

## NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION

**AGENCY:** National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), Ames Research Center

**ACTION:** Mitigated Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)

**SUMMARY:** Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), as amended (Title 42 United States Code [U.S.C.] § 4321, et seq.), the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provisions of NEPA (Title 40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] Parts 1500 – 1508), and NASA’s procedures for implementing NEPA (14 CFR Subpart 1216.3), NASA has made a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the Hangar 3 Building Demolition Project. This project, proposed by Planetary Ventures LLC (PV), is located within the NASA Moffett Federal Airfield (MFA) area at NASA’s Ames Research Center (Ames) in Mountain View, California. This FONSI summarizes NASA’s assessment of the environmental impacts of the proposed action (i.e., the demolition of Hangar 3) and determines that, with implementation of certain mitigation measures, the proposed action will not result in a significant direct, indirect, or cumulative impact to the quality of the human environment. The Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) was published for a 30-day public notice and comment period in June 2022. No public comments on the Draft EA were received.

**DATE:** 12/6/22

**ADDRESS:** The Final EA that serves as the basis for this FONSI is available at <https://environment.arc.nasa.gov/NEPA.html>.

### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

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### SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION:

The Draft EA was made available to federal, state, and local agencies, interested parties and the general public for review and comment on June 17, 2022. A Notice of Availability for the Draft EA was published in the following newspapers: Mountain View Voice, Palo Alto Weekly, Sunnyvale Sun, and the San Jose Mercury News. In addition, hard copies of the Draft EA were made available at the City of Mountain View Public Library and the City of Sunnyvale Public Library. No comments were received during the 30-day public comment period that ended on July 18, 2022.

At the conclusion of the public comment period, NASA prepared the Final EA. As no comments were received on the Draft EA, NASA has not made any material revisions to the document. The Final EA is substantively the same as the Draft EA that published on June 17, 2022. The Final EA with appendices are hereby incorporated by reference into this FONSI. Upon signature of this FONSI, a Notice of Availability of the Final EA and FONSI will be published in the same newspapers as the Draft EA (see above).

## **Purpose and Need**

Based on the terms of the lease executed between NASA and PV for the MFA premises in 2014, it was anticipated that the Hangar 3 building would be rehabilitated for use as a research and development facility. However, despite significant efforts to repair the damaged trusses of the Hangar 3 building, rehabilitation of the building for reuse has proven ineffective, and it has been determined that the building is unsafe for occupancy and vulnerable to further damage and collapse. The unstable condition of Hangar 3 does not meet NASA's obligation to manage historic structures in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) (Title 54 U.S.C. § 300101 et seq.), California Building Code (2016) (Chapter 1, Part 2, [A] 116.1 - Unsafe Structures and Equipment), and California Building Code (2019) §102.6.2. The purpose and need of the Project is to remedy this unsafe and implement a solution that eliminates the unavoidable continued structural degradation or unplanned/unmanaged catastrophic collapse of Hangar 3.

## **Proposed Action and No Action Alternative**

The Proposed Action would involve the demolition of Hangar 3, including removal and management of all solid and hazardous waste, equipment, and any contaminated environmental media (e.g., water used to suppress dust). The Proposed Action would occur in three phases: 1) Pre-demolition activities (Phase 1) lasting approximately 80 to 90 working days; 2) demolition (Phase 2) lasting approximately 125 working days; and 3) waste disposal and recycling (Phase 3) occurring concurrently with Phase 1 and Phase 2. The total duration for all phases would be nine months. Specific actions which would occur in each phase are described in the EA. Upon completion of the Proposed Action, all above ground Hangar 3 components would be removed and only the concrete slab would remain, consistent with pre-Project conditions. No use is currently planned for the site once demolition occurs.

Under the No Action Alternative, Hangar 3 would remain unoccupied, and maintenance of the temporary internal shoring and hydraulic jacking system by PV would continue. Under this alternative, no further attempts to complete structural upgrades of Hangar 3 would be undertaken. Although PV has removed all items stored in the structure due to safety concerns, some ongoing maintenance of the extensive internal shoring and hydraulic jacking system for the structure would be required under this alternative. Under this alternative, the structure could sustain damage as a result of an earthquake or high wind loading, which could result in a partial or full collapse of Hangar 3. Such a collapse would pose a safety of life risk to nearby personnel and damage to nearby property from flying debris.

## **Summary of Environmental Impacts**

Ten environmental resource categories were analyzed in the EA: air quality; biological resources; cultural resources; greenhouse gases (GHG) and climate change; hazards, safety and waste management; noise and vibration; transportation and circulation; utilities; visual resources; and water resources. Four resource areas were not carried forward for detailed analysis in the EA because it was determined these resources were either not present or would not be impacted by the Proposed Action. Resources eliminated from detailed consideration in the EA were floodplains and wetlands; geological resources; land use; and socioeconomics and environmental justice. A summary of reasonably foreseeable potential environmental consequences is provided in Table 1.

The EA identifies and analyzes a suite of "avoidance and minimization measures" and "mitigation measures" for the Project. These measures help to ensure that the level of environmental impacts from

Project implementation are less than significant. PV has agreed to implement all of the identified measures.<sup>1</sup> These are described in the EA and consolidated in Appendix F of the EA.

**Table 1. Summary of Potential Environmental Consequences**

Resource	Proposed Action
<p><b>Air Quality</b>  (EA Section 3.2.1)</p>	<p>Mobile source exhaust emissions would be generated from off-road construction<sup>2</sup> equipment, demolition activities, workers' commutes and hauling of demolition material. Emissions would be below the Federal <i>de minimis</i> and Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) thresholds for all criteria pollutants and would be less than significant. Fugitive dust would be generated from demolition activities. A water truck would spray water on exposed areas or those that could generate dust during demolition activities. The Proposed Action would wet any asbestos containing material (ACM) prior to demolition. As a result, any effects related to the potential release of ACM into the environment would be mitigated and less than significant. Construction activities related to the Proposed Action would not result in a health risk from exposure to diesel particulate matter (DPM). Impacts to air quality would be less than significant.</p>
<p><b>Biological Resources</b>  (EA Section 3.2.2)</p>	<p>The Proposed Action could result in potential impacts to nesting/overwintering burrowing owls, nesting and roosting common (i.e., non-special-status) species of birds, and roosting common species of bats. The Proposed Action would not result in impacts to wetlands, aquatic habitats, riparian habitats, or other sensitive habitats; threatened or endangered species or their habitats; special-status plants; trees; or wildlife movement corridors.</p> <p>The Proposed Action would implement Mitigation Measures BIO-1A through BIO-3D (14 measures specified in the EA) to minimize potential impacts to burrowing owls, nesting and roosting birds, and roosting bats. Because the Proposed Action would not result in effects that are substantial (i.e., resulting in a measurable decline in regional populations) or that could be permanent in their effect on population or subpopulation survival without active management, the impacts would be less than significant.</p>
<p><b>Cultural Resources</b>  (EA Section 3.2.3)</p>	<p>The Proposed Action would result in the demolition of Hangar 3, which is both individually listed as a historic structure in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) and as a contributor to the NRHP-listed Naval Air Station (NAS) Sunnyvale Historic District. The demolition of Hangar 3 would also disrupt the visual qualities and historic character within the District as a whole. This would impact the historic setting of the District and the individual contributors, particularly on the eastside of the airfield, which includes Hangar 2, Building 055, the East Aircraft Parking Apron, other contributing airfield infrastructure (runways and taxiways), operations and support buildings, and the munitions magazines and historic handling facilities. Thus, the Proposed Action would have an adverse effect on historic resources, as defined by 36 CFR 800(a)(1), Protection of Historic Properties.</p> <p>However, the NAS Sunnyvale Historic District and its remaining various contributors would retain sufficient, albeit diminished, historic integrity following the completion of the Proposed Action and would continue to qualify for listing on the NRHP. Additionally, the adverse effects resulting from the Proposed Action would be</p>

<sup>1</sup>NASA, as lessor and owner of the MFA premises, has the authority to oversee and manage all aspects of the Hangar 3 demolition Project and to enforce PV's implementation of the associated mitigation measures.

<sup>2</sup>"Construction" and "construction activities" refers only to demolition and pre-demolition activities as described in Section 2.2.5 of the Final EA.

**Table 1. Summary of Potential Environmental Consequences**

Resource	Proposed Action
	<p>addressed and resolved through implementation of the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) made between the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, PV, and NASA on December 5, 2022. Failure to implement the Proposed Action could result in catastrophic failure of the H3 structure, which could result in significant damage to the remaining structures located within the NASA Sunnyvale Historic District, thereby causing a significant and potentially irreversible diminishment of the area’s historic integrity.</p> <p>There are no ground disturbing activities located within the identified area of heightened prehistoric-era or historic-era archaeological sensitivity or areas with known sites. In the event that ground disturbing activities were required and archaeological materials were discovered, all work would be halted, the NASA Cultural Resources Manager would be notified, and the appropriate steps outlined in the Integrated Cultural Resources Management Plan Standard Operating Procedure 8: Inadvertent Discovery would be implemented. As a result, impacts on cultural resources under NEPA would be less than significant.</p>
<p><b>Greenhouse Gases and Climate Change</b> <b>(Section 3.2.4)</b></p>	<p>Demolition of Hangar 3 would result in the emissions of greenhouse gases (GHGs) generated from off-road construction equipment, demolition activities, workers’ commutes and hauling of demolition material. The accumulation of GHGs within the atmosphere leads to global climate change. The GHG emissions generated by the Proposed Action would occur over a short duration and would not exceed the Federal Mandatory Reporting Threshold. The GHG emissions from the Proposed Action would not contribute directly or incrementally to global climate change. The Proposed Action would not result in a significant impact to global climate change.</p>
<p><b>Hazards, Safety and Waste Management</b> <b>(EA Section 3.2.5)</b></p>	<p>Demolition of Hangar 3 would result in potential exposure of other MFA users to lead-based paint (LBP), ACM, and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCB) in the vicinity of the Project site. All construction activities would comply with Avoidance and Minimization Measure (AMM)-1: Environmental Issues Management Plan (EIMP), to ensure demolition would not expose personnel to site contaminants and minimize the risk of release of waste contaminants into the environment. To minimize hazards from falls, scaffolding would be installed as per Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standards. Implementation of the Proposed Action would create short-term impacts with regard to hazardous wastes during mobilization, demolition, and demobilization activities. All Project activities would be conducted in compliance with applicable regulations, AMM-1: EIMP, and the site-specific health and safety plan. Moreover, there is adequate capacity at the landfills for any demolition waste.</p> <p>By implementing appropriate plans and complying with applicable regulations, impacts related to worker safety or the exposure to hazardous materials would be less than significant.</p>
<p><b>Noise and Vibration</b> <b>(EA Section 3.2.6)</b></p>	<p>Two types of short-term noise impacts could occur during implementation of the Proposed Action: 1) traffic-related noise from the movement of demolition crew, equipment, and support materials; and 2) noise generated during actual H3 demolition and removal. Noise modeling indicates that impacts of demolition activity to sensitive receptors would be negligible. Modeling also indicates that vibration generated from demolition equipment would not be expected to cause damage to existing nearby buildings. Demolition noise levels would be expected to be well below impact thresholds. Additionally, the Proposed Action would implement the protection</p>

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	measures noted in AMM-2: Noise and Vibration, to further reduce temporary construction noise and vibration impacts on adjacent sensitive receptors. Therefore, noise and vibration impacts on sensitive receptors would be less than significant.
<b>Transportation and Circulation</b>  <b>(EA Section 3.2.7)</b>	<p>Traffic impact analysis found that the surrounding study intersections would operate at level of service (LOS) D or better during the AM and PM peak hours under background conditions. Addition of the peak hour Proposed Action traffic<sup>3</sup> to the study intersections would have a negligible impact on traffic circulation in the Project’s local region of influence and would not result in a significant impact at the study intersections. The effects of the Proposed Action on the transportation system would be temporary since the Proposed Action would not generate new operational trips once construction was complete. No offsite improvements at study intersections would be needed under the Proposed Action. Additionally, the Proposed Action would implement AMM-3: Construction Traffic Control Plan, to ensure construction traffic does not block access for other area users and coordination occurs with other construction activities during the same construction period. Since the Proposed Action would not result in a substantial increase in traffic generation or increase in the use of connecting street systems, the direct, indirect and cumulative impact would be less than significant on local users.</p>
<b>Utilities</b>  <b>(EA Section 3.2.8)</b>	<p>The Proposed Action would not result in any new utility infrastructure. Active utility infrastructure connected to Hangar 3 would be identified and disabled before initiating any site work. Underground utility lines would not be impacted as no subsurface activity would occur. All existing service connections would be capped or otherwise disabled. Above-ground water lines serving Hangar 3 would be drained, terminated, and capped at the connection to the service line where it goes below ground. All underground NASA communication infrastructure and vaults would be protected during demolition of Hangar 3. Therefore, the Proposed Action would not disrupt or accidentally damage existing utility lines and the impact would be less than significant.</p>
<b>Visual Resources</b>  <b>(EA Section 3.2.9)</b>	<p>Permanent changes to the existing visual landscape would result from the demolition of Hangar 3. Hangar 3 is a prominent feature in views toward MFA from nearby locations, reinforced by the presence of Hangar 2. As a pair, these structures are highly recognizable visual and historic features in the local and regional landscape. Therefore, the removal of Hangar 3 would be noticeable by viewers familiar with the area. However, such visual changes, while substantial, would not be significant , as Hangar 2 would provide a similar but new focal point in public views and would maintain the overall visual character of the Project area. As such, impacts on the existing visual character and the scenic quality of public views would be less than significant. Additionally, adverse effects on the visual landscape resulting from completion of the Project would be mitigated through implementation of the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) made between the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, PV, and NASA on December 5, 2022 (see above discussion on “Cultural Resources.”).</p>
<b>Water Resources</b>	<p>Under the Proposed Action, construction activities would include abatement, demolition, and waste disposal. All construction activities would be above-ground, and no site grading or site disturbance would occur. Water generated from dust suppression and watering of ACM prior to demolition would be collected and treated,</p>

<sup>3</sup> Proposed action traffic includes worker traffic and haul trips for the transportation of equipment and waste.

**Table 1. Summary of Potential Environmental Consequences**

Resource	Proposed Action
(EA Section 3.2.10)	as necessary. All water discharged from demolition activities would be collected in covered and secured Baker tanks and tested prior to being transported offsite or discharged to the sanitary sewer. To minimize potential impacts associated with runoff and sedimentation, the construction contractor would implement a sitewide Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) in accordance with AMM-1: EIMP. Ongoing groundwater monitoring would not be disturbed at MFA. There would be no excavation associated with the Proposed Action; therefore, no groundwater would be expected to be encountered, and dewatering would not be needed. As such, significant impacts to groundwater would not occur. Under this alternative, potential impacts to water resources would be minimized through implementation of AMM-1: EIMP and would be less than significant.

**Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI):** Based on the review of the EA and FONSI completed for the Hangar 3 Building Demolition Project, including the environmental analyses and mitigation measures in the EA, I conclude based on my independent judgment that the Proposed Action will not have a significant impact on the quality of the human or natural environment either by itself or when considering cumulative effects. The EA and supporting materials in the administrative record for this Project provide sufficient evidence for making this determination. The requirements of NEPA, the Council on Environmental Quality, and 14 CFR subpart 1216.3, have been fulfilled, and an EIS is not necessary and will not be prepared.

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 Dr. Eugene L. Tu  
 Director  
 Ames Research Center

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 Date