 53 percent of the U.S., respectively. The unemployment rates in Laredo and Webb County (3.7 percent) are comparable to that of Texas (3.8 percent) and the U.S. (3.9 percent) (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics [BLS] 2020a, BLS 2020b, BLS 2020c, BLS 2020d).

Impacts on socioeconomic conditions would be considered significant if they included displacement or relocation of residences or commercial buildings or increases in long-term demands for public services in excess of existing and projected capacities.

3.16.1 Alternative 1: Proposed Action

The proposed Laredo Air Branch facility would be located within the boundaries of Laredo International Airport in Laredo, Texas. The proposed facility would be sufficiently large enough to accommodate 50 agents and personnel with the potential for more personnel to be added in the future. Any additional agents and their families moving into the area, needing homes, schools, and public services would be expected to live in Laredo. With an estimated population of 262,491, Laredo offers many options for housing, schools, shopping, and other amenities, and would be able to handle the increased demand for housing and public services. As a result, increases in the demand for public services in excess of existing and projected capacities would be minimal.

Temporary, minor, beneficial impacts in the form of jobs and income for area residents, revenues to local businesses, and sales and use taxes to Laredo, Webb County, and the State of Texas from locally purchased building materials could be realized if construction materials are purchased locally and local construction workers are hired for facility construction.

3.16.2 Alternative 2: No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, the proposed Laredo Air Branch facility would not be constructed in Webb County, so there would be no socioeconomic impacts. AMO's ability to detect and interdict illicit cross-border activity would not be enhanced, so impacts from illegal activity would continue.

3.17 ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE AND PROTECTION OF CHILDREN

EO 12898, *Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations*, was issued by President Clinton on February 11, 1994. It was intended to ensure that proposed federal actions do not have disproportionately high and adverse human health and environmental effects on minority and low-income populations and to ensure greater public participation by minority and low-income populations. It required each agency to develop an agency-wide environmental justice strategy. A Presidential Transmittal Memorandum issued with the EO states that "each federal agency shall analyze the environmental effects, including human health, economic and social effects, of federal actions, including effects on minority communities and low-income communities, when such analysis is required by the NEPA 42 U.S.C. section 4321, et seq."

EO 12898 does not provide guidelines as to how to determine concentrations of minority or low-income populations. However, analysis of demographic data on race, ethnicity, and poverty provides information on minority and low-income populations that could be affected by the proposed actions. The 2010 Census reports numbers of minority individuals, and the U.S. Census American Community Survey (ACS) provides the most recent poverty estimates available. Minority populations are those persons who identify themselves as Black, Hispanic, Asian American, American Indian/Alaskan Native, Pacific Islander, or Other. Poverty status is used to define low-income. Poverty is defined as the number of people with income below poverty level, which was \$26,200 for a family of four in 2020 (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services [HHS] 2020). A potential disproportionate impact may occur when minority populations in the study area exceeds 50 percent and/or the low-income population exceeds 20

percent of the population. Additionally, a disproportionate impact may occur when the minority and/or low-income populations in the study area are meaningfully greater than those in the region.

EO 13045, *Protection of Children from Environmental Health and Safety Risks*, requires each Federal agency “to identify and assess environmental health risks and safety risks that may disproportionately affect children” and “ensure that its policies, programs, activities, and standards address disproportionate risks to children that result from environmental health risks or safety risks.” This EO was prompted by the recognition that children, still undergoing physiological growth and development, are more sensitive to adverse environmental health and safety risks than adults. The potential for impacts on the health and safety of children is greater where projects are located near residential areas. U.S. Census data for minority population and poverty rates for the APE are presented in Table 3-8.

Table 3-8. Minority Population and Poverty Rates for the Region of Interest

	Minority Population (Percent)	All Ages in Poverty (Percent)
Laredo, Texas	96.4	29.1
Webb County	96.4	25.7
Texas	58.8	14.9
United States	39.9	10.5

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2019

3.17.1 Alternative 1: Proposed Action

Under the Proposed Action, the proposed Laredo Air Branch facility would be located approximately 1,200 feet away from the nearest residence and within the boundaries of Laredo International Airport. Therefore, the Proposed Action would not result in disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects on minority and low-income populations. Additionally, BMPs would be implemented such as fencing off the construction site to prevent residents or non-crew members from entering the site. Also, all OSHA guidelines would be followed. Therefore, there would be no environmental health or safety risks that disproportionately affect children or minorities.

3.17.2 Alternative 2: No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, the proposed Laredo Air Branch facility would not be constructed. There would be no impacts on people, so there would be no disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects on minority and low income populations. There would also be no environmental health or safety risks that could disproportionately affect children.

3.18 SUMMARY OF IMPACTS

Table 3-9 is provided to summarize the impacts of the No Action Alternative and Proposed Action on each of the elements discussed in this section (Affected Environment and Consequences).

Table 3-9. Summary Matrix of Potential Impacts

Affected Environment	No Action Alternative (Alternative 2)	Proposed Action (Alternative 1)
Land Use	No impacts would occur.	The Proposed Action would not have an impact on land use. Approximately 13 acres of undeveloped Laredo International Airport land would be converted to a developed land use.
Soils	No impacts would occur.	The Proposed Action would have a minor impact on soils. Permanent impacts on approximately 13 acres of soil would occur through the conversion of undeveloped land to use as an Air Branch facility.
Vegetative Habitat	No impacts would occur.	The Proposed Action would have permanent, minor impacts on vegetative habitat as the 13 acres of habitat to be converted have previously been disturbed, and possess limited native vegetative species. The plant communities associated with the project site are both locally and regionally common, and the permanent loss of approximately 13 acres of vegetation would not adversely affect the population viability of any plant or animal species in the region.
Wildlife Resources	No impacts would occur.	The Proposed Action would have a long term, negligible impact on wildlife resources due to the permanent removal of approximately 13 acres of habitat.
Protected Species and Critical Habitats	No impacts would occur.	The Proposed Action would have no effect to any federally protected species. No designated Critical Habitat is present within the project footprint.
Cultural Resources	No impacts would occur.	The Proposed Action would have no effect on cultural resources.
Groundwater	No impacts would occur.	The Proposed Action would have a long term, negligible impact on groundwater resources.
Surface Waters and Waters of the United States	No impacts would occur.	Surface water quality could be temporarily impacted during construction activities as a result of erosion and sedimentation. However, due to the lack of surface waters present at the proposed Laredo Air Branch facility, and through the use of BMPs, these effects would be minimized. No impacts to wetlands and Waters of the U.S. would occur as none exist on or near the project site.
Floodplains	No impacts would occur.	The Proposed Action would have no effect on floodplains.
Air Quality	No impacts would occur.	Temporary and minor increases in air pollution would occur from the use of construction equipment (combustion emissions) and the disturbance of soils (fugitive dust) during construction.
Noise	No impacts would occur.	Temporary and negligible increases in noise would occur during construction.
Utilities and Infrastructure	No impacts would occur.	Negligible demands on power utilities would be required as a result of the Proposed Action.
Hazardous Materials and Waste Management	No impacts would occur.	The Proposed Action would not result in the exposures of the environment or public to any hazardous materials. The potential exists for minor releases of petroleum, oil, and lubricant during construction activities. BMPs will be implemented to minimize any potential contamination during construction activities.
Roadways and Traffic	No impacts would occur.	Construction activities would have a temporary, negligible impact on roadways and traffic within the region. The increase of vehicular traffic would occur to supply materials and work crews at the project site during construction.
Radio Frequency Environment	No impacts would occur.	The Proposed Action would have permanent, minor impacts on the radio frequency environment. The installation of new communications equipment within the project site would emit RF energy and EM radiation. However, any adverse effects would likely be negligible due to the minimal exposure limits associated with both the type of equipment used and the tower site location.
Socioeconomics	No impacts would occur.	The Proposed Action would have temporary, negligible adverse impacts on socioeconomics.
Environmental Justice and Protection of Children	No impacts would occur.	The Proposed Action would not result in disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects on minority population or low income populations.

4.0 BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

This section describes those measures that will be implemented to reduce or eliminate potential adverse impacts on the human and natural environments. Many of these measures have been incorporated as standard operating procedures by CBP on past projects. BMPs will be presented for each resource category that would be potentially affected. It should be emphasized that these are general BMPs and the development of specific BMPs will be required for certain activities implemented under the action alternatives. The proposed BMPs will be coordinated through the appropriate agencies and land managers/administrators, as required.

It is federal policy to reduce adverse impacts through the sequence of avoidance, minimization, and, finally, compensation. Compensation varies and includes activities such as restoration of habitat in other areas, acquisition of lands, etc., and is typically coordinated with the appropriate federal and state resource agencies.

4.1 GENERAL PROJECT PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

1. If required, night-vision-friendly strobe lights necessary for CBP operational needs will use the minimum wattage and number of flashes per minute necessary to ensure operational safety.
2. Avoid contamination of ground and surface waters by storing concrete wash water, and any water that has been contaminated with construction materials, oils, equipment residue, etc., in closed containers on-site until removed for disposal. This wash water is toxic to wildlife. Storage tanks must have proper air space (to avoid rainfall-induced overtopping), be on-ground containers, and be located in upland areas instead of washes.
3. Avoid lighting impacts during the night by conducting construction and maintenance activities during daylight hours only. If night lighting is unavoidable, 1) use special bulbs designed to ensure no increase in ambient light conditions; 2) minimize the number of lights used; 3) place lights on poles pointed down toward the ground, with shields on lights to prevent light from going up into sky, or out laterally into the landscape; and 4) selectively place lights so they are directed away from all native vegetative communities.
4. CBP will avoid the spread of non-native plants by not using natural materials (e.g., straw) for on-site erosion control. If natural materials must be used, the natural material would be certified weed and weed-seed free. Herbicides not toxic to listed species that may be in the area can be used for non-native vegetation control. Application of herbicides will follow federal guidelines and can be used according to and in accordance with label directions.
5. CBP will ensure that all construction will follow DHS *Directive 025-01* for Sustainable Practices for Environmental, Energy, and Transportation Management.
6. CBP will place drip pans under parked equipment and establish containment zones when refueling vehicles or equipment.

4.2 SOILS

1. Clearly demarcate the perimeter of all new areas to be disturbed using flagging or temporary construction fencing. Do not allow any disturbance outside that perimeter.
2. The area of disturbance will be minimized by limiting deliveries of materials and equipment to only those needed for effective project implementation.
3. Within the designated disturbance area, grading or topsoil removal will be limited to areas where this activity is needed to provide the ground conditions necessary for construction or maintenance activities.
4. Rehabilitation will include revegetating or the distribution of organic and geological materials (i.e., boulders and rocks) over the disturbed area to reduce erosion while allowing the area to naturally vegetate.

4.3 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

1. Materials used for on-site erosion control will be free of non-native plant seeds and other plant parts to limit potential for infestation.
2. Identify by its source location any fill material, sandbags, hay bales, and mulch brought in from outside the project area. These materials will be free of non-native plant seeds and other plant parts to limit potential for infestation.
3. Native seeds or plants will be used to revegetate temporarily disturbed areas.
4. Obtain materials such as gravel, topsoil, or fill from existing developed or previously used sources that are compatible with the project area and are from legally permitted sites. Do not use materials from undisturbed areas adjacent to the project area.
5. To prevent entrapment of wildlife species, ensure that excavated, steep-walled holes or trenches are either completely covered by plywood or metal caps at the close of each workday, or provided with one or more escape ramps (at no greater than 1,000-foot intervals and sloped less than 45 degrees) constructed of earthen fill or wooden planks.
6. Each morning, before the start of construction or maintenance activities, and before such holes or trenches are filled, ensure they are thoroughly inspected for trapped animals. Ensure that any animals discovered are allowed to escape voluntarily (by escape ramps or temporary structures), without harassment, and before construction activities resume, or are removed from the trench or hole by a qualified person and allowed to escape unimpeded.
7. The MBTA (16 U.S.C. 703-712, [1918, as amended 1936, 1960, 1968, 1969, 1974, 1978, 1986 and 1989]) requires that federal agencies coordinate with the USFWS if a construction activity would result in the take of a migratory bird. If construction or

clearing activities are scheduled during nesting season (March 15 through September 15) within potential nesting habitats, surveys will be performed to identify active nests. In the case that an active nest is detected, a buffer of vegetation (≥ 100 feet) will be established around the nest until young have fledged or the nest is abandoned.

If construction activities will result in the take of a migratory bird, then coordination with the USFWS and TPWD will be required and applicable permits would be obtained prior to construction or clearing activities. Other mitigation measures that would be considered are to install visual markers on any guy wires used, and to schedule all construction activities outside of the nesting season, negating the requirement for nesting bird surveys.

8. CBP will not, for any length of time, permit any pets inside the project area or adjacent native habitats. This BMP does not pertain to law enforcement animals.

4.4 CULTURAL RESOURCES

3. In the event that unanticipated archaeological resources are discovered during construction or any other project-related activities, or should known archaeological resources be inadvertently affected in a manner that was not anticipated, the project proponent or contractor shall immediately halt all activities in the immediate area of the discovery and take steps to stabilize and protect the discovered resource until it can be evaluated by a qualified archaeologist.
4. In the event that human remains are inadvertently discovered all ground-disturbing activity would cease immediately. The Project Manager would immediately notify CBP. CBP would notify state police within 24 hours of the discovery and follow their directions for securing the site pending examination of a medical examiner/coroner. Law enforcement and the coroner would determine whether or not the discovery constitutes a crime scene. CBP would coordinate with the state police and the coroner regarding where construction activities can resume. No work may proceed without the written authorization of CBP. CBP would notify the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the Texas Historical Commission or Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, any impacted Indian Tribe, and any impacted federal agency of the discovery in writing within two business days. NAGPRA would be followed if the discovery is determined to be of Native American origin. CBP's established standard operating procedures for inadvertent discoveries would be adhered to in all cases.

4.5 AIR QUALITY

1. Soil watering will be utilized to minimize airborne particulate matter created during construction activities. Bare ground may be covered with hay or straw to lessen wind erosion during the time between Air Branch facility construction and the revegetation of temporary impact areas with a mixture of native plant seeds or nursery plantings (or both). All construction equipment and vehicles will be kept in good operating condition to minimize exhaust emissions.

4.6 WATER RESOURCES

1. Wastewater is to be stored in closed containers on-site until removed for disposal. Wastewater is water used for project purposes that is contaminated with construction materials or from cleaning equipment and thus carries oils or other toxic materials or other contaminants as defined by federal or state regulations.
2. Avoid contamination of ground and surface waters by collecting concrete wash water in open containers and disposing of it off-site.
3. Avoid contaminating natural aquatic and wetland systems with runoff by limiting all equipment maintenance, staging, and laydown and dispensing hazardous liquids, such as fuel and oil, to designated upland areas.
4. Cease work during heavy rains and do not resume work until conditions are suitable for the movement of equipment and materials.
5. Erosion control measures and appropriate BMPs, as required and promulgated through a site-specific SWPPP and engineering designs, will be implemented before, during, and after soil-disturbing activities.
6. Areas with highly erodible soils will be given special consideration when preparing the SWPPP to ensure incorporation of various erosion control techniques, such as straw bales, silt fencing, aggregate materials, wetting compounds, and rehabilitation, where possible, to decrease erosion.
7. All construction and maintenance contractors and personnel will review the CBP-approved spill protection plan and implement it during construction and maintenance activities.
8. Wastewater from pressure washing must be collected. A ground pit or sump can be used to collect the wastewater. Wastewater from pressure washing must not be discharged into any surface water.
9. If soaps or detergents are used, the wastewater and solids must be pumped or cleaned out and disposed of in an approved facility. If no soaps or detergents are used, the wastewater must first be filtered or screened to remove solids before being allowed to flow off-site. Detergents and cleaning solutions must not be sprayed over or discharged into surface waters.

4.7 NOISE

1. Avoid noise impacts during the night by conducting construction and maintenance activities during daylight hours only.

2. All OSHA requirements will be followed. To lessen noise impacts on the local wildlife communities, construction will only occur during daylight hours. All motor vehicles will be properly maintained to reduce the potential for vehicle-related noise.

4.8 SOLID AND HAZARDOUS WASTES

9. BMPs will be implemented as standard operating procedures during all construction activities, and will include proper handling, storage, and/or disposal of hazardous and/or regulated materials. To minimize potential impacts from hazardous and regulated materials, all fuels, waste oils, and solvents will be collected and stored in tanks or drums within a secondary containment system that consists of an impervious floor and bermed sidewalls capable of containing the volume of the largest container stored therein. The refueling of machinery will be completed in accordance with accepted industry and regulatory guidelines, and all vehicles will have drip pans during storage to contain minor spills and drips. Although it is unlikely that a major spill would occur, any spill of reportable quantities will be contained immediately within an earthen dike, and the application of an absorbent (e.g., granular, pillow, sock) will be used to absorb and contain the spill.
10. CBP will contain non-hazardous waste materials and other discarded materials, such as construction waste, until removed from the construction and maintenance sites. This will assist in keeping the project area and surroundings free of litter and reduce the amount of disturbed area needed for waste storage.
11. CBP will minimize site disturbance and avoid attracting predators by promptly removing waste materials, wrappers, and debris from the site. Any waste that must remain more than 12 hours should be properly stored until disposal.
12. All waste oil and solvents will be recycled. All non-recyclable hazardous and regulated wastes will be collected, characterized, labeled, stored, transported, and disposed of in accordance with all applicable federal, state, and local regulations, including proper waste manifesting procedures.
13. Solid waste receptacles will be maintained at the project site. Non-hazardous solid waste (trash and waste construction materials) will be collected and deposited in on-site receptacles. Solid waste will be collected and disposed of by a local waste disposal contractor.
14. Disposal of used batteries or other small quantities of hazardous waste will be handled, managed, maintained, stored, and disposed of in accordance with applicable federal and state rules and regulations for the management, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials, hazardous waste, and universal waste. Additionally, to the extent practicable, all batteries will be recycled locally.
15. All rainwater collected in secondary containment will be pumped out, and secondary containment will have netting to minimize exposure to wildlife.

16. A properly licensed and certified hazardous waste disposal contractor will be used for hazardous waste disposal, and manifests will be traced to final destinations to ensure proper disposal is accomplished.

4.9 ROADWAYS AND TRAFFIC

Construction vehicles will travel and equipment will be transported on established roads with proper flagging and safety precautions.

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6.0 ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AADT	Annual average daily traffic
ACS	U.S. Census American Community Survey
AMO	Air and Marine Operations
ANSI	American National Standards Institute
AOR	Area of Responsibility
APE	Area of Potential Effects
ARPA	Archaeological Resources Protection Act
ASTM	American Society for Testing and Materials
BMP	Best Management Practice
CAA	Clean Air Act
CBP	U.S. Customs and Border Protection
CEQ	Council on Environmental Quality
CFC	Chlorofluorocarbons
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CH ₄	Methane
CO ₂	Carbon Dioxide
CO	Carbon Monoxide
CWA	Clean Water Act
dB	Decibel
dBA	A-weighted decibel
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
DNL	Day-night average sound level
DOI	U.S. Department of the Interior
EA	Environmental Assessment
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EM	Electromagnetic
EO	Executive Order
ESA	Endangered Species Act
FAA	Federal Aviation Administration
FCC	Federal Communications Commission
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FONSI	Finding of No Significant Impact
ft ²	Square Feet
GHG	Greenhouse Gases
GSRC	Gulf South Research Corporation
HFC	Hydrofluorocarbons
IEEE	Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers
MBTA	Migratory Bird Treaty Act
MPE	Maximum Permissible Exposure
N ₂ O	Nitrous oxide
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NAGPRA	Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act
NCRP	National Council on Radiation Protection and Measurements

NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
NO ₂	Nitrogen Dioxide
NOA	Notice of Availability
NPS	National Park Service
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
NTIA	National Telecommunications and Information Administration
O ₃	Ozone
OSHA	Occupational, Safety, and Health Administration
OTHM	Official Texas Historical Marker
PM-2.5	Particulate Matter less than 2.5 microns
PM-10	Particulate matter less than 10 microns
RF	Radio Frequency
RGV	Rio Grande Valley
ROI	Region of Influence
RVSS	Remote Video Surveillance System
SO ₂	Sulfur Dioxide
SPCCP	Spill Prevention, Control and Countermeasure Plan
SWPPP	Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan
TCEQ	Texas Commission on Environmental Quality
TCP	Traditional Cultural Property
THC	Texas Historical Commission
TPWD	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
TWDB	Texas Water Development Board
TxDOT	Texas Department of Transportation
U.S.	United States
USACE	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
USBP	U.S. Border Patrol
USBR	U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
USDA	U.S. Department of Agriculture
USEPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
USFS	U.S. Forest Service
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

**APPENDIX A
CORRESPONDENCE**

**THE PROPOSED LARED AIR BRANCH FACILITY
LAREDO, TEXAS,
LAREDO SECTOR, U.S. CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION
DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY**

**Distribution List
Agency Coordination Letters**

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TEXAS

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LOCAL

The Honorable Tano E. Tijerina
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Marco Gutierrez
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Peggy Rudd
Director and Librarian
Texas State Library and Archives Commission, State Publications Depository Program
P.O. Box 12927
Austin, TX 78711-2927

Re: Cultural Resources Survey of 13 Acres at the Laredo International Airport for the Proposed U.S. Customs and Border Protection Laredo Air Unit, Webb County, Texas

Dear Peggy Rudd:

Please find enclosed the final cultural resources management report titled *Cultural Resources Survey of 13 Acres at the Laredo International Airport for the Proposed U.S. Customs and Border Protection Laredo Air Unit, Webb County, Texas*. The report does not include archaeological site location information and is for the public. The report outlines the results of archaeological and aboveground resources surveys of the new Laredo Air Unit project area located in Webb County. The surveys were conducted by Gulf South Research Corporation (GSRC) for the U.S. Customs and Border Protection under Contract Number GS10F0058K, Task Order 70B01C19F00001360 - Work Order 20-01. This work was conducted under Texas Antiquities Permit Number 8944. In accordance with Texas Administrative Code, Title 13, Part 2, Chapter 26, this report is being distributed to the Texas State Library and Archives Commission, State Publications Depository Program, and 11 other university-based libraries and archaeological research institutions around the State of Texas. If you have any questions about the reports or need any additional copies or information please contact Mr. John Lindemuth, Principal Investigator, GSRC, by phone at (225) 757-8088 or by email at johnl@gsrcorp.com.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "John Lindemuth", with a long, sweeping underline.

John Lindemuth
Principal Investigator

Enclosures: 1 bound final public report without site location information



Brian Roberts
Director
Texas Archeological Research Laboratory at the University of Texas
10100 Burnet Road
J.J. Pickle Research Campus, Bldg. 5, Rm. 4
Austin, TX 78758-4445

Re: Cultural Resources Survey of 13 Acres at the Laredo International Airport for the Proposed U.S. Customs and Border Protection Laredo Air Unit, Webb County, Texas

Dear Brian Roberts:

Please find enclosed the final cultural resources management report titled *Cultural Resources Survey of 13 Acres at the Laredo International Airport for the Proposed U.S. Customs and Border Protection Laredo Air Unit, Webb County, Texas*. The report does not include archaeological site location information and is for the public. The report outlines the results of archaeological and aboveground resources surveys of the new Laredo Air Unit project area located in Webb County. The surveys were conducted by Gulf South Research Corporation (GSRC) for the U.S. Customs and Border Protection under Contract Number GS10F0058K, Task Order 70B01C19F00001360 - Work Order 20-01. This work was conducted under Texas Antiquities Permit Number 8944. In accordance with Texas Administrative Code, Title 13, Part 2, Chapter 26, this report is being distributed to the Texas State Library and Archives Commission, State Publications Depository Program, and 11 other university-based libraries and archaeological research institutions around the State of Texas. If you have any questions about the reports or need any additional copies or information please contact Mr. John Lindemuth, Principal Investigator, GSRC, by phone at (225) 757-8088 or by email at johnl@gsrcorp.com.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "John Lindemuth". The signature is stylized with a long, sweeping underline.

John Lindemuth
Principal Investigator

Enclosures: 1 bound final public report without site location information



Jon Lohse
Director
Center for Archeological Studies at Texas State University
Department of Anthropology Rm. 120
Texas State University-San Marcos
601 University Drive
San Marcos, TX 78666

Re: Cultural Resources Survey of 13 Acres at the Laredo International Airport for the Proposed U.S. Customs and Border Protection Laredo Air Unit, Webb County, Texas

Dear Jon Lohse:

Please find enclosed the final cultural resources management report titled *Cultural Resources Survey of 13 Acres at the Laredo International Airport for the Proposed U.S. Customs and Border Protection Laredo Air Unit, Webb County, Texas*. The report does not include archaeological site location information and is for the public. The report outlines the results of archaeological and aboveground resources surveys of the new Laredo Air Unit project area located in Webb County. The surveys were conducted by Gulf South Research Corporation (GSRC) for the U.S. Customs and Border Protection under Contract Number GS10F0058K, Task Order 70B01C19F00001360 - Work Order 20-01. This work was conducted under Texas Antiquities Permit Number 8944. In accordance with Texas Administrative Code, Title 13, Part 2, Chapter 26, this report is being distributed to the Texas State Library and Archives Commission, State Publications Depository Program, and 11 other university-based libraries and archaeological research institutions around the State of Texas. If you have any questions about the reports or need any additional copies or information please contact Mr. John Lindemuth, Principal Investigator, GSRC, by phone at (225) 757-8088 or by email at johnl@gsrcorp.com.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "John Lindemuth", with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

John Lindemuth
Principal Investigator

Enclosures: 1 bound final public report without site location information



Steve Tomka
Director
Center for Archeological Research at the University of Texas, San Antonio
One UTSA Circle
San Antonio, TX 78249

Re: Cultural Resources Survey of 13 Acres at the Laredo International Airport for the Proposed U.S. Customs and Border Protection Laredo Air Unit, Webb County, Texas

Dear Steve Tomka:

Please find enclosed the final cultural resources management report titled *Cultural Resources Survey of 13 Acres at the Laredo International Airport for the Proposed U.S. Customs and Border Protection Laredo Air Unit, Webb County, Texas*. The report does not include archaeological site location information and is for the public. The report outlines the results of archaeological and aboveground resources surveys of the new Laredo Air Unit project area located in Webb County. The surveys were conducted by Gulf South Research Corporation (GSRC) for the U.S. Customs and Border Protection under Contract Number GS10F0058K, Task Order 70B01C19F00001360 - Work Order 20-01. This work was conducted under Texas Antiquities Permit Number 8944. In accordance with Texas Administrative Code, Title 13, Part 2, Chapter 26, this report is being distributed to the Texas State Library and Archives Commission, State Publications Depository Program, and 11 other university-based libraries and archaeological research institutions around the State of Texas. If you have any questions about the reports or need any additional copies or information please contact Mr. John Lindemuth, Principal Investigator, GSRC, by phone at (225) 757-8088 or by email at johnl@gsrcorp.com.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "John Lindemuth", with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

John Lindemuth
Principal Investigator

Enclosures: 1 bound final public report without site location information



Sara Padelford
Director
Ralph W. Steen Library, Stephen F. Austin State University
1936 North Street
Nacogdoches, TX 75962

Re: Cultural Resources Survey of 13 Acres at the Laredo International Airport for the Proposed U.S. Customs and Border Protection Laredo Air Unit, Webb County, Texas

Dear Sara Padelford:

Please find enclosed the final cultural resources management report titled *Cultural Resources Survey of 13 Acres at the Laredo International Airport for the Proposed U.S. Customs and Border Protection Laredo Air Unit, Webb County, Texas*. The report does not include archaeological site location information and is for the public. The report outlines the results of archaeological and aboveground resources surveys of the new Laredo Air Unit project area located in Webb County. The surveys were conducted by Gulf South Research Corporation (GSRC) for the U.S. Customs and Border Protection under Contract Number GS10F0058K, Task Order 70B01C19F00001360 - Work Order 20-01. This work was conducted under Texas Antiquities Permit Number 8944. In accordance with Texas Administrative Code, Title 13, Part 2, Chapter 26, this report is being distributed to the Texas State Library and Archives Commission, State Publications Depository Program, and 11 other university-based libraries and archaeological research institutions around the State of Texas. If you have any questions about the reports or need any additional copies or information please contact Mr. John Lindemuth, Principal Investigator, GSRC, by phone at (225) 757-8088 or by email at johnl@gsrcorp.com.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "John Lindemuth", with a long, sweeping underline.

John Lindemuth
Principal Investigator

Enclosures: 1 bound final public report without site location information



Tom Rohrig
Associate Librarian
Texas Tech Universtiy Library
18th and Boston
P.O. Box 40002
Lubbock, TX 79409-0002

Re: Cultural Resources Survey of 13 Acres at the Laredo International Airport for the Proposed U.S. Customs and Border Protection Laredo Air Unit, Webb County, Texas

Dear Tom Rohrig:

Please find enclosed the final cultural resources management report titled *Cultural Resources Survey of 13 Acres at the Laredo International Airport for the Proposed U.S. Customs and Border Protection Laredo Air Unit, Webb County, Texas*. The report does not include archaeological site location information and is for the public. The report outlines the results of archaeological and aboveground resources surveys of the new Laredo Air Unit project area located in Webb County. The surveys were conducted by Gulf South Research Corporation (GSRC) for the U.S. Customs and Border Protection under Contract Number GS10F0058K, Task Order 70B01C19F00001360 - Work Order 20-01. This work was conducted under Texas Antiquities Permit Number 8944. In accordance with Texas Administrative Code, Title 13, Part 2, Chapter 26, this report is being distributed to the Texas State Library and Archives Commission, State Publications Depository Program, and 11 other university-based libraries and archaeological research institutions around the State of Texas. If you have any questions about the reports or need any additional copies or information please contact Mr. John Lindemuth, Principal Investigator, GSRC, by phone at (225) 757-8088 or by email at johnl@gsrcorp.com.

Sincerely,

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John Lindemuth
Principal Investigator

Enclosures: 1 bound final public report without site location information



Laura Sare
Government Information Librarian
University Libraries, Texas A&M University
5000 TAMU
College Station, TX 77843-5000

Re: Cultural Resources Survey of 13 Acres at the Laredo International Airport for the Proposed U.S. Customs and Border Protection Laredo Air Unit, Webb County, Texas

Dear Laura Sare:

Please find enclosed the final cultural resources management report titled *Cultural Resources Survey of 13 Acres at the Laredo International Airport for the Proposed U.S. Customs and Border Protection Laredo Air Unit, Webb County, Texas*. The report does not include archaeological site location information and is for the public. The report outlines the results of archaeological and aboveground resources surveys of the new Laredo Air Unit project area located in Webb County. The surveys were conducted by Gulf South Research Corporation (GSRC) for the U.S. Customs and Border Protection under Contract Number GS10F0058K, Task Order 70B01C19F00001360 - Work Order 20-01. This work was conducted under Texas Antiquities Permit Number 8944. In accordance with Texas Administrative Code, Title 13, Part 2, Chapter 26, this report is being distributed to the Texas State Library and Archives Commission, State Publications Depository Program, and 11 other university-based libraries and archaeological research institutions around the State of Texas. If you have any questions about the reports or need any additional copies or information please contact Mr. John Lindemuth, Principal Investigator, GSRC, by phone at (225) 757-8088 or by email at johnl@gsrcorp.com.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "John Lindemuth", with a long, sweeping underline.

John Lindemuth
Principal Investigator

Enclosures: 1 bound final public report without site location information



Robert Stakes
Library Director
University of Texas at El Paso Library
500 West University Avenue
El Paso, TX 79968-0583

Re: Cultural Resources Survey of 13 Acres at the Laredo International Airport for the Proposed U.S. Customs and Border Protection Laredo Air Unit, Webb County, Texas

Dear Robert Stakes:

Please find enclosed the final cultural resources management report titled *Cultural Resources Survey of 13 Acres at the Laredo International Airport for the Proposed U.S. Customs and Border Protection Laredo Air Unit, Webb County, Texas*. The report does not include archaeological site location information and is for the public. The report outlines the results of archaeological and aboveground resources surveys of the new Laredo Air Unit project area located in Webb County. The surveys were conducted by Gulf South Research Corporation (GSRC) for the U.S. Customs and Border Protection under Contract Number GS10F0058K, Task Order 70B01C19F00001360 - Work Order 20-01. This work was conducted under Texas Antiquities Permit Number 8944. In accordance with Texas Administrative Code, Title 13, Part 2, Chapter 26, this report is being distributed to the Texas State Library and Archives Commission, State Publications Depository Program, and 11 other university-based libraries and archaeological research institutions around the State of Texas. If you have any questions about the reports or need any additional copies or information please contact Mr. John Lindemuth, Principal Investigator, GSRC, by phone at (225) 757-8088 or by email at johnl@gsrcorp.com.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "John Lindemuth", with a long, sweeping underline.

John Lindemuth
Principal Investigator

Enclosures: 1 bound final public report without site location information



Roberta Schaafsma
Director and J.S. Bridwell Endowed Librarian
Southern Methodist University Library
PO Box 750135
Dallas, TX 75275-0476

Re: Cultural Resources Survey of 13 Acres at the Laredo International Airport for the Proposed U.S. Customs and Border Protection Laredo Air Unit, Webb County, Texas

Dear Roberta Schaafsma:

Please find enclosed the final cultural resources management report titled *Cultural Resources Survey of 13 Acres at the Laredo International Airport for the Proposed U.S. Customs and Border Protection Laredo Air Unit, Webb County, Texas*. The report does not include archaeological site location information and is for the public. The report outlines the results of archaeological and aboveground resources surveys of the new Laredo Air Unit project area located in Webb County. The surveys were conducted by Gulf South Research Corporation (GSRC) for the U.S. Customs and Border Protection under Contract Number GS10F0058K, Task Order 70B01C19F00001360 - Work Order 20-01. This work was conducted under Texas Antiquities Permit Number 8944. In accordance with Texas Administrative Code, Title 13, Part 2, Chapter 26, this report is being distributed to the Texas State Library and Archives Commission, State Publications Depository Program, and 11 other university-based libraries and archaeological research institutions around the State of Texas. If you have any questions about the reports or need any additional copies or information please contact Mr. John Lindemuth, Principal Investigator, GSRC, by phone at (225) 757-8088 or by email at johnl@gsrcorp.com.

Sincerely,

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John Lindemuth
Principal Investigator

Enclosures: 1 bound final public report without site location information



Don E. Carleton
Executive Director
Dolph Briscoe Center for American History
2313 Red River, SRH 2.101
Austin, TX 78705

Re: Cultural Resources Survey of 13 Acres at the Laredo International Airport for the Proposed U.S. Customs and Border Protection Laredo Air Unit, Webb County, Texas

Dear Don E. Carleton:

Please find enclosed the final cultural resources management report titled *Cultural Resources Survey of 13 Acres at the Laredo International Airport for the Proposed U.S. Customs and Border Protection Laredo Air Unit, Webb County, Texas*. The report does not include archaeological site location information and is for the public. The report outlines the results of archaeological and aboveground resources surveys of the new Laredo Air Unit project area located in Webb County. The surveys were conducted by Gulf South Research Corporation (GSRC) for the U.S. Customs and Border Protection under Contract Number GS10F0058K, Task Order 70B01C19F00001360 - Work Order 20-01. This work was conducted under Texas Antiquities Permit Number 8944. In accordance with Texas Administrative Code, Title 13, Part 2, Chapter 26, this report is being distributed to the Texas State Library and Archives Commission, State Publications Depository Program, and 11 other university-based libraries and archaeological research institutions around the State of Texas. If you have any questions about the reports or need any additional copies or information please contact Mr. John Lindemuth, Principal Investigator, GSRC, by phone at (225) 757-8088 or by email at johnl@gsrcorp.com.

Sincerely,

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John Lindemuth
Principal Investigator

Enclosures: 1 bound final public report without site location information



Shawna Kennedy-Witthar
Director of Information and Library Resources
Cornette Library, West Texas A&M University
P.O. Box 60748
Canyon, TX 79016-0001

Re: Cultural Resources Survey of 13 Acres at the Laredo International Airport for the Proposed U.S. Customs and Border Protection Laredo Air Unit, Webb County, Texas

Dear Shawna Kennedy-Witthar:

Please find enclosed the final cultural resources management report titled *Cultural Resources Survey of 13 Acres at the Laredo International Airport for the Proposed U.S. Customs and Border Protection Laredo Air Unit, Webb County, Texas*. The report does not include archaeological site location information and is for the public. The report outlines the results of archaeological and aboveground resources surveys of the new Laredo Air Unit project area located in Webb County. The surveys were conducted by Gulf South Research Corporation (GSRC) for the U.S. Customs and Border Protection under Contract Number GS10F0058K, Task Order 70B01C19F00001360 - Work Order 20-01. This work was conducted under Texas Antiquities Permit Number 8944. In accordance with Texas Administrative Code, Title 13, Part 2, Chapter 26, this report is being distributed to the Texas State Library and Archives Commission, State Publications Depository Program, and 11 other university-based libraries and archaeological research institutions around the State of Texas. If you have any questions about the reports or need any additional copies or information please contact Mr. John Lindemuth, Principal Investigator, GSRC, by phone at (225) 757-8088 or by email at johnl@gsrcorp.com.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "John Lindemuth", with a long, sweeping underline.

John Lindemuth
Principal Investigator

Enclosures: 1 bound final public report without site location information



Andy Cloud
Director
Center of Big Bend Studies
Box C-71
Alpine, TX 79832

Re: Cultural Resources Survey of 13 Acres at the Laredo International Airport for the Proposed U.S. Customs and Border Protection Laredo Air Unit, Webb County, Texas

Dear Andy Cloud:

Please find enclosed the final cultural resources management report titled *Cultural Resources Survey of 13 Acres at the Laredo International Airport for the Proposed U.S. Customs and Border Protection Laredo Air Unit, Webb County, Texas*. The report does not include archaeological site location information and is for the public. The report outlines the results of archaeological and aboveground resources surveys of the new Laredo Air Unit project area located in Webb County. The surveys were conducted by Gulf South Research Corporation (GSRC) for the U.S. Customs and Border Protection under Contract Number GS10F0058K, Task Order 70B01C19F00001360 - Work Order 20-01. This work was conducted under Texas Antiquities Permit Number 8944. In accordance with Texas Administrative Code, Title 13, Part 2, Chapter 26, this report is being distributed to the Texas State Library and Archives Commission, State Publications Depository Program, and 11 other university-based libraries and archaeological research institutions around the State of Texas. If you have any questions about the reports or need any additional copies or information please contact Mr. John Lindemuth, Principal Investigator, GSRC, by phone at (225) 757-8088 or by email at johnl@gsrcorp.com.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "John Lindemuth", with a long, sweeping underline.

John Lindemuth
Principal Investigator

Enclosures: 1 bound final public report without site location information



February 25, 2021

Alejandro Labrada
Laredo International Airport, Assistant Airport Director
5210 Bob Bullock Loop
Laredo, TX 78041

RE: *Proposed Laredo Air Branch Facility, Air and Marine Operations, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security*

Dear Mr. Labrada,

The Border Patrol & Air and Marine (BPAM) Program Management Office (PMO), within Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) plans to construct a new Air Branch Facility on an approximately 13-acre parcel of land at the Laredo International Airport in Laredo Texas (Figure 1). The Proposed Action would consist of the construction, operation, and maintenance of a new Air Branch facility, including an administrative operational space, hangar space, aircraft and vehicle parking, and additional site improvements. The new Laredo Air Branch facility in Laredo, Texas would alleviate overcrowded conditions and allow room for current and planned future growth in personnel and additional hangar space would accommodate future operations. The new facilities are being designed to meet CBP facility standards.

The proposed Laredo Air Branch facility would include the following components (Figure 2):

- 16,000 ft² administrative operations building
- 56,000 ft² maintenance hangar facility (includes 24,000 ft² maintenance hangar and 32,000 ft² of support space)
- 17,500 ft² storage hangar facility (includes a 12,000 ft² storage hangar and 2,500 ft² of support space)
- An approximately 62,000 ft² aircraft parking apron and ramp
- One (1) exterior aircraft wash/rinse rack
- Hazardous material storage area
- Parking area to accommodate 10 government-owned vehicles, 75 agent vehicles, five (5) visitor vehicles, one (1) oversized vehicle, one (1) fuel truck, and three (3) fuel trailers
- Storage canopy
- Enhanced lighting
- Signage
- Security fencing
- Sidewalks and curbs
- Storm drainage
- Additional site improvements

Mr. Labrada

Page 2

CBP is gathering data and input from state and local governmental agencies, departments, and bureaus that may be affected by or otherwise have an interest in this undertaking. Since your agency or organization may have particular knowledge and expertise regarding potential environmental impacts from CBP's Proposed Action, your input is sought regarding the likely or anticipated environmental effects of this undertaking. Your response should include any state and local restrictions, permitting, or other requirements with which CBP would have to comply during project siting, construction, and operation.

Per DHS Instruction Manual 023-01-001-01, *Implementation of the National Environmental Policy*, we will provide your agency with a copy of the Draft EA for the Proposed Laredo Air Branch facility for your review and comment.

Your prompt attention to this request is appreciated. If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Lauri Regan at (202) 313-1872 or via email at lauri.r.regan@cbp.dhs.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Joseph Zidron". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "J".

Joseph Zidron
Real Estate and Environmental Branch Chief
Border Patrol & Air and Marine PMO
U.S. Customs and Border Protection
24000 Avila Road – Suite 5020
Laguna Niguel, CA 92677

Enclosure(s)



Legend
 Project Boundary

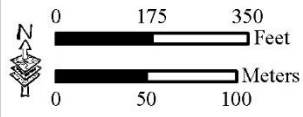
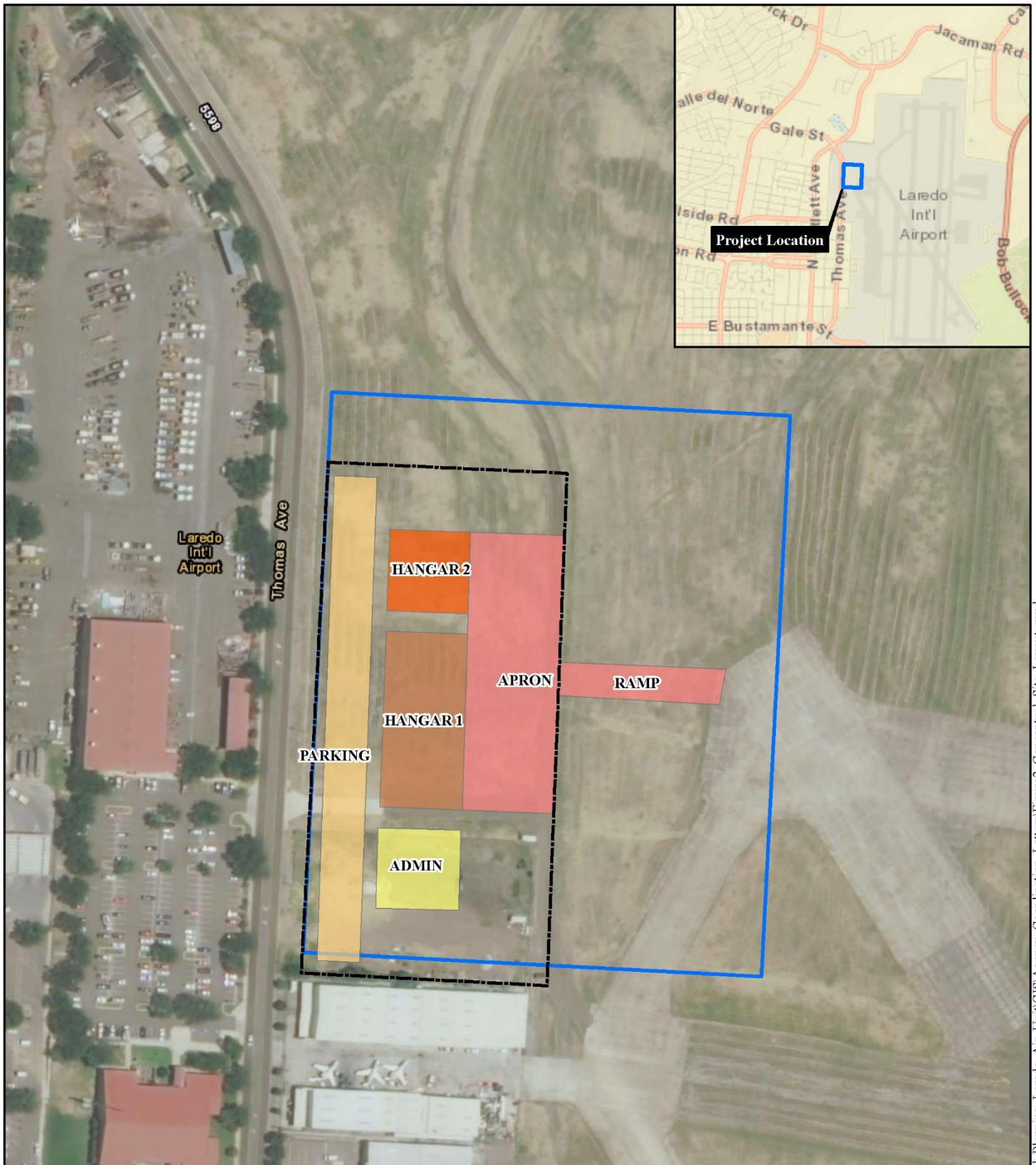


Figure 1. Project Area Map



Legend

- Perimeter Fence
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- Parking

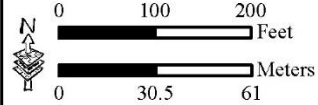


Figure 2. Conceptual Site Layout for the Laredo Air Branch



February 26, 2021

Arthur "Butch" Blazer, President
Mescalero Apache Tribe of the Mescalero Reservation
P.O. Box 227
Mescalero, NM 88340

RE: *Proposed Laredo Air Branch Facility, Air and Marine Operations, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security*

Dear Mr. Blazer,

The Border Patrol & Air and Marine (BPAM) Program Management Office (PMO), within Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) plans to construct a new Air Branch Facility on an approximately 13-acre parcel of land at the Laredo International Airport in Laredo Texas (Figure 1). The Proposed Action would consist of the construction, operation, and maintenance of a new Air Branch facility, including an administrative operational space, hangar space, aircraft and vehicle parking, and additional site improvements. The new Laredo Air Branch facility in Laredo, Texas would alleviate overcrowded conditions and allow room for current and planned future growth in personnel and additional hangar space would accommodate future operations. The new facilities are being designed to meet CBP facility standards.

The proposed Laredo Air Branch facility would include the following components (Figure 2):

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Mr. Blazer

Page 2

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Sincerely,


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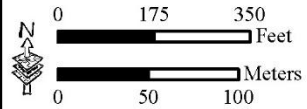
Joseph Zidron
Real Estate and Environmental Branch Chief
Border Patrol & Air and Marine PMO
U.S. Customs and Border Protection
24000 Avila Road – Suite 5020
Laguna Niguel, CA 92677

Enclosure(s)



Legend

 Project Boundary



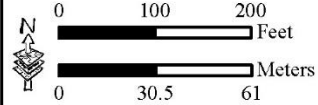
February 2021

Figure 1. Project Area Map



Legend

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- Hangar 1
- Hangar 2
- Parking




February 2021

Figure 2. Conceptual Site Layout for the Laredo Air Branch



February 26, 2021

Bobby Komardley, Chairman
Apache Tribe of Oklahoma
P.O. Box 1330
Anadarko, OK 73005

RE: *Proposed Laredo Air Branch Facility, Air and Marine Operations, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security*

Dear Chairman Komardley,

The Border Patrol & Air and Marine (BPAM) Program Management Office (PMO), within Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) plans to construct a new Air Branch Facility on an approximately 13-acre parcel of land at the Laredo International Airport in Laredo Texas (Figure 1). The Proposed Action would consist of the construction, operation, and maintenance of a new Air Branch facility, including an administrative operational space, hangar space, aircraft and vehicle parking, and additional site improvements. The new Laredo Air Branch facility in Laredo, Texas would alleviate overcrowded conditions and allow room for current and planned future growth in personnel and additional hangar space would accommodate future operations. The new facilities are being designed to meet CBP facility standards.

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Chairman Komardley

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Your prompt attention to this request is appreciated. If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Lauri Regan at (202) 313-1872 or via email at lauri.r.regan@cbp.dhs.gov.

Sincerely,

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Joseph Zidron
Real Estate and Environmental Branch Chief
Border Patrol & Air and Marine PMO
U.S. Customs and Border Protection
24000 Avila Road – Suite 5020
Laguna Niguel, CA 92677

Enclosure(s)



Legend
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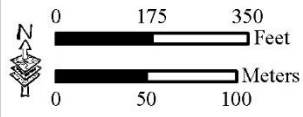
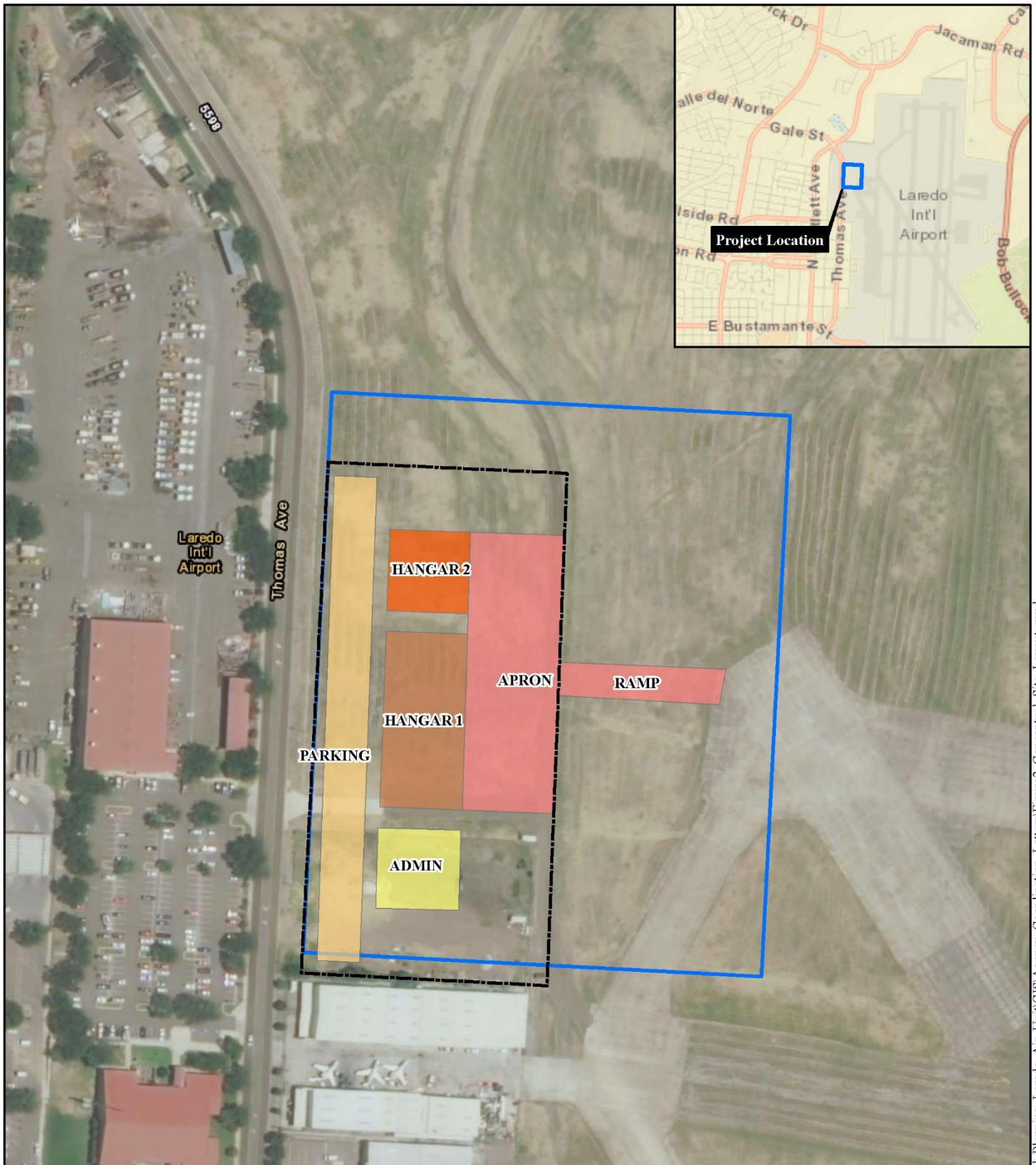


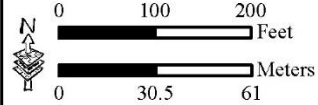
Figure 1. Project Area Map

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Legend

- Perimeter Fence
- Project Boundary
- Admin Building
- Apron
- Hangar 1
- Hangar 2
- Parking




February 2021

Figure 2. Conceptual Site Layout for the Laredo Air Branch



February 25, 2021

Elsy D. Borgstedte, C.M.
Laredo International Airport, Assistant Airport Director
5210 Bob Bullock Loop
Laredo, TX 78041

RE: *Proposed Laredo Air Branch Facility, Air and Marine Operations, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security*

Dear Ms. Borgstedte,

The Border Patrol & Air and Marine (BPAM) Program Management Office (PMO), within Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) plans to construct a new Air Branch Facility on an approximately 13-acre parcel of land at the Laredo International Airport in Laredo Texas (Figure 1). The Proposed Action would consist of the construction, operation, and maintenance of a new Air Branch facility, including an administrative operational space, hangar space, aircraft and vehicle parking, and additional site improvements. The new Laredo Air Branch facility in Laredo, Texas would alleviate overcrowded conditions and allow room for current and planned future growth in personnel and additional hangar space would accommodate future operations. The new facilities are being designed to meet CBP facility standards.

The proposed Laredo Air Branch facility would include the following components (Figure 2):

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Ms. Borgstedte

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Your prompt attention to this request is appreciated. If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Lauri Regan at (202) 313-1872 or via email at lauri.r.regan@cbp.dhs.gov.

Sincerely,

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Joseph Zidron
Real Estate and Environmental Branch Chief
Border Patrol & Air and Marine PMO
U.S. Customs and Border Protection
24000 Avila Road – Suite 5020
Laguna Niguel, CA 92677

Enclosure(s)



Legend
 Project Boundary

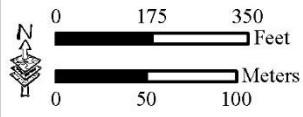


Figure 1. Project Area Map



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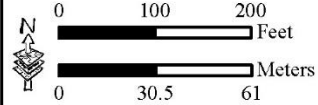


Figure 2. Conceptual Site Layout for the Laredo Air Branch



March 1, 2021

Ernesto Reyes
United States Fish and Wildlife Service
Alamo Ecological Service Sub-Office
3325 Green Jay Road
Alamo, TX 78516

RE: *Proposed Laredo Air Branch Facility, Air and Marine Operations, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security*

Dear Mr. Reyes,

The Border Patrol & Air and Marine (BPAM) Program Management Office (PMO), within Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) plans to construct a new Air Branch Facility on an approximately 13-acre parcel of land at the Laredo International Airport in Laredo Texas (Figure 1). The Proposed Action would consist of the construction, operation, and maintenance of a new Air Branch facility, including an administrative operational space, hangar space, aircraft and vehicle parking, and additional site improvements. The new Laredo Air Branch facility in Laredo, Texas would alleviate overcrowded conditions and allow room for current and planned future growth in personnel and additional hangar space would accommodate future operations. The new facilities are being designed to meet CBP facility standards.

The proposed Laredo Air Branch facility would include the following components (Figure 2):

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Mr. Reyes

Page 2

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Per DHS Instruction Manual 023-01-001-01, *Implementation of the National Environmental Policy*, we will provide your agency with a copy of the Draft EA for the Proposed Laredo Air Branch facility for your review and comment.

Your prompt attention to this request is appreciated. If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Lauri Regan at (202) 313-1872 or via email at lauri.r.regan@cbp.dhs.gov.

Sincerely,

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Joseph Zidron
Real Estate and Environmental Branch Chief
Border Patrol & Air and Marine PMO
U.S. Customs and Border Protection
24000 Avila Road – Suite 5020
Laguna Niguel, CA 92677

Enclosure(s)



Legend
 Project Boundary

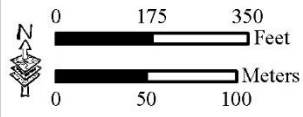
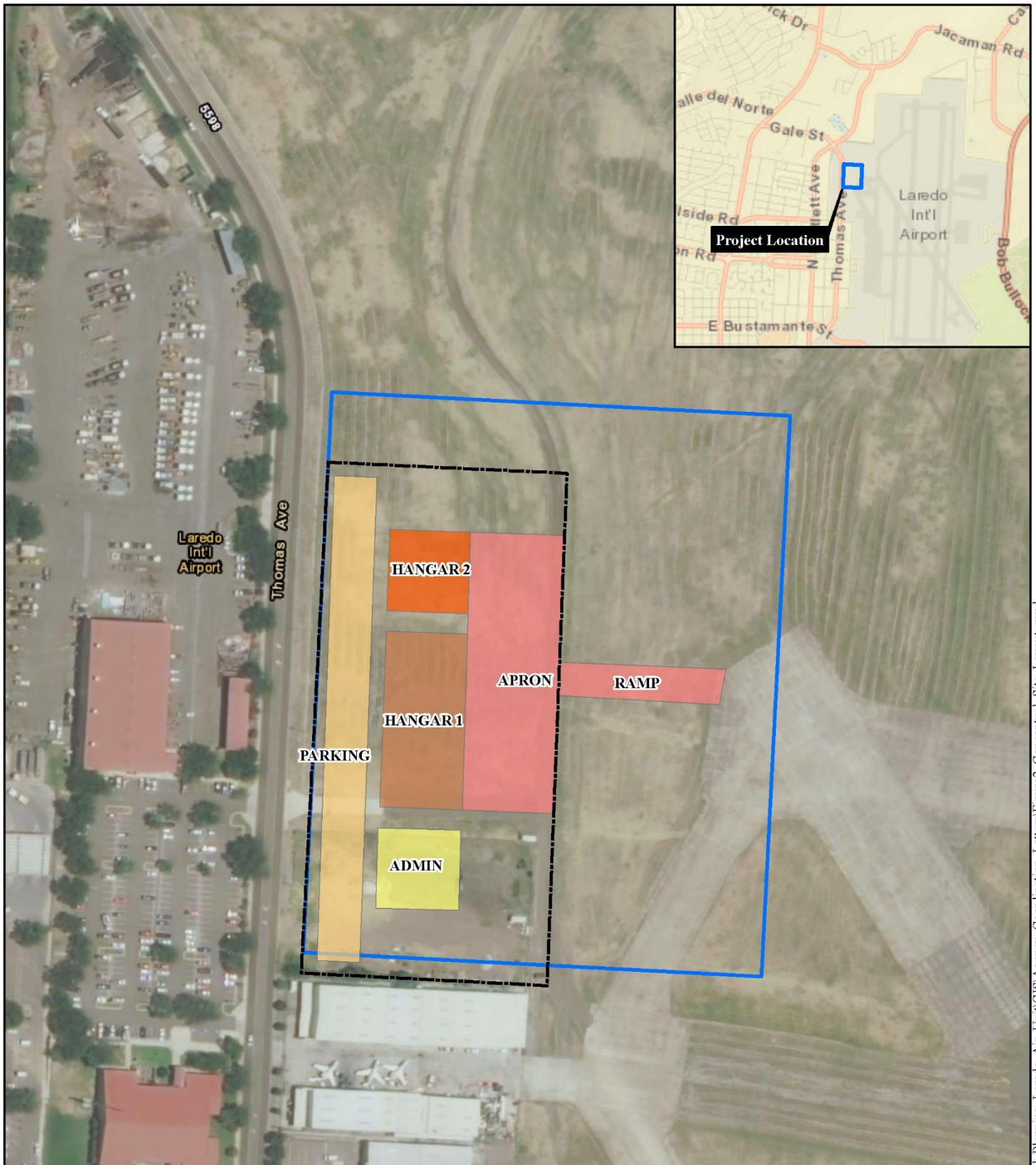
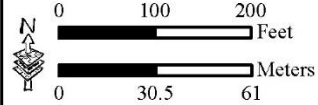


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Legend

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- Parking




February 2021

Figure 2. Conceptual Site Layout for the Laredo Air Branch



February 25, 2021

Flavio A. Garza, Jr., Natural Resource Manager
Natural Resources Conservation Service, USDA
7209 E. Saunders Suite 7
Laredo, TX 78041-9001
956.723.3222, Ext. 3

RE: *Proposed Laredo Air Branch Facility, Air and Marine Operations, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security*

Dear Mr. Garza,

The Border Patrol & Air and Marine (BPAM) Program Management Office (PMO), within Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) plans to construct a new Air Branch Facility on an approximately 13-acre parcel of land at the Laredo International Airport in Laredo Texas (Figure 1). The Proposed Action would consist of the construction, operation, and maintenance of a new Air Branch facility, including an administrative operational space, hangar space, aircraft and vehicle parking, and additional site improvements. The new Laredo Air Branch facility in Laredo, Texas would alleviate overcrowded conditions and allow room for current and planned future growth in personnel and additional hangar space would accommodate future operations. The new facilities are being designed to meet CBP facility standards.

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Mr. Garza

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Sincerely,

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Joseph Zidron
Real Estate and Environmental Branch Chief
Border Patrol & Air and Marine PMO
U.S. Customs and Border Protection
24000 Avila Road – Suite 5020
Laguna Niguel, CA 92677

Enclosure(s)



Legend
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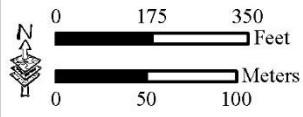


Figure 1. Project Area Map



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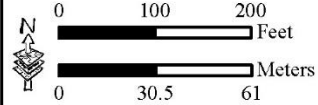


Figure 2. Conceptual Site Layout for the Laredo Air Branch



February 26, 2021

Gary McAdams, THPO
Wichita and Affiliated Tribes
P.O. Box 729
Anadarko, OK 73005

RE: *Proposed Laredo Air Branch Facility, Air and Marine Operations, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security*

Dear Mr. McAdam,

The Border Patrol & Air and Marine (BPAM) Program Management Office (PMO), within Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) plans to construct a new Air Branch Facility on an approximately 13-acre parcel of land at the Laredo International Airport in Laredo Texas (Figure 1). The Proposed Action would consist of the construction, operation, and maintenance of a new Air Branch facility, including an administrative operational space, hangar space, aircraft and vehicle parking, and additional site improvements. The new Laredo Air Branch facility in Laredo, Texas would alleviate overcrowded conditions and allow room for current and planned future growth in personnel and additional hangar space would accommodate future operations. The new facilities are being designed to meet CBP facility standards.

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Mr. McAdams

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Sincerely,

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Joseph Zidron
Real Estate and Environmental Branch Chief
Border Patrol & Air and Marine PMO
U.S. Customs and Border Protection
24000 Avila Road – Suite 5020
Laguna Niguel, CA 92677

Enclosure(s)



Legend
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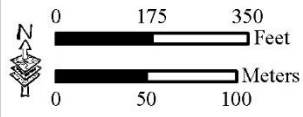
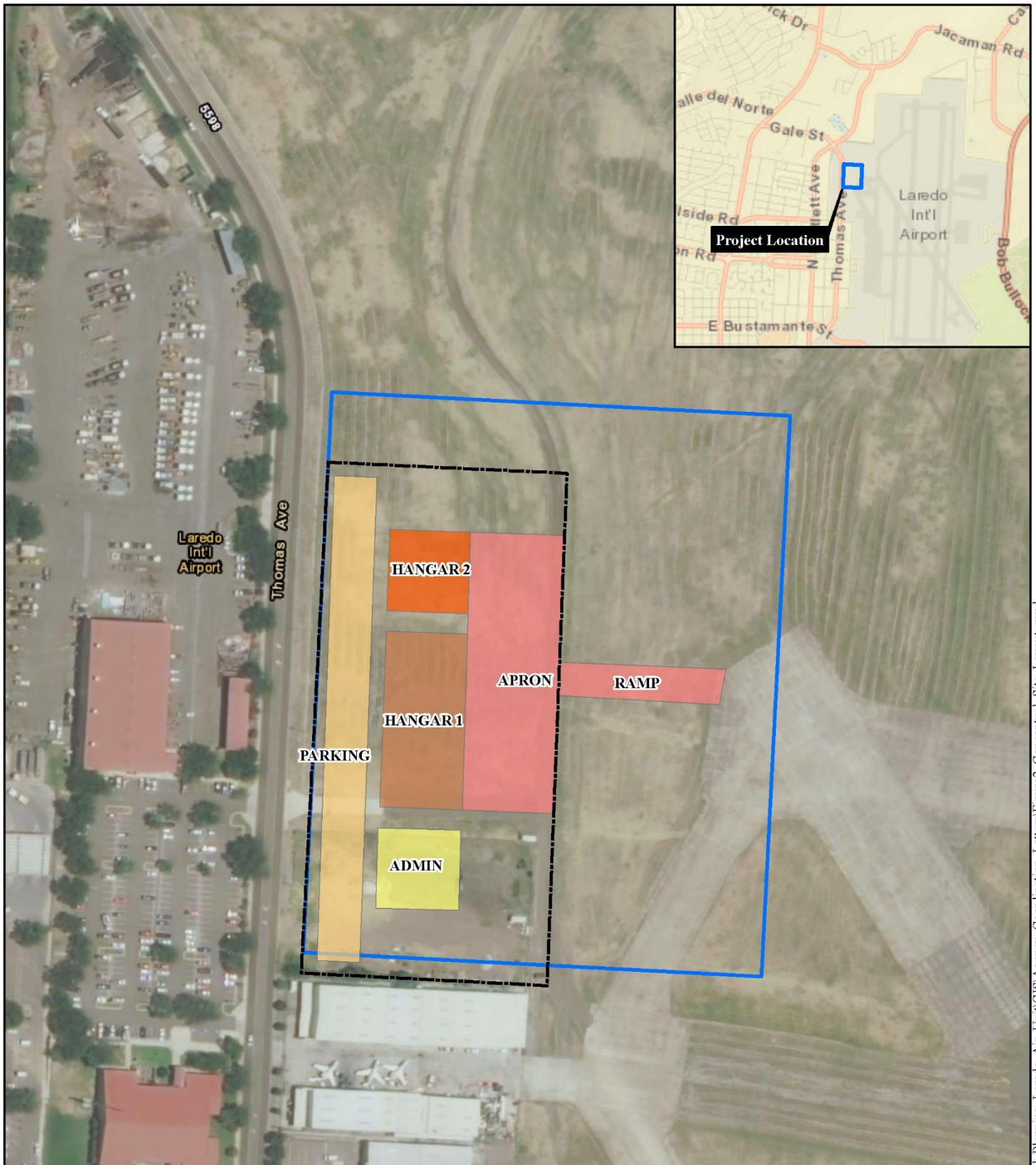


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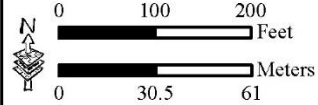


Figure 2. Conceptual Site Layout for the Laredo Air Branch



February 26, 2021

Holly Haughton, Tribal Historic President
Mescalero Apache Tribe of the Mescalero Reservation
P.O. Box 227
Mescalero, NM 88340

RE: *Proposed Laredo Air Branch Facility, Air and Marine Operations, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security*

Dear Ms. Haughton,

The Border Patrol & Air and Marine (BPAM) Program Management Office (PMO), within Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) plans to construct a new Air Branch Facility on an approximately 13-acre parcel of land at the Laredo International Airport in Laredo Texas (Figure 1). The Proposed Action would consist of the construction, operation, and maintenance of a new Air Branch facility, including an administrative operational space, hangar space, aircraft and vehicle parking, and additional site improvements. The new Laredo Air Branch facility in Laredo, Texas would alleviate overcrowded conditions and allow room for current and planned future growth in personnel and additional hangar space would accommodate future operations. The new facilities are being designed to meet CBP facility standards.

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Ms. Haughton

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Your prompt attention to this request is appreciated. If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Lauri Regan at (202) 313-1872 or via email at lauri.r.regan@cbp.dhs.gov.

Sincerely,

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Joseph Zidron
Real Estate and Environmental Branch Chief
Border Patrol & Air and Marine PMO
U.S. Customs and Border Protection
24000 Avila Road – Suite 5020
Laguna Niguel, CA 92677

Enclosure(s)



Legend
 Project Boundary

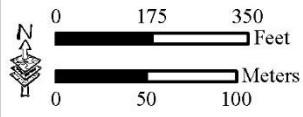
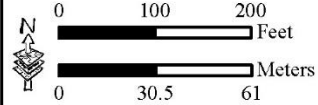


Figure 1. Project Area Map



Legend

- Perimeter Fence
- Project Boundary
- Admin Building
- Apron
- Hangar 1
- Hangar 2
- Parking



February 2021

Figure 2. Conceptual Site Layout for the Laredo Air Branch



February 25, 2021

Jaime A. Garza, Regional Director
Region 16 – Laredo (Webb County)
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality
707 E. Calton Rd, Suite 304
Laredo, TX 78041-3887
956.791.6716

RE: *Proposed Laredo Air Branch Facility, Air and Marine Operations, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security*

Dear Regional Director Garza,

The Border Patrol & Air and Marine (BPAM) Program Management Office (PMO), within Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) plans to construct a new Air Branch Facility on an approximately 13-acre parcel of land at the Laredo International Airport in Laredo Texas (Figure 1). The Proposed Action would consist of the construction, operation, and maintenance of a new Air Branch facility, including an administrative operational space, hangar space, aircraft and vehicle parking, and additional site improvements. The new Laredo Air Branch facility in Laredo, Texas would alleviate overcrowded conditions and allow room for current and planned future growth in personnel and additional hangar space would accommodate future operations. The new facilities are being designed to meet CBP facility standards.

The proposed Laredo Air Branch facility would include the following components (Figure 2):

- 16,000 ft² administrative operations building
- 56,000 ft² maintenance hangar facility (includes 24,000 ft² maintenance hangar and 32,000 ft² of support space)
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Regional Director Garza

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Joseph Zidron
Real Estate and Environmental Branch Chief
Border Patrol & Air and Marine PMO
U.S. Customs and Border Protection
24000 Avila Road – Suite 5020
Laguna Niguel, CA 92677

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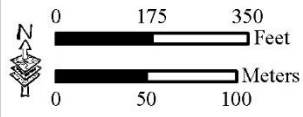
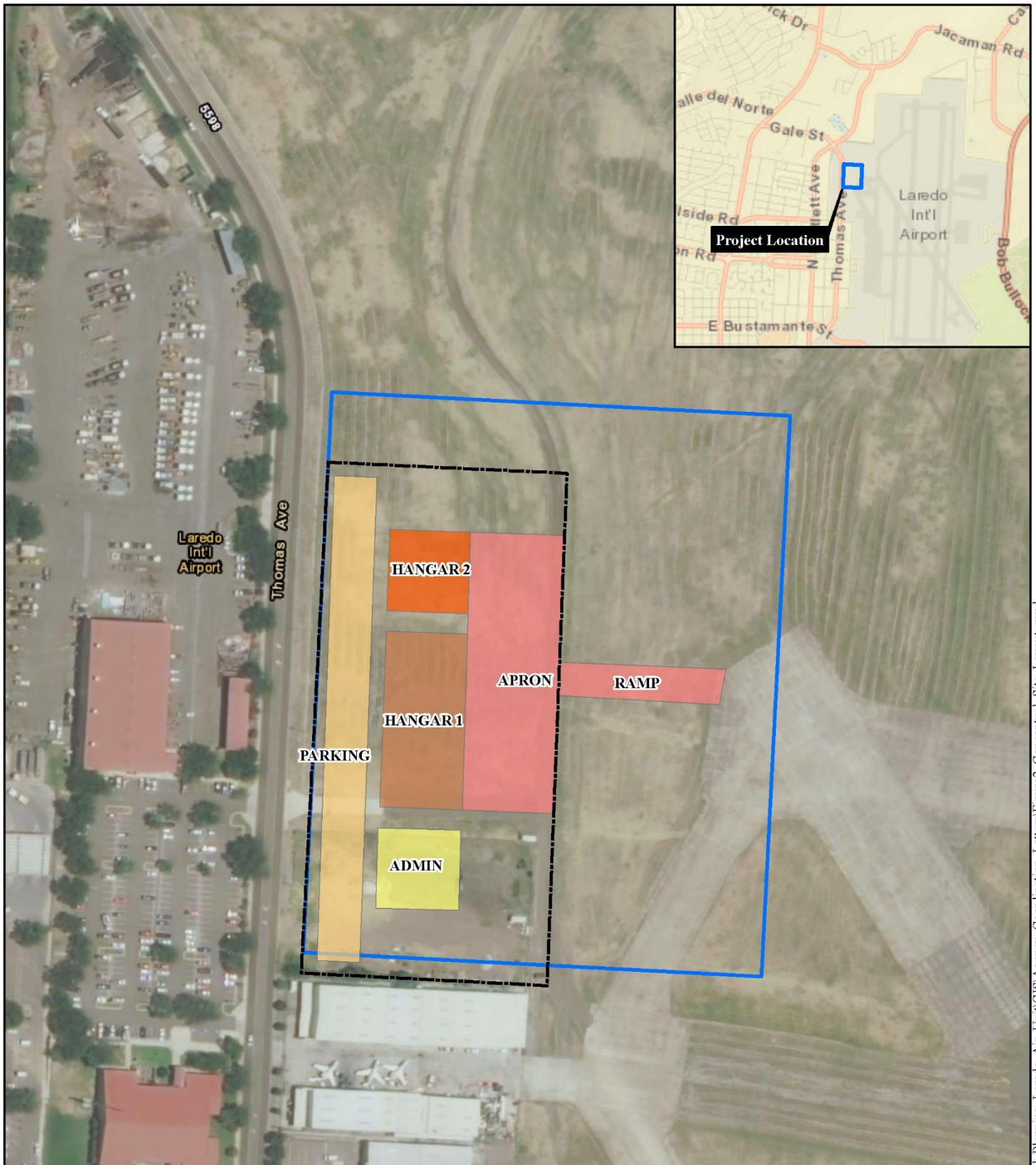
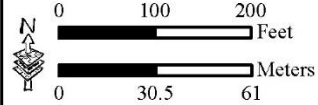


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February 2021

Figure 2. Conceptual Site Layout for the Laredo Air Branch



March 1, 2021

Texas Department of Transportation
Jesus Saavedra, P.E.
Laredo Area Engineer
1817 Bob Bullock Loop
Laredo, Texas 78043

RE: *Proposed Laredo Air Branch Facility, Air and Marine Operations, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security*

Dear Mr. Saavedra,

The Border Patrol & Air and Marine (BPAM) Program Management Office (PMO), within Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) plans to construct a new Air Branch Facility on an approximately 13-acre parcel of land at the Laredo International Airport in Laredo Texas (Figure 1). The Proposed Action would consist of the construction, operation, and maintenance of a new Air Branch facility, including an administrative operational space, hangar space, aircraft and vehicle parking, and additional site improvements. The new Laredo Air Branch facility in Laredo, Texas would alleviate overcrowded conditions and allow room for current and planned future growth in personnel and additional hangar space would accommodate future operations. The new facilities are being designed to meet CBP facility standards.

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Mr. Saavedra

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Joseph Zidron
Real Estate and Environmental Branch Chief
Border Patrol & Air and Marine PMO
U.S. Customs and Border Protection
24000 Avila Road – Suite 5020
Laguna Niguel, CA 92677

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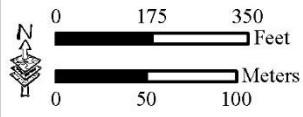
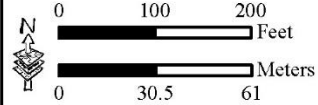


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February 2021

Figure 2. Conceptual Site Layout for the Laredo Air Branch



February 25, 2021

Keith Hayden
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Region 6
1445 Ross Avenue
Fountain Place 12th Floor, Suite 1200
Dallas, TX 75202

RE: *Proposed Laredo Air Branch Facility, Air and Marine Operations, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security*

Dear Mr. Hayden,

The Border Patrol & Air and Marine (BPAM) Program Management Office (PMO), within Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) plans to construct a new Air Branch Facility on an approximately 13-acre parcel of land at the Laredo International Airport in Laredo Texas (Figure 1). The Proposed Action would consist of the construction, operation, and maintenance of a new Air Branch facility, including an administrative operational space, hangar space, aircraft and vehicle parking, and additional site improvements. The new Laredo Air Branch facility in Laredo, Texas would alleviate overcrowded conditions and allow room for current and planned future growth in personnel and additional hangar space would accommodate future operations. The new facilities are being designed to meet CBP facility standards.

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Mr. Hayden

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Your prompt attention to this request is appreciated. If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Lauri Regan at (202) 313-1872 or via email at lauri.r.regan@cbp.dhs.gov.

Sincerely,



Joseph Zidron
Real Estate and Environmental Branch Chief
Border Patrol & Air and Marine PMO
U.S. Customs and Border Protection
24000 Avila Road – Suite 5020
Laguna Niguel, CA 92677

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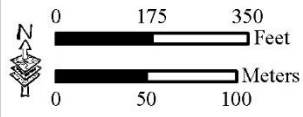
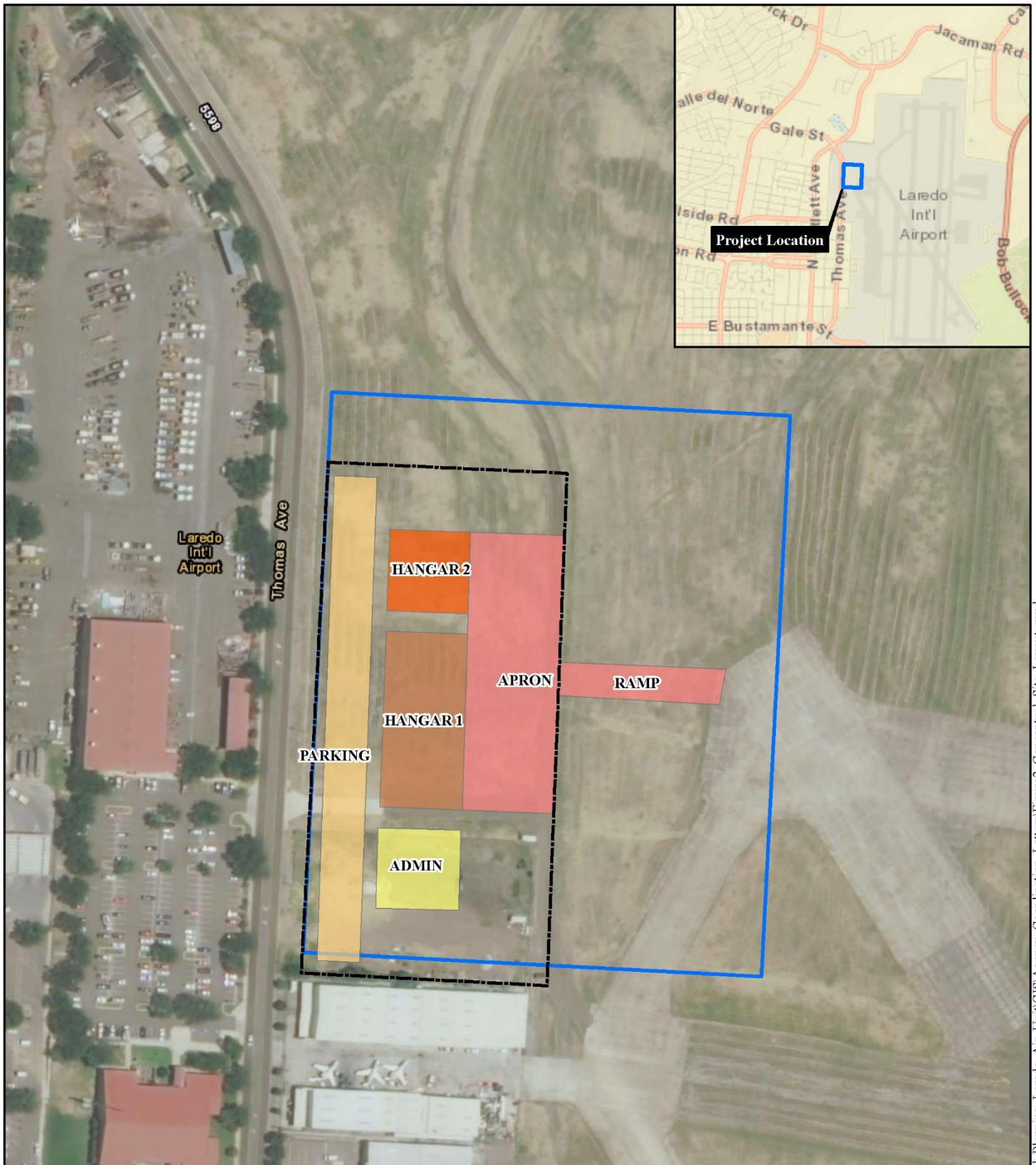
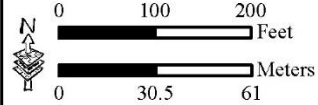


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February 2021

Figure 2. Conceptual Site Layout for the Laredo Air Branch



February 25, 2021

Kim McLaughlin, Chief
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Galveston District Regulatory Branch
2000 Fort Point Road
Galveston, TX 77550

RE: *Proposed Laredo Air Branch Facility, Air and Marine Operations, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security*

Dear Chief Mclaughlin,

The Border Patrol & Air and Marine (BPAM) Program Management Office (PMO), within Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) plans to construct a new Air Branch Facility on an approximately 13-acre parcel of land at the Laredo International Airport in Laredo Texas (Figure 1). The Proposed Action would consist of the construction, operation, and maintenance of a new Air Branch facility, including an administrative operational space, hangar space, aircraft and vehicle parking, and additional site improvements. The new Laredo Air Branch facility in Laredo, Texas would alleviate overcrowded conditions and allow room for current and planned future growth in personnel and additional hangar space would accommodate future operations. The new facilities are being designed to meet CBP facility standards.

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Chief McLaughlin

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Joseph Zidron
Real Estate and Environmental Branch Chief
Border Patrol & Air and Marine PMO
U.S. Customs and Border Protection
24000 Avila Road – Suite 5020
Laguna Niguel, CA 92677

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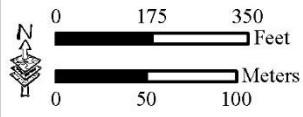
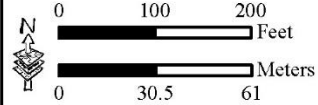


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February 2021

Figure 2. Conceptual Site Layout for the Laredo Air Branch



February 25, 2021

Ms. Lauren Norman-Brown, THPO
Tonkawa Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma
1 Rush Buffalo Road
Tonkawa, OK 74653-4449

RE: *Proposed Laredo Air Branch Facility, Air and Marine Operations, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security*

Dear President Patterson,

The Border Patrol & Air and Marine (BPAM) Program Management Office (PMO), within Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) plans to construct a new Air Branch Facility on an approximately 13-acre parcel of land at the Laredo International Airport in Laredo Texas (Figure 1). The Proposed Action would consist of the construction, operation, and maintenance of a new Air Branch facility, including an administrative operational space, hangar space, aircraft and vehicle parking, and additional site improvements. The new Laredo Air Branch facility in Laredo, Texas would alleviate overcrowded conditions and allow room for current and planned future growth in personnel and additional hangar space would accommodate future operations. The new facilities are being designed to meet CBP facility standards.

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President Patterson

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Sincerely,

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Joseph Zidron
Real Estate and Environmental Branch Chief
Border Patrol & Air and Marine PMO
U.S. Customs and Border Protection
24000 Avila Road – Suite 5020
Laguna Niguel, CA 92677

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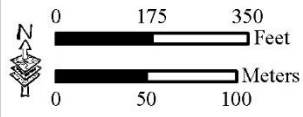
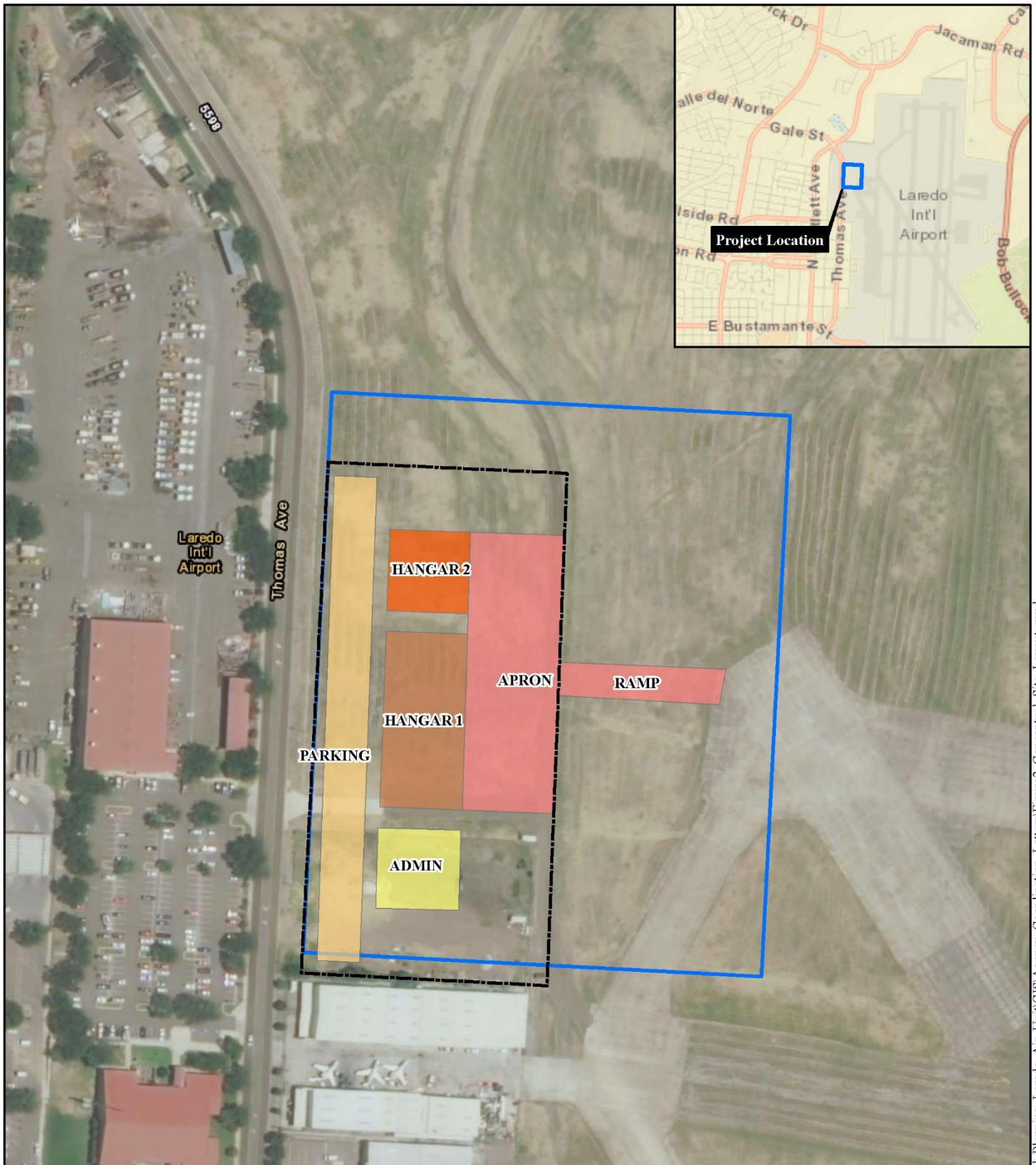
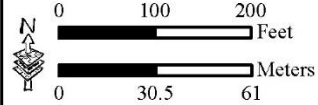


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February 2021

Figure 2. Conceptual Site Layout for the Laredo Air Branch



February 25, 2021

Marco Gutierrez
City of Laredo Planning Department
1413 Houston Street
Laredo, Texas 78040

RE: *Proposed Laredo Air Branch Facility, Air and Marine Operations, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security*

Dear Mr. Gutierrez,

The Border Patrol & Air and Marine (BPAM) Program Management Office (PMO), within Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) plans to construct a new Air Branch Facility on an approximately 13-acre parcel of land at the Laredo International Airport in Laredo Texas (Figure 1). The Proposed Action would consist of the construction, operation, and maintenance of a new Air Branch facility, including an administrative operational space, hangar space, aircraft and vehicle parking, and additional site improvements. The new Laredo Air Branch facility in Laredo, Texas would alleviate overcrowded conditions and allow room for current and planned future growth in personnel and additional hangar space would accommodate future operations. The new facilities are being designed to meet CBP facility standards.

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Mr. Gutierrez

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Real Estate and Environmental Branch Chief
Border Patrol & Air and Marine PMO
U.S. Customs and Border Protection
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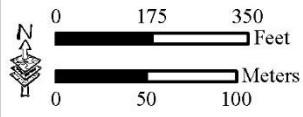
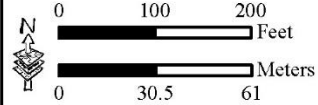


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February 2021

Figure 2. Conceptual Site Layout for the Laredo Air Branch



February 25, 2021

Mark Wolfe
State Historic Preservation Officer
Texas Historical Commission
1511 Colorado
Austin, TX 78701

RE: *Proposed Laredo Air Branch Facility, Air and Marine Operations, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security*

Dear Mr. Wolfe,

The Border Patrol & Air and Marine (BPAM) Program Management Office (PMO), within Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) plans to construct a new Air Branch Facility on an approximately 13-acre parcel of land at the Laredo International Airport in Laredo Texas (Figure 1). The Proposed Action would consist of the construction, operation, and maintenance of a new Air Branch facility, including an administrative operational space, hangar space, aircraft and vehicle parking, and additional site improvements. The new Laredo Air Branch facility in Laredo, Texas would alleviate overcrowded conditions and allow room for current and planned future growth in personnel and additional hangar space would accommodate future operations. The new facilities are being designed to meet CBP facility standards.

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Mr. Wolfe

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Real Estate and Environmental Branch Chief
Border Patrol & Air and Marine PMO
U.S. Customs and Border Protection
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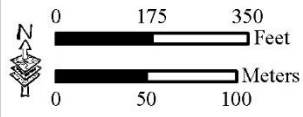
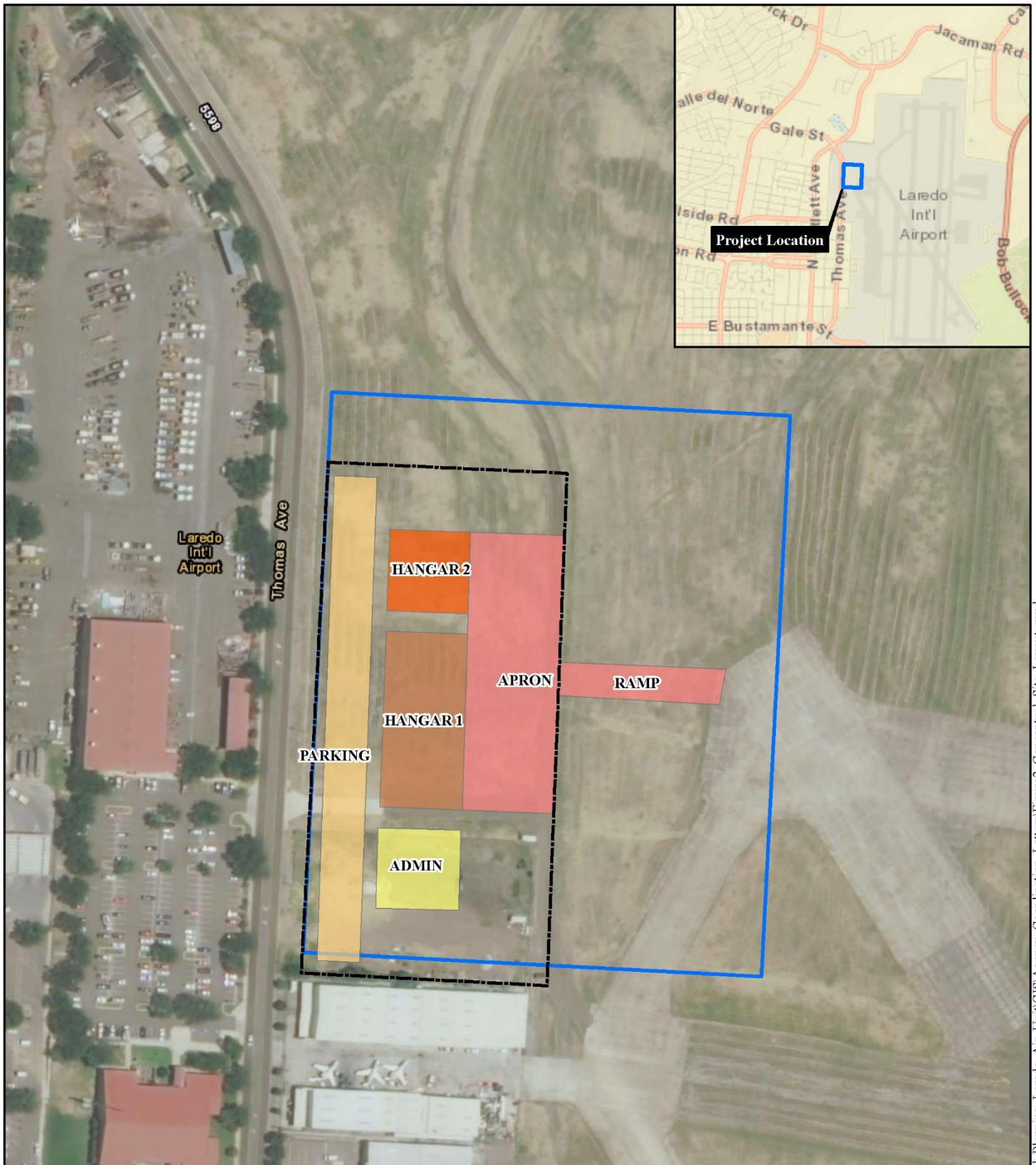
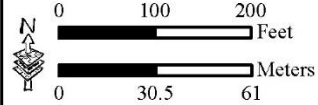


Figure 1. Project Area Map



Legend

- Perimeter Fence
- Project Boundary
- Admin Building
- Apron
- Hangar 1
- Hangar 2
- Parking



February 2021

Figure 2. Conceptual Site Layout for the Laredo Air Branch



February 25, 2021

Martina Minthorn, THPO
The Commanche Nation, Oklahoma
6 SW D Avenue
Lawton, OK 73502

RE: *Proposed Laredo Air Branch Facility, Air and Marine Operations, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security*

Dear Ms. Minthorn,

The Border Patrol & Air and Marine (BPAM) Program Management Office (PMO), within Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) plans to construct a new Air Branch Facility on an approximately 13-acre parcel of land at the Laredo International Airport in Laredo Texas (Figure 1). The Proposed Action would consist of the construction, operation, and maintenance of a new Air Branch facility, including an administrative operational space, hangar space, aircraft and vehicle parking, and additional site improvements. The new Laredo Air Branch facility in Laredo, Texas would alleviate overcrowded conditions and allow room for current and planned future growth in personnel and additional hangar space would accommodate future operations. The new facilities are being designed to meet CBP facility standards.

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Ms. Minthorn

Page 2

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Per DHS Instruction Manual 023-01-001-01, *Implementation of the National Environmental Policy*, we will provide your agency with a copy of the Draft EA for the Proposed Laredo Air Branch facility for your review and comment.

Your prompt attention to this request is appreciated. If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Lauri Regan at (202) 313-1872 or via email at lauri.r.regan@cbp.dhs.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Joseph Zidron". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Joseph" and last name "Zidron" clearly legible.

Joseph Zidron
Real Estate and Environmental Branch Chief
Border Patrol & Air and Marine PMO
U.S. Customs and Border Protection
24000 Avila Road – Suite 5020
Laguna Niguel, CA 92677

Enclosure(s)



Legend
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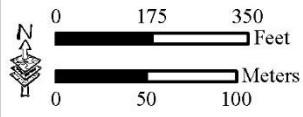
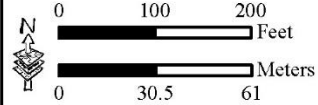


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February 2021

Figure 2. Conceptual Site Layout for the Laredo Air Branch



February 25, 2021

Ms. Meredith Longoria
Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Wildlife Division Program
4200 Smith School Road
Austin, Texas 78744

RE: *Proposed Laredo Air Branch Facility, Air and Marine Operations, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security*

Dear Ms. Longoria,

The Border Patrol & Air and Marine (BPAM) Program Management Office (PMO), within Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) plans to construct a new Air Branch Facility on an approximately 13-acre parcel of land at the Laredo International Airport in Laredo Texas (Figure 1). The Proposed Action would consist of the construction, operation, and maintenance of a new Air Branch facility, including an administrative operational space, hangar space, aircraft and vehicle parking, and additional site improvements. The new Laredo Air Branch facility in Laredo, Texas would alleviate overcrowded conditions and allow room for current and planned future growth in personnel and additional hangar space would accommodate future operations. The new facilities are being designed to meet CBP facility standards.

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Ms. Longoria

Page 2

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Per DHS Instruction Manual 023-01-001-01, *Implementation of the National Environmental Policy*, we will provide your agency with a copy of the Draft EA for the Proposed Laredo Air Branch facility for your review and comment.

Your prompt attention to this request is appreciated. If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Lauri Regan at (202) 313-1872 or via email at lauri.r.regan@cbp.dhs.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Joseph Zidron". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "J".

Joseph Zidron
Real Estate and Environmental Branch Chief
Border Patrol & Air and Marine PMO
U.S. Customs and Border Protection
24000 Avila Road – Suite 5020
Laguna Niguel, CA 92677

Enclosure(s)



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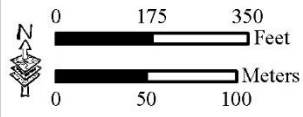
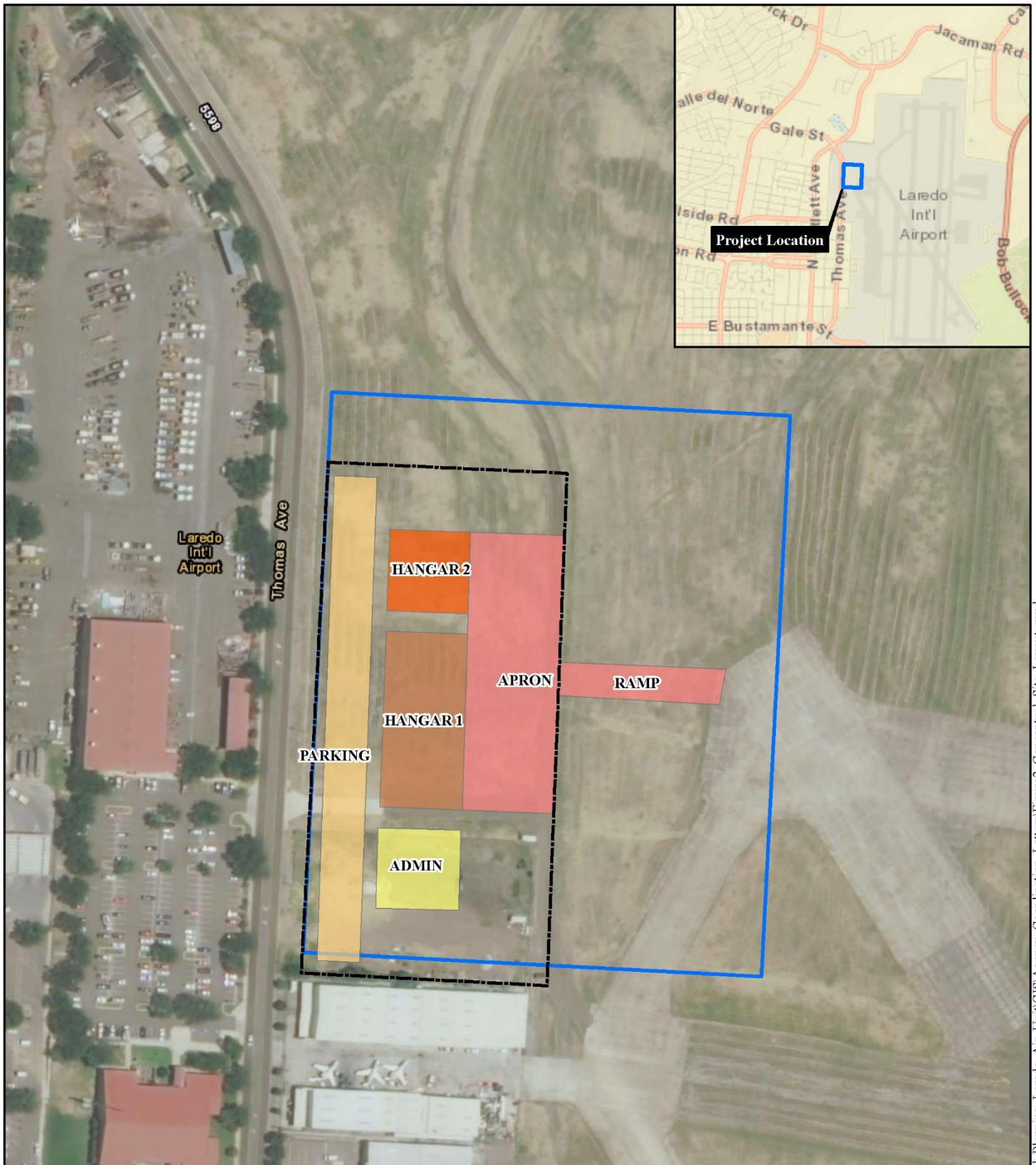
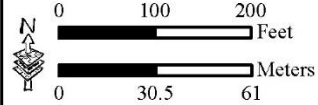


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February 2021

Figure 2. Conceptual Site Layout for the Laredo Air Branch



March 1, 2021

Mr. Russell Martin, President
Tonkawa Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma
1 Rush Buffalo Road
Tonkawa, OK 74653-4449

RE: *Proposed Laredo Air Branch Facility, Air and Marine Operations, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security*

Dear President Martin,

The Border Patrol & Air and Marine (BPAM) Program Management Office (PMO), within Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) plans to construct a new Air Branch Facility on an approximately 13-acre parcel of land at the Laredo International Airport in Laredo Texas (Figure 1). The Proposed Action would consist of the construction, operation, and maintenance of a new Air Branch facility, including an administrative operational space, hangar space, aircraft and vehicle parking, and additional site improvements. The new Laredo Air Branch facility in Laredo, Texas would alleviate overcrowded conditions and allow room for current and planned future growth in personnel and additional hangar space would accommodate future operations. The new facilities are being designed to meet CBP facility standards.

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President Martin

Page 2

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Per DHS Instruction Manual 023-01-001-01, *Implementation of the National Environmental Policy*, we will provide your agency with a copy of the Draft EA for the Proposed Laredo Air Branch facility for your review and comment.

Your prompt attention to this request is appreciated. If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Lauri Regan at (202) 313-1872 or via email at lauri.r.regan@cbp.dhs.gov.

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Joseph Zidron
Real Estate and Environmental Branch Chief
Border Patrol & Air and Marine PMO
U.S. Customs and Border Protection
24000 Avila Road – Suite 5020
Laguna Niguel, CA 92677

Enclosure(s)



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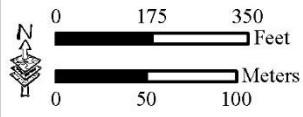


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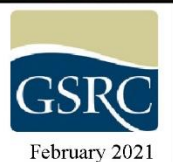
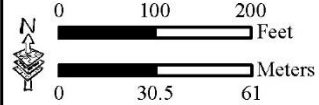


Figure 2. Conceptual Site Layout for the Laredo Air Branch



February 26, 2021

Terri Parton, President
Wichita and Affiliated Tribes
P.O. Box 729
Anadarko, OK 73005

RE: *Proposed Laredo Air Branch Facility, Air and Marine Operations, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security*

Dear President Parton,

The Border Patrol & Air and Marine (BPAM) Program Management Office (PMO), within Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) plans to construct a new Air Branch Facility on an approximately 13-acre parcel of land at the Laredo International Airport in Laredo Texas (Figure 1). The Proposed Action would consist of the construction, operation, and maintenance of a new Air Branch facility, including an administrative operational space, hangar space, aircraft and vehicle parking, and additional site improvements. The new Laredo Air Branch facility in Laredo, Texas would alleviate overcrowded conditions and allow room for current and planned future growth in personnel and additional hangar space would accommodate future operations. The new facilities are being designed to meet CBP facility standards.

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President Parton

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Per DHS Instruction Manual 023-01-001-01, *Implementation of the National Environmental Policy*, we will provide your agency with a copy of the Draft EA for the Proposed Laredo Air Branch facility for your review and comment.

Your prompt attention to this request is appreciated. If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Lauri Regan at (202) 313-1872 or via email at lauri.r.regan@cbp.dhs.gov.

Sincerely,

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Joseph Zidron
Real Estate and Environmental Branch Chief
Border Patrol & Air and Marine PMO
U.S. Customs and Border Protection
24000 Avila Road – Suite 5020
Laguna Niguel, CA 92677

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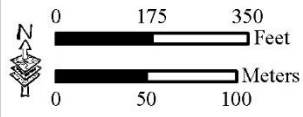
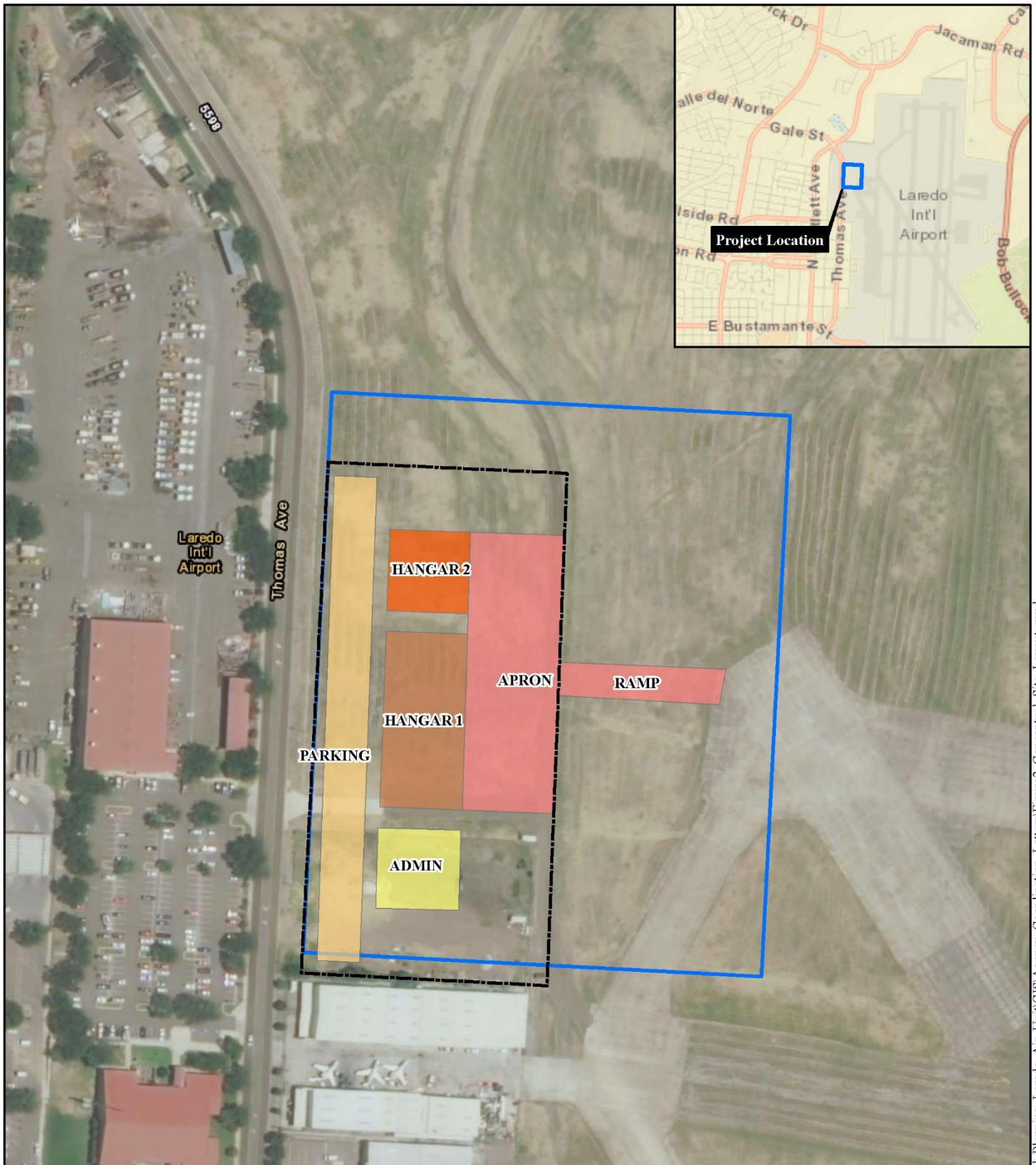
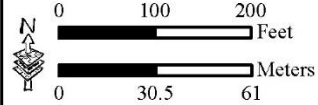


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February 2021

Figure 2. Conceptual Site Layout for the Laredo Air Branch



February 25, 2021

The Honorable Tano E. Tijerina
Webb County Judge
1000 Houston St. 3rd floor
Laredo, TX 78040
956.523.4600

RE: *Proposed Laredo Air Branch Facility, Air and Marine Operations, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security*

Dear Honorable Tijerina,

The Border Patrol & Air and Marine (BPAM) Program Management Office (PMO), within Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) plans to construct a new Air Branch Facility on an approximately 13-acre parcel of land at the Laredo International Airport in Laredo Texas (Figure 1). The Proposed Action would consist of the construction, operation, and maintenance of a new Air Branch facility, including an administrative operational space, hangar space, aircraft and vehicle parking, and additional site improvements. The new Laredo Air Branch facility in Laredo, Texas would alleviate overcrowded conditions and allow room for current and planned future growth in personnel and additional hangar space would accommodate future operations. The new facilities are being designed to meet CBP facility standards.

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Honorable Tijerina

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Joseph Zidron
Real Estate and Environmental Branch Chief
Border Patrol & Air and Marine PMO
U.S. Customs and Border Protection
24000 Avila Road – Suite 5020
Laguna Niguel, CA 92677

Enclosure(s)



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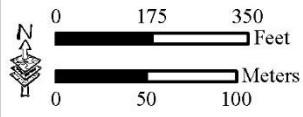
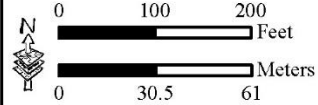


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February 2021

Figure 2. Conceptual Site Layout for the Laredo Air Branch



February 25, 2021

William Nelson, Chairman
The Commanche Nation, Oklahoma
P.O. Box 908
Lawton, OK 73502

RE: *Proposed Laredo Air Branch Facility, Air and Marine Operations, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security*

Dear Mr. Nelson,

The Border Patrol & Air and Marine (BPAM) Program Management Office (PMO), within Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) plans to construct a new Air Branch Facility on an approximately 13-acre parcel of land at the Laredo International Airport in Laredo Texas (Figure 1). The Proposed Action would consist of the construction, operation, and maintenance of a new Air Branch facility, including an administrative operational space, hangar space, aircraft and vehicle parking, and additional site improvements. The new Laredo Air Branch facility in Laredo, Texas would alleviate overcrowded conditions and allow room for current and planned future growth in personnel and additional hangar space would accommodate future operations. The new facilities are being designed to meet CBP facility standards.

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Honorable Tijerina

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Your prompt attention to this request is appreciated. If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Lauri Regan at (202) 313-1872 or via email at lauri.r.regan@cbp.dhs.gov.

Sincerely,

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Joseph Zidron
Real Estate and Environmental Branch Chief
Border Patrol & Air and Marine PMO
U.S. Customs and Border Protection
24000 Avila Road – Suite 5020
Laguna Niguel, CA 92677

Enclosure(s)



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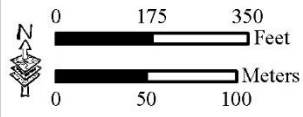
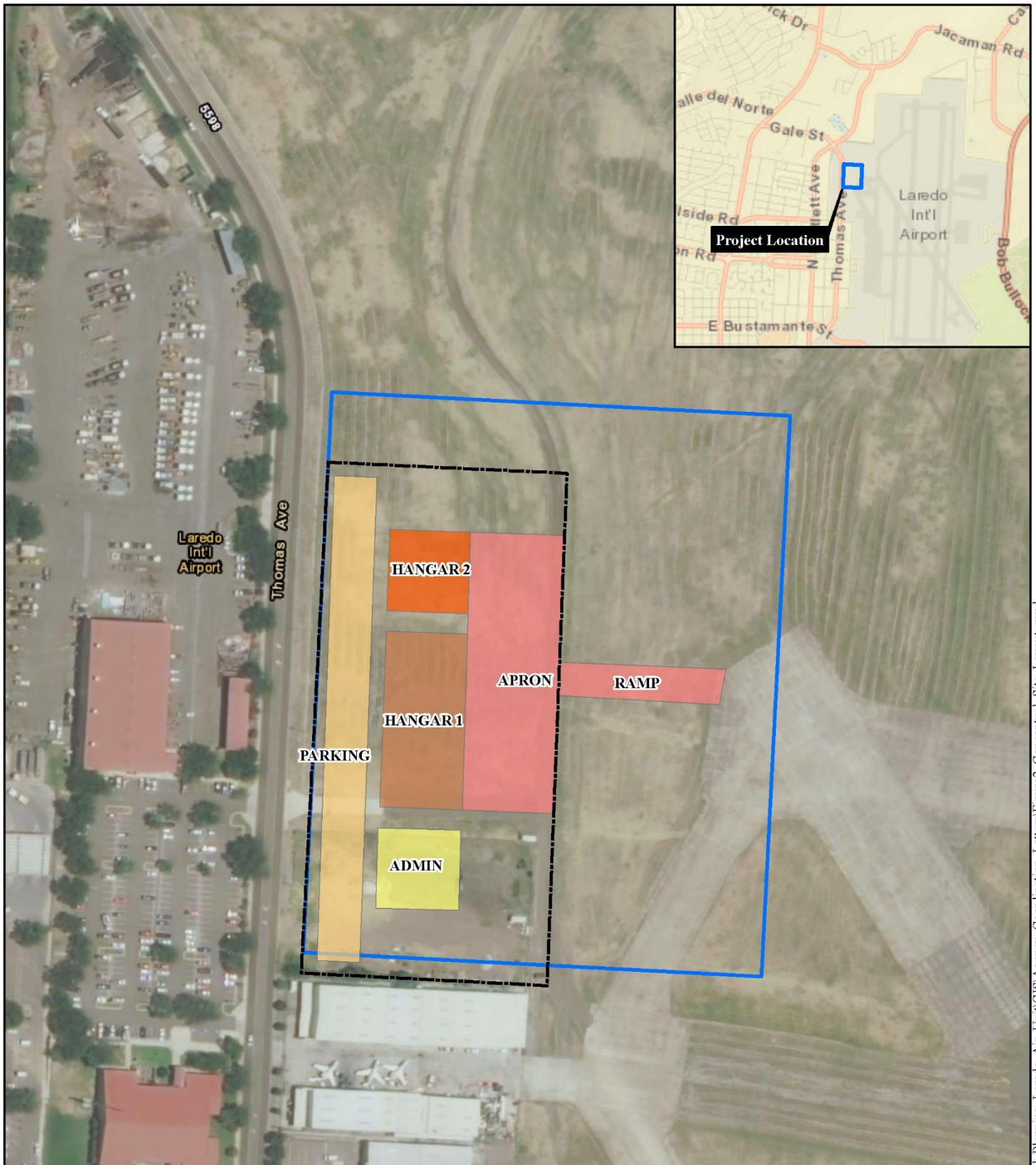
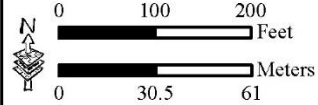


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February 2021

Figure 2. Conceptual Site Layout for the Laredo Air Branch

RESPONSES

From: Gerardo J. Pinzon
To: Howard Nass
Cc: Arturo Garcia; Marco A. Gutierrez; Alejandra Martinez
Subject: RE: Proposed New CBP Air Branch Facility
Date: Monday, March 1, 2021 3:07:12 PM
Attachments: image001.jpg
image003.jpg
COMMERCIAL GUIDE.pdf

Congratulations on this new project. We look forward to assist you in the permitting process. As you might not be aware, we are now utilizing ProjectDox by Avolve, our new electronic permitting system, which includes electronic review.

I am attaching the commercial guide to assist you in the process.

I would like to offer to you and your design team, a pre-design virtual meeting were you can meet our review team and get a preliminary idea of our requirements. Please let us know so we can schedule this meeting as you are closer to your preliminary design.

We look forward to this new project.

Best,

Gerry Pinzon, P.E.
Building Official
Building Development Services
1413 Houston St.
(956) 794-1625

From: Howard Nass <hnass@gsrcorp.com>
Sent: Friday, February 26, 2021 10:45 AM
To: Marco A. Gutierrez <mgutierrez@ci.laredo.tx.us>
Cc: Gerardo J. Pinzon <gpinzon@ci.laredo.tx.us>; Arturo Garcia <agarcia@ci.laredo.tx.us>
Subject: RE: Proposed New CBP Air Branch Facility

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Mr. Gutierrez,

Thank you

Howard Nass
Gulf South Research Corporation
Senior Project Manager
(225) 757-8088 (O)
(225) 247-1311 (C)

From: Marco A. Gutierrez <mgutierrez@ci.laredo.tx.us>
Sent: Friday, February 26, 2021 10:33 AM
To: Howard Nass <hnass@gsrcorp.com>
Cc: Gerardo J. Pinzon <gpinzon@ci.laredo.tx.us>; Arturo Garcia <agarcia@ci.laredo.tx.us>
Subject: RE: Proposed New CBP Air Branch Facility

Mr. Nass, good morning

I already pass your information to Mr. Gerardo Pinzon (Building Official) he can respond to your Questions

Thank you

Marco Gutierrez
PLANS EXAMINER I & II - SUPERVISOR
City of Laredo | Building Development Services Department
1413 Houston St., Laredo, TX 78040 | 956.794.1625 ext.1632
mgutierrez@ci.laredo.tx.us
www.cityoflaredo.com/Building

From: Howard Nass [<mailto:hnass@gsrcorp.com>]
Sent: Thursday, February 25, 2021 3:26 PM
To: Marco A. Gutierrez <mgutierrez@ci.laredo.tx.us>
Subject: Proposed New CBP Air Branch Facility

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Dear Mr. Gutierrez,

The U.S. Customs and Border Protection is proposing to construct a new Air Branch facility at the Laredo International Airport. On behalf of CBP, Gulf South Research Corporation (GSRC) is in the process of scoping the project as part of the National Environmental Policy Act process. Please find attached a scoping letter for your review and consideration.

Sincerely,

Howard Nass
Gulf South Research Corporation
Senior Project Manager
(225) 757-8088 (O)
(225) 247-1311 (C)

From: [Jose Vargas](#)
To: [Howard Nass](#)
Cc: [Jesus Saavedra](#)
Subject: RE: Proposed New CBP Air Branch Facility - Scoping Letter
Date: Monday, March 1, 2021 2:18:27 PM

Good afternoon Mr. Nass,

This CBP project will not have any potential environmental impacts on TxDOT projects.

Thank you.

JDV

From: Jose Vargas
Sent: Monday, March 1, 2021 12:06 PM
To: Howard Nass <hnass@gsrcorp.com>
Cc: Jesus Saavedra <Jesus.Saavedra@txdot.gov>
Subject: RE: Proposed New CBP Air Branch Facility - Scoping Letter

Good morning Mr. Nass,

I'll forward this document to the appropriate sections and let you know if we have any comments.

Thank you.

From: Howard Nass <hnass@gsrcorp.com>
Sent: Monday, March 1, 2021 11:55 AM
To: Jose Vargas <Jose.Vargas@txdot.gov>
Subject: FW: Proposed New CBP Air Branch Facility - Scoping Letter

This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Mr. Vargas,

I received an email reply from Mr. Saavedra that he is out of the office and to contact you for assistance. In an effort to ensure TxDOT receives the attached scoping letter, I am forwarding my original email and attachment to Mr. Saavedra. Thank you for your consideration.

Howard Nass

Gulf South Research Corporation
Senior Project Manager
(225) 757-8088 (O)
(225) 247-1311 (C)

From: Howard Nass

Sent: Monday, March 1, 2021 11:41 AM

To: jesus.saavedra@txdot.gov

Subject: Proposed New CBP Air Branch Facility - Scoping Letter

Dear Mr. Saavedra,

The U.S. Customs and Border Protection is proposing to construct a new Air Branch facility at the Laredo International Airport. On behalf of CBP, Gulf South Research Corporation (GSRC) is in the process of scoping the project as part of the National Environmental Policy Act process. Please find attached a scoping letter for your review and consideration.

Sincerely,

Howard Nass

Gulf South Research Corporation

Senior Project Manager

(225) 757-8088 (O)

(225) 247-1311 (C)



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 6
1201 ELM STREET, SUITE 500
DALLAS, TEXAS 75270-2102

March 11, 2021

Joseph Zidron
Real Estate and Environmental Branch Chief
Border Patrol & Air and Marine PMO
U.S. Customs and Border Protection
24000 Avila Road – Suite 5020
Laguna Niguel, California 92677

Dear Mr. Zidron:

The Region 6 office of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Scoping request, dated February 25, 2021, to solicit input regarding the impacts associated with the proposed construction of the Laredo Air Branch Facility.

To assist in the scoping process, we have identified the following areas for your attention in the preparation of CBP environmental planning documents:

Air Quality

EPA recommends that in order to reduce potential short-term air quality impacts associated with construction activities, the agencies responsible for the project should include a Construction Emissions Mitigation Plan in the draft environmental analysis prepared for this project. In addition to conducting construction and waste disposal activities in accordance with all applicable local, state, or federal requirements, EPA recommends that fugitive dust source controls (e.g. stabilization of disturbed soils), mobile/stationary source controls (e.g. limitation of vehicle idling, maintenance of engines to perform at EPA certification levels), and administrative controls (e.g. traffic/parking management plan to maintain traffic flow) be considered for inclusion (as applicable and practicable) in the Construction Emissions Mitigation Plan in order to reduce impacts associated with emissions of NO_x, CO, PM, SO₂, and other pollutants from construction-related activities.

Environmental Justice

The CBP should conduct an evaluation of environmental justice (EJ) populations near the geographic scope of the project. If such populations exist, the potential for disproportionate adverse impacts to minority and low-income populations should be discussed along with the approaches used to foster public participation by these populations. There should be a comprehensive communication strategy to inform EJ communities and encourage participation of EJ populations within at least one-mile radius of the proposed project boundaries. EPA recommends CBP use available tools (i.e., EJ Screen, U.S. Census Bureau, area knowledge) to identify and screen EJ populations. Finally, EPA recommends that CBP utilize the Promising

Practice Report to supplement the applicable requirements for considering and analyzing EJ populations, which can be found at the following link:

https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2016-08/documents/nepa_promising_practices_document_2016.pdf.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide scoping comments on the proposed Laredo Air Branch Facility construction project. We look forward to reviewing the environmental planning documents related to this effort. The staff contact for the review is Keith Hayden and he can be reached at 214-665-2133, or by e-mail at hayden.keith@epa.gov.

Sincerely,

The signature block features the name "ROBERT HOUSTON" in a bold, sans-serif font. To the right of the name is a red, stylized signature line. Below the name and signature line is a block of small, black text providing digital signature details: "Digitally signed by ROBERT HOUSTON", "DN: c=US, o=U.S. Government, ou=Environmental Protection Agency, cn=ROBERT HOUSTON", "1.9.2342.1.2000300.100.1.1=68001003", "555693", and "Date: 2021.09.11 15:15:26 -0600".

Robert Houston, Acting Director
Office of Communities, Tribes and
Environmental Assessment



Life's better outside.®

April 5, 2021

Joseph Zidron
Real Estate and Environmental Branch Chief
Border Patrol & Air and Marine PMO
U.S. Customs and Border Protection
24000 Avila Road Suite 5020
Laguna Niguel, CA 92677

RE: Proposed Laredo Air Branch Facility, Air and Marine Operations, U.S.
Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security, Laredo,
Webb County, Texas

Dear Mr. Zidron:

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) has received the request for the comments regarding the proposed project referenced above. The Department of Homeland Security is preparing a Draft Environmental Assessment for the proposed project.

Project Description

The Border Patrol & Air and Marine (BPAM) Program Management Office (PMO) within Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) U.S. Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) plans to construct a new Air Branch Facility on an approximate 13-acre tract of land at the Laredo International Airport in Laredo, Webb County, Texas.

The proposed Air Branch facility would include an administrative operations building, hanger space, aircraft and vehicle parking, lighting, security fencing and additional site improvements.

TPWD has reviewed the information provided and offers the following comments and recommendations.

General Construction Recommendations

Overall, due to the previously disturbed condition of the proposed project site, the TPWD-Wildlife Habitat Assessment Program does not anticipate significant adverse impacts to rare, threatened, or endangered species, or other fish and wildlife resources as a result of the project. TPWD is providing the following general construction recommendation to assist in project planning.

Recommendation: In general, TPWD recommends the judicious use and placement of sediment control fence to exclude wildlife from areas to be disturbed, particularly areas that would be trenched or excavated (e.g., for building foundations, installation of utilities, etc.). In many cases, sediment control fence placement for the purposes of controlling erosion and protecting water quality can

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512.389.4800
www.tpwd.texas.gov

To manage and conserve the natural and cultural resources of Texas and to provide hunting, fishing and outdoor recreation opportunities for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.

be modified minimally to also provide the benefit of excluding wildlife access to construction areas. The exclusion fence should be buried at least six inches and be at least 24 inches high. The exclusion fence should be maintained for the life of the project and only removed after the construction is completed and the disturbed sites have been revegetated, if applicable.

Construction personnel should be encouraged to examine the inside of the exclusion area daily to determine if any wildlife species have been trapped inside the area of impact and provide safe egress opportunities prior to initiation of construction activities. TPWD recommends that any open trenches or excavation areas be covered overnight and/or inspected every morning to ensure no wildlife species have been trapped in trenches. For open trenches and excavated areas, escape ramps fashioned from soil or boards should be installed at an angle of less than 45 degrees (1:1) in excavated areas that will allow trapped wildlife to climb out on their own.

Recommendation: For soil stabilization and/or revegetation of disturbed areas within proposed project areas, TPWD recommends erosion and seed/mulch stabilization materials that avoid entanglement hazards to snakes and other wildlife species. Because the mesh found in many erosion control blankets or mats pose an entanglement hazard to wildlife, TPWD recommends the use of no-till drilling, hydromulching and/or hydroseeding due to a reduced risk to wildlife. If erosion control blankets or mats would be used, the product should contain no netting or contain loosely woven, natural fiber netting in which the mesh design allows the threads to move, therefore allowing expansion of the mesh openings. Plastic mesh matting and hydromulch containing microplastics should be avoided.

Enhanced lighting is proposed as a component of the project; however, specific information regarding what type of lighting would be included and where it would be installed was not indicated in the information provided.

As a result of light pollution, “sky glow” can have negative impacts on wildlife and ecosystems by disrupting natural day and night cycles inherent in managing behaviors such as migration, reproduction, nourishment, sleep, and protection from predators.

Recommendation: As protection measures for wildlife, TPWD recommends utilizing the minimum amount of permanent night-time lighting needed for safety and security. TPWD recommends minimizing the project’s contribution toward skyglow by focusing light downward, with full cutoff luminaries to avoid light emitting above the horizontal, and to use dark-sky friendly lighting that is on only when needed, down-shielded, as bright as needed, and minimizes blue light emissions. Appropriate lighting technologies, beneficial management practices, and other dark sky resources can be found at the International Dark-Sky Association and McDonald Observatory websites.

Mr. Joseph Zidron
Page 3 of 3
April 5, 2021

I appreciate the opportunity to review and comment on this project. Please contact me at (361) 825-3240 or russell.hooten@tpwd.texas.gov if we may be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

Russell Hooten

Russell Hooten
Wildlife Habitat Assessment Program
Wildlife Division

/rh 46096



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Texas Coastal Ecological Services Field Office
3325 Green Jay Road
Alamo, Texas 78516
956/784-7560 (Fax) 956/787-8338



In Reply Refer To:
02ETTX00-2021-TA-1396

April 13, 2021

Mr. Joseph Zidron
Real Estate and Environmental Branch Chief
Border Patrol & Air and Marine PMO
U.S. Customs and Border Protection
24000 Avila Road – Suite 5020
Laguna Niguel, California 92677

Dear Mr. Zidron:

We received your March 1, 2021, letter regarding effects of proposed facility on federally listed species in Webb County, Texas. This action was also evaluated for impacts to wetlands and other federal trust fish and wildlife resources.

The Border Patrol & Air and Marine (BPAM) Program Management Office (PMO), within Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) proposes to construct a new Air Branch Facility on approximately 13-acre parcel of land at the Laredo International Airport in Laredo, Texas. The Proposed Action would consist of the construction, operation, and maintenance of a new Air Branch facility, including an administrative operational space, hangar space, aircraft and vehicle parking, and additional site improvements. BPAM is preparing a draft environmental assessment (EA) for this proposed project.

Federally Listed Species:

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) works with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats, including listed species. Federally-listed species in Webb County, Texas where the proposed action will occur include the ocelot (*Leopardus pardalis*), jaguarundi (*Herpailurus yaguarondi*), Texas hornshell (*Popenaias popeii*), and Ashy dogweed (*Thymophylla tephroleuca*).

To avoid impacts to migratory birds, the Service recommends migratory bird surveys be conducted prior to mechanical clearing of brush and trees between March 15 and September 15. Surveys should look for birds, nests and eggs. The Service recommends leaving a buffer of vegetation (≥ 100 feet) around songbird nests detected until young have fledged or the nest is abandoned. Other species such as water birds or raptors require larger buffer distances of 500 feet or more.

The construction of overhead power lines creates threats of avian collision and electrocution. The Service recommends the installation of underground rather than overhead power lines whenever possible. For new overhead lines or retrofitting of old lines, we recommend that project developers implement, to the maximum extent practicable, the Avian Power Line Interaction Committee guidelines found at <http://www.aplic.org/>.

Wetlands and Wildlife Habitat:

Wetlands and riparian zones provide valuable fish and wildlife habitat as well as contribute to flood control, water quality enhancement, and groundwater recharge. Wetland and riparian vegetation provides food and cover for wildlife, stabilizes banks and decreases soil erosion. These areas are inherently dynamic and very sensitive to changes caused by such activities as overgrazing, logging, major construction, or earth disturbance.

Executive Order 11990 asserts that each agency shall provide leadership and take action to minimize the destruction, loss or degradation of wetlands, and to preserve and enhance the natural and beneficial value of wetlands in carrying out the agency's responsibilities. Construction activities near riparian zones should be carefully designed to minimize impacts. If vegetation clearing is needed in these riparian areas, they should be re-vegetated with native wetland and riparian vegetation to prevent erosion or loss of habitat. We recommend minimizing the area of soil scarification and initiating incremental re-establishment of herbaceous vegetation at the proposed work sites. Denuded and/or disturbed areas should be re-vegetated with a mixture of native legumes and grasses.

Species commonly used for soil stabilization are listed in the Texas Department of Agriculture's (TDA) Native Tree and Plant Directory, available from TDA at P.O. Box 12847, Austin, Texas 78711. The Service also urges taking precautions to ensure sediment loading does not occur to any receiving streams in the proposed project area. To prevent and/or minimize soil erosion and compaction associated with construction activities, avoid any unnecessary clearing of vegetation, and follow established rights-of-way whenever possible. All machinery and petroleum products should be stored outside the floodplain and/or wetland area during construction to prevent possible contamination of water and soils.

Wetlands and riparian areas are high priority fish and wildlife habitat, serving as important sources of food, cover, and shelter for numerous species of resident and migratory wildlife. Waterfowl and other migratory birds use wetlands and riparian corridors as stopover, feeding, and nesting areas. We strongly recommend that the selected project site not impact wetlands and riparian areas, and be located as far as practical from these areas. Migratory birds tend to concentrate in or near wetlands and riparian areas and use these areas as migratory flyways or corridors. After every effort has been made to avoid impacting wetlands, you anticipate

unavoidable wetland impacts will occur; you should contact the appropriate U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) office to determine if a permit is necessary prior to commencement of construction activities. If your project will involve filling, dredging, or trenching of a wetland or riparian area it may require a Clean Water Act Section 404 permit from the Corps. For permitting requirements please contact the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, District Engineer, 1100 Commerce Street, Dallas, Texas 75242, (469) 487-7007.

Beneficial Landscaping:

In accordance with Executive Order 13112 on Invasive Species and the Executive Memorandum on Beneficial Landscaping (42 C.F.R. 26961), where possible, any landscaping associated with project plans should be limited to seeding and replanting with native species. A mixture of grasses and forbs appropriate to address potential erosion problems and long-term cover should be planted when seed is reasonably available. Although Bermuda grass is listed in seed mixtures, this species and other introduced species should be avoided as much as possible. The Service also recommends the use of native trees, shrubs, and herbaceous species that are adaptable, drought tolerant and conserve water.

State Listed Species:

The State of Texas protects certain species. Please contact the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (Endangered Resources Branch), 4200 Smith School Road, Austin, Texas 78744 (telephone 512/389-8021) for information concerning fish, wildlife, and plants of State concern or visit their website at: http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/huntwild/wild/wildlife_diversity/texas_rare_species/listed_species/.

Once the Service receives the draft EA for review, the Service will provide more detailed site specific comments and recommendations. We appreciate the opportunity to provide pre-planning information. If we can be of further assistance, please contact Ernesto Reyes at (956) 784-7560.

Sincerely,



Charles Ardizzone
Field Supervisor

cc: Assistant Field Supervisor, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Corpus Christi, TX

APPENDIX B
STATE-LISTED SPECIES FOR WEBB COUNTY, TEXAS

Last Update: 3/5/2021

WEBB COUNTY

AMPHIBIANS

South Texas siren (Large Form) *Siren sp. 1*

Aquatic: Mainly found in bodies of quiet water, permanent or temporary, with or without submergent vegetation. Wet or sometimes wet areas, such as arroyos, canals, ditches, or even shallow depressions; aestivates in the ground during dry periods, but does require some moisture to remain.

Federal Status:	State Status: T	SGCN: Y
Endemic: N	Global Rank: GNRQ	State Rank: S1

ARACHNIDS

No accepted common name *Diplocentrus diablo*

Like all species of *Diplocentrus*, *D. diablo* is an obligate burrower but may be found under large surface objects in rocky areas of the Rio Grande Valley (Stockwell & Nilsson 1987).

Federal Status:	State Status:	SGCN: Y
Endemic: N	Global Rank: GNR	State Rank: S2

BIRDS

Franklin's gull *Leucophaeus pipixcan*

This species is only a spring and fall migrant throughout Texas. It does not breed in or near Texas. Winter records are unusual consisting of one or a few individuals at a given site (especially along the Gulf coastline). During migration, these gulls fly during daylight hours but often come down to wetlands, lake shore, or islands to roost for the night.

Federal Status:	State Status:	SGCN: Y
Endemic: N	Global Rank: G5	State Rank: S2N

gray hawk *Buteo plagiatus*

Locally and irregularly along U.S.-Mexico border; mature riparian woodlands and nearby semiarid mesquite and scrub grasslands; breeding range formerly extended north to southernmost Rio Grande floodplain of Texas

Federal Status:	State Status: T	SGCN: Y
Endemic: N	Global Rank: GNR	State Rank: S2B

interior least tern *Sternula antillarum athalassos*

Sand beaches, flats, bays, inlets, lagoons, islands. Subspecies is listed only when inland (more than 50 miles from a coastline); nests along sand and gravel bars within braided streams, rivers; also know to nest on man-made structures (inland beaches, wastewater treatment plants, gravel mines, etc); eats small fish and crustaceans, when breeding forages within a few hundred feet of colony

Federal Status: DL: Delisted	State Status: E	SGCN: Y
Endemic: N	Global Rank: G4T3Q	State Rank: S1B

DISCLAIMER

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WEBB COUNTY

BIRDS

mountain plover

Charadrius montanus

Breeding: nests on high plains or shortgrass prairie, on ground in shallow depression; nonbreeding: shortgrass plains and bare, dirt (plowed) fields; primarily insectivorous

Federal Status:	State Status:	SGCN: Y
Endemic: N	Global Rank: G3	State Rank: S2

reddish egret

Egretta rufescens

Resident of the Texas Gulf Coast; brackish marshes and shallow salt ponds and tidal flats; nests on ground or in trees or bushes, on dry coastal islands in brushy thickets of yucca and prickly pear

Federal Status:	State Status: T	SGCN: Y
Endemic: N	Global Rank: G4	State Rank: S2B

western burrowing owl

Athene cunicularia hypugaea

Open grasslands, especially prairie, plains, and savanna, sometimes in open areas such as vacant lots near human habitation or airports; nests and roosts in abandoned burrows

Federal Status:	State Status:	SGCN: Y
Endemic: N	Global Rank: G4T4	State Rank: S2

white-faced ibis

Plegadis chihi

Prefers freshwater marshes, sloughs, and irrigated rice fields, but will attend brackish and saltwater habitats; currently confined to near-coastal rookeries in so-called hog-wallow prairies. Nests in marshes, in low trees, on the ground in bulrushes or reeds, or on floating mats.

Federal Status:	State Status: T	SGCN: Y
Endemic: N	Global Rank: G5	State Rank: S4B

wood stork

Mycteria americana

Prefers to nest in large tracts of baldcypress (*Taxodium distichum*) or red mangrove (*Rhizophora mangle*); forages in prairie ponds, flooded pastures or fields, ditches, and other shallow standing water, including salt-water; usually roosts communally in tall snags, sometimes in association with other wading birds (i.e. active heronries); breeds in Mexico and birds move into Gulf States in search of mud flats and other wetlands, even those associated with forested areas; formerly nested in Texas, but no breeding records since 1960

Federal Status:	State Status: T	SGCN: Y
Endemic: N	Global Rank: G4	State Rank: SHB,S2N

FISH

Rio Grande darter

Etheostoma grahami

Essentially restricted to the mainstream and spring-fed tributaries of the Rio Grande and the lower Pecos River downstream to the Devils River and Dolan, San Felipe and Sycamore creeks. Gravel and rubble riffles

Federal Status:	State Status: T	SGCN: Y
Endemic: N	Global Rank: G2G3	State Rank: S2

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WEBB COUNTY

FISH

Rio Grande shiner *Notropis jemezanus*

Rio Grande drainage. Occurs over substrate of rubble, gravel and sand, often overlain with silt

Federal Status: State Status: T SGCN: Y
Endemic: N Global Rank: G3 State Rank: S1

speckled chub *Macrhybopsis aestivalis*

Found throughout the Rio Grande and lower Pecos River but occurs most frequently between the Rio Conchos confluence and the Pecos River. Flowing water over coarse sand and fine gravel substrates in streams; typically found in raceways and runs.

Federal Status: State Status: T SGCN: Y
Endemic: N Global Rank: G3G4 State Rank: S1S2

Tamaulipas shiner *Notropis braytoni*

Restricted to the Rio Grande basin in Texas including the lower Pecos River. Typically found in large rivers and creeks associated with a variety of flowing-water habitats such as runs and riffles over gravel, cobble, and sand.

Federal Status: State Status: T SGCN: Y
Endemic: N Global Rank: G4 State Rank: S1S2

INSECTS

American bumblebee *Bombus pensylvanicus*

Habitat description is not available at this time.

Federal Status: State Status: SGCN: Y
Endemic: Global Rank: G3G4 State Rank: SNR

neojuvvenile tiger beetle *Cicindela obsoleta neojuvenilis*

Bare or sparsely vegetated, dry, hard-packed soil; typically in previously disturbed areas; peak adult activity in Jul

Federal Status: State Status: SGCN: Y
Endemic: Global Rank: G5T1 State Rank: SH

No accepted common name *Latineosus cibola*

This species was recently described from Texas in only two localities (a creek and a water treatment plant on a major river) in Val Verde and Webb Cos. (Sun and McCafferty, 2008).

Federal Status: State Status: SGCN: Y
Endemic: Global Rank: G1G2 State Rank: SNR

MAMMALS

black bear *Ursus americanus*

Generalist. Historically found throughout Texas. In Chisos, prefers higher elevations where pinyon-oaks predominate; also occasionally sighted in desert scrub of Trans-Pecos (Black Gap Wildlife Management Area) and Edwards Plateau in juniper-oak habitat. For ssp. luteolus, bottomland hardwoods, floodplain forests, upland hardwoods with mixed pine; marsh. Bottomland hardwoods and large tracts of inaccessible forested areas.

Federal Status: State Status: T SGCN: Y

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WEBB COUNTY

MAMMALS

Endemic: N Global Rank: G5 State Rank: S3

cave myotis bat *Myotis velifer*

Colonial and cave-dwelling; also roosts in rock crevices, old buildings, carports, under bridges, and even in abandoned Cliff Swallow (*Hirundo pyrrhonota*) nests; roosts in clusters of up to thousands of individuals; hibernates in limestone caves of Edwards Plateau and gypsum cave of Panhandle during winter; opportunistic insectivore.

Federal Status: State Status: SGCN: Y
Endemic: N Global Rank: G4G5 State Rank: S4

Davis pocket gopher *Geomys personatus davisi*

Burrows in sandy soils in southern Texas

Federal Status: State Status: SGCN: Y
Endemic: Y Global Rank: G4T2 State Rank: S2

eastern spotted skunk *Spilogale putorius*

Generalist; open fields prairies, croplands, fence rows, farmyards, forest edges & woodlands. Prefer wooded, brushy areas & tallgrass prairies. *S.p. ssp. interrupta* found in wooded areas and tallgrass prairies, preferring rocky canyons and outcrops when such sites are available.

Federal Status: State Status: SGCN: Y
Endemic: N Global Rank: G4 State Rank: S1S3

long-tailed weasel *Mustela frenata*

Includes brushlands, fence rows, upland woods and bottomland hardwoods, forest edges & rocky desert scrub. Usually live close to water.

Federal Status: State Status: SGCN: Y
Endemic: N Global Rank: G5 State Rank: S5

mountain lion *Puma concolor*

Generalist; found in a wide range of habitats statewide. Found most frequently in rugged mountains & riparian zones.

Federal Status: State Status: SGCN: Y
Endemic: N Global Rank: G5 State Rank: S2S3

ocelot *Leopardus pardalis*

Restricted to mesquite-thorn scrub and live-oak mottes; avoids open areas. Dense mixed brush below four feet; thorny shrublands; dense chaparral thickets; breeds and raises young June-November.

Federal Status: LE State Status: E SGCN: Y
Endemic: N Global Rank: G4 State Rank: S1

southern yellow bat *Lasiurus ega*

Relict palm grove is only known Texas habitat. Neotropical species roosting in palms, forages over water; insectivorous; breeding in late winter. Roosts in dead palm fronds in ornamental palms in urban areas.

Federal Status: State Status: SGCN: Y

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WEBB COUNTY

MAMMALS

Endemic: N Global Rank: G5 State Rank: S3S4

Strecker's pocket gopher *Geomys streckeri*

Underground burrows of deep, sandy soils; feed mostly on vegetation; reproductive data not well known, but likely breed year round, with no more than two litters per year

Federal Status: State Status: SGCN: Y

Endemic: Y Global Rank: G1Q State Rank: S1

tricolored bat *Perimyotis subflavus*

Forest, woodland and riparian areas are important. Caves are very important to this species.

Federal Status: State Status: SGCN: Y

Endemic: N Global Rank: G2G3 State Rank: S3S4

western hog-nosed skunk *Conepatus leuconotus*

Habitats include woodlands, grasslands & deserts, to 7200 feet, most common in rugged, rocky canyon country; little is known about the habitat of the ssp. telmalestes

Federal Status: State Status: SGCN: Y

Endemic: N Global Rank: G4 State Rank: S4

western spotted skunk *Spilogale gracilis*

Brushy canyons, rocky outcrops (rimrock) on hillsides and walls of canyons. In semi-arid brushlands in U.S., in wet tropical forests in Mexico. When inactive or bearing young, occupies den in rocks, burrow, hollow log, brush pile, or under building.

Federal Status: State Status: SGCN: Y

Endemic: N Global Rank: G5 State Rank: S5

white-nosed coati *Nasua narica*

Woodlands, riparian corridors and canyons. Most individuals in Texas probably transients from Mexico; diurnal and crepuscular; very sociable; forages on ground and in trees; omnivorous; may be susceptible to hunting, trapping, and pet trade

Federal Status: State Status: T SGCN: Y

Endemic: N Global Rank: G5 State Rank: S1

MOLLUSKS

Mexican Fawnsfoot *Truncilla cognata*

Occurs in large rivers but may also be found in medium-sized streams. Is commonly found in habitats with some flowing water, often in protected near shore areas such as banks and backwaters but also at the head of riffles; the latter more often supporting both sub-adults and adults. Typically occurs in substrates of mixed sand and gravel as well as soft unconsolidated sediments. Considered intolerant of reservoirs (Randklev et al. 2017b; Randklev et al. forthcoming). [Mussels of Texas 2019]

Federal Status: State Status: T SGCN: Y

Endemic: N Global Rank: G1 State Rank: S1

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WEBB COUNTY

MOLLUSKS

Salina Mucket *Potamilus metnecktayi*

Occurs in medium to large rivers, where it may be found in substrates composed of various combinations of mud, sand, gravel, and cobble, as well as under rocks. It occurs in areas with slow to moderate current, most often in stable littoral habitats dominated by boulder or bedrock habitat; not known from reservoirs (Randklev et al. 2017b; Randklev et al. forthcoming). [Mussels of Texas 2019]

Federal Status:	State Status: T	SGCN: Y
Endemic: N	Global Rank: G1	State Rank: S1

Texas Hornshell *Popenaias popeii*

Occurs in small streams to large rivers in slow to moderate current, often residing in rock crevices, travertine shelves, and under large boulders, where small-grained material, such as clay, silt, or sand gathers. Can also occur in riffles that are clean swept of soft silt; not known from reservoirs (Carman 2007; Inoue et al. 2014; Randklev et al. 2017b; Randklev et al. forthcoming). [Mussels of Texas 2019]

Federal Status: LE	State Status: E	SGCN: Y
Endemic: N	Global Rank: G1	State Rank: S1

REPTILES

northern cat-eyed snake *Leptodeira septentrionalis septentrionalis*

Terrestrial: Thorn scrub and deciduous woodland; dense thickets bordering ponds and streams.

Federal Status:	State Status: T	SGCN: Y
Endemic: N	Global Rank: G5	State Rank: S3

reticulate collared lizard *Crotaphytus reticulatus*

Terrestrial: Requires open brush-grasslands; thorn-scrub vegetation, usually on well-drained rolling terrain of shallow gravel, caliche, or sandy soils; often on scattered flat rocks below escarpments or isolated rock outcrops among scattered clumps of prickly pear and mesquite

Federal Status:	State Status:	SGCN: Y
Endemic: N	Global Rank: G3	State Rank: S4

Rio Grande river cooter *Pseudemys gorzugi*

Aquatic: Habitat includes rivers and their more permanent spring-fed tributary streams, beaver ponds, and stock tanks (Garrett and Barker 1987). Occupied waters may have a muddy, sandy, or rocky bottom, and may or may not contain aquatic vegetation (Degenhardt et al. 1996).

Federal Status:	State Status:	SGCN: Y
Endemic: N	Global Rank: G3G4	State Rank: S2

Tamaulipan spot-tailed earless lizard *Holbrookia subcaudalis*

Terrestrial: Habitats include moderately open prairie-brushland regions, particularly fairly flat areas free of vegetation or other obstructions (e.g., open meadows, old and new fields, graded roadways, cleared and disturbed areas, prairie savanna, and active agriculture including row crops); also, oak-juniper woodlands and mesquite-prickly pear associations (Axtell 1968, Bartlett and Bartlett 1999).

Federal Status:	State Status:	SGCN: Y
Endemic:	Global Rank: GNR	State Rank: S2

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WEBB COUNTY

REPTILES

Texas horned lizard

Phrynosoma cornutum

Terrestrial: Open habitats with sparse vegetation, including grass, prairie, cactus, scattered brush or scrubby trees; soil may vary in texture from sandy to rocky; burrows into soil, enters rodent burrows, or hides under rock when inactive. Occurs to 6000 feet, but largely limited below the pinyon-juniper zone on mountains in the Big Bend area.

Federal Status: State Status: T SGCN: Y
Endemic: N Global Rank: G4G5 State Rank: S3

Texas indigo snake

Drymarchon melanurus erebennus

Terrestrial: Thornbush-chaparral woodland of south Texas, in particular dense riparian corridors. Can do well in suburban and irrigated croplands. Requires moist microhabitats, such as rodent burrows, for shelter.

Federal Status: State Status: SGCN: Y
Endemic: Global Rank: G5T4 State Rank: S4

Texas tortoise

Gopherus berlandieri

Terrestrial: Open scrub woods, arid brush, lomas, grass-cactus association; often in areas with sandy well-drained soils. When inactive occupies shallow depressions dug at base of bush or cactus; sometimes in underground burrow or under object. Eggs are laid in nests dug in soil near or under bushes.

Federal Status: State Status: T SGCN: Y
Endemic: N Global Rank: G4 State Rank: S2

western box turtle

Terrapene ornata

Terrestrial: Ornate or western box turtles inhabit prairie grassland, pasture, fields, sandhills, and open woodland. They are essentially terrestrial but sometimes enter slow, shallow streams and creek pools. For shelter, they burrow into soil (e.g., under plants such as yucca) (Converse et al. 2002) or enter burrows made by other species.

Federal Status: State Status: SGCN: Y
Endemic: N Global Rank: G5 State Rank: S3

western hognose snake

Heterodon nasicus

Terrestrial: Shortgrass or mixed grass prairie, with gravel or sandy soils. Often found associated with draws, floodplains, and more mesic habitats within the arid landscape. Frequently occurs in shrub encroached grasslands.

Federal Status: State Status: SGCN: Y
Endemic: N Global Rank: G5 State Rank: S4

western massasauga

Sistrurus tergeminus

Terrestrial: Shortgrass or mixed grass prairie, with gravel or sandy soils. Often found associated with draws, floodplains, and more mesic habitats within the arid landscape. Frequently occurs in shrub encroached grasslands.

Federal Status: State Status: SGCN: Y
Endemic: N Global Rank: G3G4 State Rank: S3S4

PLANTS

arrowleaf milkvine

Matelea sagittifolia

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WEBB COUNTY

PLANTS

Most consistently encountered in thornscrub in South Texas; Perennial; Flowering March-July; Fruiting April-July and Dec?

Federal Status:	State Status:	SGCN: Y
Endemic: N	Global Rank: G3	State Rank: S3

ashy dogweed *Thymophylla tephroleuca*

Grasslands with scattered shrubs; most sites on sands or sandy loams on level or very gently rolling topography over Eocene strata of the Laredo Formation; flowering March-May depending to some extent on rainfall

Federal Status: LE	State Status: E	SGCN: Y
Endemic: Y	Global Rank: G2	State Rank: S2

Buckley's spiderwort *Tradescantia buckleyi*

Occurs on sandy loam or clay soils in grasslands or shrublands underlain by the Beaumont Formation.

Federal Status:	State Status:	SGCN: Y
Endemic: N	Global Rank: G3	State Rank: S3

Croft's bluet *Houstonia croftiae*

Occurs in sparsely vegetated areas in grasslands or among shrubs (Carr 2015).

Federal Status:	State Status:	SGCN: Y
Endemic: Y	Global Rank: G3	State Rank: S3

Fitch's hedgehog cactus *Echinocereus reichenbachii* var. *fitchii*

Grasslands, thorn shrublands, and mesquite-acacia woodlands on sandy, possibly somewhat saline, soils on the coastal prairie. Within these communities, the plants may be most frequently found in open areas that are somewhat sparsely covered with brush of a low stature. Frequently grows at the ecotone where these upland areas meet lower areas dominated by halophytic grasses and forbs; Perennial

Federal Status:	State Status:	SGCN: Y
Endemic: N	Global Rank: G5T3	State Rank: S3

Johnston's frankenia *Frankenia johnstonii*

Dwarf shrublands on strongly saline, highly alkaline, calcareous or gypseous, clayey to sandy soils of valley flats or rocky slopes; mapped soils at many sites are of the Catarina and/or Maverick Series, other mapped soils include Copita, Brennan, Zapata, and Montell series; most sites are underlain by Eocene sandstones and clays of the Jackson Group or the Yegua and Laredo formations; a few are underlain by El Pico clay or the Catahoula and Frio formations shrublands; flowering throughout the growing season depending upon rainfall

Federal Status: DL	State Status:	SGCN: Y
Endemic: N	Global Rank: G3	State Rank: S3

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WEBB COUNTY

PLANTS

Kleberg saltbush

Atriplex klebergorum

Usually occurs in sparsely vegetated saline areas, including flats and draws; in light sandy or clayey loam soils with other halophytes; occasionally observed on scraped oil pad sites; observed flowering in late August-early September, but may vary with rainfall, fruits are usually present in fall; because of its annual nature, populations fluctuate widely from year to year

Federal Status: State Status: SGCN: Y
Endemic: Y Global Rank: G2 State Rank: S2

McCart's whitlow-wort

Paronychia maccartii

Known only from the type specimen, habitat poorly understood; substrate for type location described as very hard-packed red sand, possibly the Cuevita-Randado Complex, probably occurring in thorn shrubland plant community; based on type specimens presence of flowers and collection date, flowers in March, possibly also in other months and in response to rainfall

Federal Status: State Status: SGCN: Y
Endemic: Y Global Rank: GH State Rank: SH

Nickels' cory cactus

Coryphantha nickelsiae

Limestone outcrops and nearby alluvial or gravelly soils on hills or plains in grasslands or shrublands at low elevations; known sites in Mexico have been described as Chihuahuan Desert scrub; flowering August through September

Federal Status: State Status: SGCN: Y
Endemic: N Global Rank: G2 State Rank: SH

sand sheet leaf-flower

Phyllanthus abnormis var. *riograndensis*

Semi-desert scrub of deep South Texas; Annual; Flowering Feb-July; Fruiting Oct-March

Federal Status: State Status: SGCN: Y
Endemic: Y Global Rank: G5T3 State Rank: S3

shortcrown milkvine

Matelea brevicoronata

Primarily in grasslands on tight sandy or silty substrates; Perennial; Flowering March-Sept; Fruiting May-Sept

Federal Status: State Status: SGCN: Y
Endemic: Y Global Rank: G3 State Rank: S3

Siler's huaco

Manfreda sileri

Rare in a variety of grasslands and shrublands on dry sites; Perennial; Flowering April-July; Fruiting June-July

Federal Status: State Status: SGCN: Y
Endemic: N Global Rank: G3 State Rank: S3

South Texas gilia

Gilia ludens

Occurs in open areas in shrublands on shallow sandy loam over rock outcrops; Perennial; Flowering Dec-April; Fruiting March

Federal Status: State Status: SGCN: Y
Endemic: Y Global Rank: G3 State Rank: S3

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WEBB COUNTY

PLANTS

South Texas yellow clammyweed *Polanisia erosa ssp. brevigliandulosa*

Sand plains of south Texas (Ilitis 1958). Flowering early spring-mid fall.

Federal Status:	State Status:	SGCN: Y
Endemic: Y	Global Rank: G5T3T4	State Rank: S3S4

Texas almond *Prunus minutiflora*

Wide-ranging but scarce, in a variety of grassland and shrubland situations, mostly on calcareous soils underlain by limestone but occasionally in sandier neutral soils underlain by granite; Perennial; Flowering Feb-May and Oct; Fruiting Feb-Sept

Federal Status:	State Status:	SGCN: Y
Endemic: Y	Global Rank: G3G4	State Rank: S3S4

Texas shrimp-plant *Yeatesia platystegia*

Occurs very sparingly in a variety of shrublands and canyon woodlands at widely scattered locations; Perennial; Flowering/Fruiting April-Dec

Federal Status:	State Status:	SGCN: Y
Endemic: N	Global Rank: G3G4	State Rank: S3S4

Texas stonecrop *Lenophyllum texanum*

Found in shrublands on clay dunes (lomas) at the mouth of the Rio Grande and on xeric calcareous rock outcrops at scattered inland sites; Perennial; Flowering/Fruiting Nov-Feb

Federal Status:	State Status:	SGCN: Y
Endemic: N	Global Rank: G3	State Rank: S3

yellow-flowered alicocha *Echinocereus papillosus*

Under shrubs or in open areas on various substrates; Perennial; Flowering Jan-April.

Federal Status:	State Status:	SGCN: Y
Endemic: N	Global Rank: G3	State Rank: S3

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