

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION
DAKOTA-MINNESOTA AIRPORTS DISTRICT OFFICE
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
FOR THE RUNWAY RELOCATION AND EXTENSION PROJECT
AT THE CASSELTON AIRPORT
IN CASS COUNTY, NORTH DAKOTA**

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) prepared this Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the Runway Relocation and Extension Project at Casselton Regional Airport (5N8). The proposed action and potential environmental impacts are described in detail in the Environmental Assessment (EA) that was completed for the project dated July 2026, which is attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference. The EA was prepared in accordance with the guidelines and requirements set forth by the FAA to implement the environmental review and disclosure provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA).

Based on the evaluation in the EA and mitigation commitments defined in the document, no significant impacts associated with the Project were identified in accordance with Order 1050.1G, *FAA National Environmental Policy Act Implementing Procedures*. Therefore, it has been determined that an environmental impact statement is not needed, and this FONSI was prepared. This FONSI provides a summary of the Airport Sponsor's Proposed Action, mitigation requirements, and the basis for the FAA's finding.

I. Project Location, Description and Federal Actions

Casselton Regional Airport (5N8) is located approximately two miles south of Casselton, North Dakota (ND) and twenty miles west of Fargo, ND. The Airport has one runway, Runway 13/31, which is 3,900 feet long by 75 feet wide and constructed of concrete, with a connected parallel taxiway. Each runway end currently has a GPS approach with visibility minimums down to 1-mile. An active Red River Valley and Western Railroad (RRV&W) line runs parallel to Airport Road, about 0.2 miles south-west of Airport facilities.

The proposed action identified in the EA will extend Runway 13/31 and the parallel taxiway by 1,600 feet for a total ultimate length of 5,500 feet and relocate the runway 400 feet to the east, further away from the railroad line. The runway width will be 75 feet with a taxiway width of 35 feet. The project will include acquisition of 250 acres of land needed to develop approach procedures with $\frac{3}{4}$ -mile visibility minimums for the ultimate 5,500-foot Runway 13/31.

For the proposed action, implementation will require the following major federal actions by the FAA:

- Approval of the revised Airport Layout Plan (ALP) to incorporate the new Runway 13/31, associated taxiways, and land acquisition.
- Airspace review and approval for the new runway configuration and establishment of GPS-based instrument procedures.
- Airport Improvement Program (AIP) funding for land acquisition and eligible runway and taxiway construction.

II. Purpose and Need

The project purpose, for FAA purposes, is to maintain the runway and parallel taxiway at 5N8 to meet existing user needs and current FAA airport design standards and controlling adequate property for long-term airport needs. Additional purpose for the airport sponsor is to accommodate expected future aviation activity and to allow for operations during inclement weather (instrument meteorological conditions).

The project purpose is stated separately for the FAA and the airport sponsor because the proposed action includes more runway length than is currently eligible for FAA funding. FAA funding eligibility is tied to existing infrastructure and the existing critical aircraft, which limit improvements to the current 3,900-foot runway and related standards. The airport sponsor's purpose, however, considers anticipated needs of the ultimate critical aircraft, which are not eligible for FAA funding.

The key elements driving the need for the project are:

- Deteriorating pavement conditions on the runway and associated parallel taxiway.
- Insufficient land to increase separation of runway and taxiway and accommodate existing and future critical aircraft design standards in the apron, hangar, and development area.
- Inadequate runway length to accommodate future operations of larger aircraft.
- Instrument approach procedures, navigational aids, and lighting for any runway changes.
- Incompatible land use in Runway Protection Zones (RPZs) and insufficient land to provide clear RPZs.

To meet the project purpose and address these needs, the following objectives were pursued:

- Relocate Runway 13/31, parallel taxiway, and associated connector taxiway pavements.
- Meet design standards for the existing and expected future critical aircraft and provide space to meet based and transient aircraft design standards and facility needs.
- Provide the required runway length for existing, interim, and long-term critical aircraft needs.
- Update instrument approach procedures, navigational aids, and lighting to correspond with runway changes, including improved approach minimums.
- Minimize incompatible land uses in the Runway 13/31 RPZs.

The project's purpose and needs are described in more detail in EA Chapter 1 Section 1.2 Project Purpose and Section 1.3, Project Need.

III. Alternatives Considered

This project's alternatives analysis focused on relocation of Runway 13/31 to increase the separation distance from the terminal area and aprons to meet the purpose and need, user needs, and FAA design standards while minimizing environmental impacts and incompatible land uses. The array of alternatives considered includes:

- No Action: Maintain existing Airport facilities as-is.

- Runway Alternative A: Extend existing Runway 13/31 by 1,600 feet for 5,500 feet of total length.
- Runway Alternative B: Relocate Runway 13/31 up to 400 feet to the east; extend to 5,500 feet of total length. Alternative B analysis also considered a 300-foot separation variation.
- Runway Alternative B $\frac{3}{4}$: Alternative B with $\frac{3}{4}$ -mile visibility.
- Runway Alternative C: Construct 5,500-foot Runway 18/36, decommission Runway 13/31.

As detailed in EA Chapter 2 Alternatives, summarized in Table 2.1 Alternatives Comparison Matrix, Alternative B with a 400-foot runway to taxiway separation best meets FAA standards for airfield design and unobstructed runway protection zones and other surfaces. Specifically, in alignment with the Purpose and Need and project screening conducted as part of this EA, this alternative:

- Provides adequate separation of the runway and parallel taxiway from the terminal and apron areas
- Comply with FAA design standards
- Provides RPZs free of incompatible land uses
- Reserves land for future improved approach minimums for operations in low-visibility conditions
- Provides space for more aprons and landside development that could accommodate Group II aircraft
- Provides adequate runway length for existing and future users.

Alternative B with a $\frac{3}{4}$ -mile visibility minimum also meets the stated objectives. This alternative would involve additional property acquisition but will reduce the number of times the surrounding area would be impacted by future property acquisition and roadway relocation. This approach supports achieving the ultimate build condition, made possible through state or local funding sources, while enhancing operational reliability by allowing aircraft to land in lower visibility conditions.

The area affected by Alternative B $\frac{3}{4}$ encompasses all impacts associated with Alternative B. **Alternative B $\frac{3}{4}$ was carried forward for detailed environmental analysis as the preferred alternative, in comparison to the No Action alternative.**

IV. Environmental Consequences

After careful analysis and consultation with various state and federal resource and regulatory agencies, it was determined that the Proposed Action satisfies the purpose and need for the project while causing no significant environmental impacts. The proposed action will not significantly affect environmental resources, ***See EA Chapter 3 Environmental Consequences, summarized in Table 3-6 here:***

Table 3-6: Summary of Environmental Consequences

Environmental Impact Category		No-Action Alternative: Significant Impact?	Preferred Alternative - Alternative B ¾: Significant Impact?	Permitting/Mitigation & Associated Actions
Aviation Emissions and Air Quality		No	No. Minimal impacts during construction.	Implement EPA-recommended best management practices (BMPs) and emissions control strategies during construction.
Biological Resources (including fish, wildlife, and plants)		No	No	None
Coastal Resources		No	No	None
DOT Section 4(f) and Land and Water Conservation Fund (Section 6(f))		No	No	None
Farmlands		No	No. 180 acres directly converted but NRCS AD-1006 form score = 193, below 200 significance threshold.	None
Hazardous Materials, Solid Waste, and Pollution Prevention		No	No	Dispose of construction materials and solid waste in accordance with state and local laws.
Historic, Architectural Archeological, and Cultural Resources		No	No	None
Land Use	RPZ	No	No. Improved RPZ compatibility.	Fee-simple land acquisition of Runway 31 RPZ, and easement acquisition for 3 acres Runway 13 RPZ.
	Utilities	No	No.	The airport sponsor will vacate, extinguish, subordinate easements within the project area as needed to ensure good title.
	Transportation	No	No. Roadway realignment and RRV&W railroad crossings.	Vacation of prescriptive rights-of-way for existing roads and establishment of new rights-of-way will be completed through the platting process administered by Cass County. The County will coordinate this process with Everest Township and solicit their comments. Any roadway or railroad crossing improvements, if required, would be designed and implemented in coordination with the railroad and applicable regulatory authorities prior to construction.

Table 3-6: Summary of Environmental Consequences

Environmental Impact Category		No-Action Alternative: Significant Impact?	Preferred Alternative - Alternative B ¾: Significant Impact?	Permitting/Mitigation & Associated Actions
Natural Resources and Energy Supply		No	No. Minor increase in energy and materials demand during construction and operation	None
Noise and Compatible Land Use		No	No	None
Socioeconomics and Children's Health & Safety Risks		No	No	Land acquisition (fee simple and easements) in compliance with Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisitions
Visual Effects and Visual Character		No	No	None
Water Resources	Surface Water & Stormwater	No	No. Net impervious surface increase of 48,000 square yards. Alteration to DWR permitted agricultural drain. Culverts beneath new runway end to preserve drainage.	- Stormwater infrastructure improvements, no increase to outflow - Construction Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan - Onsite Best Management Practices - DWR notification and drainage permit
	Floodplains	No	Impacts to ND DWR BLE 1 % annual chance of flood elevation.	- Coordination with Floodplain administrator - Stormwater infrastructure improvements - Runway and taxiway above 1% elevation
	Groundwater	No	No	None
	Wetlands	No	- More than 0.5 acres direct wetland impact under USACE jurisdiction	- USACE CWA Section 404 Permit - ND DEQ 401 Permit - Replacement Plan Mitigation at Approved Bank Service Area (BSA)

V. Proposed Action

Alternative B ¾, identified as the proposed action in the EA and shown on the attached figures, includes the following:

1. Acquire approximately 250 acres in fee-simple land.
2. Modify existing avigation easements northwest of Langer Ave/ND 18 outside of new Runway 13 RPZ.
3. Design and build new 5,500 feet long by 75 feet wide Runway 13/31.

4. Decommission existing Runway 13/31 and convert 3,380 feet to 35-foot-wide parallel taxiway.
5. Design and build remaining full parallel 35-foot-wide taxiway and associated connector taxiways.
6. Install new Medium-intensity Runway Lights (MIRL).
7. Install new Precision Approach Path Indicator (PAPI) for both runway ends.
8. Realign 39th Street SE and close 156th Avenue, releasing and establishing rights of way as appropriate after land negotiations are completed.
9. Install new medium-intensity taxiway lights.
10. Establish new GPS-based procedures for the new Runway 13/31.
11. Prepare near-term apron development area.
12. Reserve long-term hangar development area.
13. Work with encumbrance holders with rights within project limits, including airport property, to extinguish or modify existing easement rights to comply with FAA good title requirements.
14. Obtain new 3-acre aviation easement for RPZ, and additional easement over 39th St SE.

VI. Environmental Commitments, Mitigation and Compliance

The following mitigation measures shall be implemented as a condition of this environmental approval and FONSI:

1. Land Actions

- Land acquisition (fee simple and easements) will comply with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act.
- The airport sponsor will vacate, extinguish, or subordinate easements within the project area as needed to meet the FAA's good title requirements.
- Vacation of prescriptive rights-of-way for existing roads and establishment of new rights-of-way will be completed through the platting process administered by Cass County. The County will coordinate this process with Everest Township and solicit their comments.

2. Stormwater Management/Drainage

- The Sponsor will obtain a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Construction General Permit (CGP) before starting construction activities, and a site-specific Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) will be implemented during construction.
- Best Management Practices (BMPs) - such as berms, sediment basins, fiber mats, and vegetation - will be installed to control erosion and prevent siltation from construction runoff.
- Stormwater management systems will be designed to prevent increases in outflow and to avoid adverse impacts on upstream or downstream properties.
- The sponsor will complete the North Dakota Department of Water Resources (ND DWR) notification process and obtain all necessary drainage permits.
- Stormwater drainage will be designed according to FAA Advisory Circular (AC) 150/5320-5D (*Airport Drainage Design*) and will comply with FAA AC 150/5200-33C (*Hazardous Wildlife Attractants on or near Airports*).

3. Floodplains

- The project will comply with all local Floodplain Administrator and ND DWR requirements, and the Sponsor will secure all required local floodplain development permits prior to construction.
- In accordance with Executive Order 11988, the FAA finds that there is no practicable alternative to siting in the floodplain. The Proposed Action is designed to minimize potential harm to or within the floodplain. The project will be designed to ensure all critical infrastructure, including the runway and taxiway, sits above the Base Level Engineering (BLE) 1% annual chance flood elevation.

4. Wetlands

- The Sponsor will obtain all necessary wetland permits prior to construction. Required approvals include a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Clean Water Act Section 404 Permit, a North Dakota Department of Environmental Quality (NDDEQ) Section 401 Water Quality Certification, and an approved Replacement Plan Mitigation at an authorized Bank Service Area (BSA).

5. Air Quality

- The Sponsor will implement Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-recommended BMPs and emissions control strategies during construction to minimize fugitive dust and heavy equipment emissions.

6. Solid Waste/Hazardous Materials

- All construction materials and solid waste will be disposed of in strict accordance with federal, state, and local laws.
- If previously unknown contaminants are discovered or a spill occurs during construction, work will cease immediately until the contractor notifies the National Response Center (800-424-8802).
- If contamination is encountered, the contractor must also notify the NDDEQ. Any contaminated soil encountered will be temporarily stockpiled and sampled to determine proper disposal requirements.

The FAA is relying on ND DWR, NDDEQ and any other federal, state and local agencies to ensure mitigation described in the EA is achieved and identified permits obtained.

VII. Public Review and Comment

The Draft EA was made available for public review and comment from March 11, 2026, to April 24, 2026, with a public hearing held on April 14, 2026. Public comments primarily focused on roadway access, drainage and stormwater management, farmland conversion, runway length justification, and aircraft noise. Agency comments focused on regulatory compliance, permitting, and construction best practices. While several commenters expressed opposition to the proposed runway length, no comments identified environmental impacts not already evaluated in the Draft EA, nor did comments request preparation of additional studies or an Environmental Impact Statement. **A summary of comments and responses along with a hearing transcript and full written and verbal comments are included in EA Appendix K.**

VIII. **Finding**

After careful and thorough consideration of the facts contained herein, the undersigned finds that the proposed Federal action, namely the Airport Sponsor's Proposed Action, is consistent with existing national environmental policies and objectives as set forth in Section 101 of NEPA and other applicable environmental requirements and does not significantly affect the quality of the human environment or otherwise include any condition requiring consultation pursuant to Section 102 (2) (C) of NEPA. As a result, the FAA will not prepare an environmental impact statement for this action.

This FONSI constitutes a final agency action and a final order taken pursuant to 49 U.S.C. §§ 40101 et seq. and constitutes a final order of the FAA Administrator which is subject to exclusive judicial review by the Courts of Appeals of the United States in accordance with the provisions of 49 U.S.C. § 46110.

APPROVAL:

Name: E. Lindsay Terry, Dakota-Minnesota Airports District Office Manager

Responsible FAA Official

Signature: 

Date: 07/28/2026