

Langley Construction and Maintenance FONPA Announcement

Due to its proximity to the Back River and Chesapeake Bay, Langley Air Force Base is located in the 100-year floodplain. The 633rd Civil Engineer Squadron invites public comment on a two-year comprehensive Finding of No Practicable Alternative for the proposed construction, maintenance and repair of facilities on Langley Air Force Base that are located in the floodplain.

This FONPA documents that there is no practicable alternative other than within the 100-year floodplain; specifies that proposed projects will be designed or modified to minimize potential harm to the floodplain; and places facilities or infrastructure above floodplain elevations as feasible. This FONPA will be effective for two years from the date of signature, after which a new FONPA will be required.

Executive Order 11988 Floodplain Management directs all Federal agencies to “take action to reduce the risk of flood loss, minimize the impact of floods on human safety, health and welfare, and restore and preserve the natural and beneficial values served by floodplains in carrying out its responsibilities,” and to “avoid direct or indirect support of floodplain development wherever there is a practicable alternative.”

Only small portions of the installation remain outside the 100-year floodplain, including the clear zone on the western end of the runway and at a few small locations on the north side of the base, away from existing infrastructure.

Unfortunately, since most of Langley lies within the floodplain, there is no practicable alternative to the various construction, maintenance and facility repair actions undertaken in support of the mission. Many of these proposed projects do not have the potential to significantly affect the environment and as such, qualify for a categorical exclusion under the National Environmental Policy Act. These actions do not require further environmental analysis in an Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Statement, but must meet the requirements set forth in EO 11988, and state why no practicable alternatives exist through a FONPA.

For a full copy of the findings document, to acquire more information or to provide comments, please contact David Jennings at 764-1126, or david.jennings.4@us.af.mil.