



Public Scoping Meeting Criminal Alien Requirement 9 Environmental Impact Statement



Lake City, Florida
June 30, 2009

**FEDERAL BUREAU OF PRISONS
CRIMINAL ALIEN REQUIREMENT 9-ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING
LAKE CITY, FLORIDA
JUNE 30, 2009
6:00 p.m.**

NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 established a national policy promoting the enhancement of the environment and established the President's Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ). One of the most significant components of NEPA are the procedures it put in place requiring any federal action or undertaking to assess the impact it will have on the human environment (natural, cultural and socioeconomic resources). NEPA applies to all federal agencies in the executive branch, including the Federal Bureau of Prisons (the Bureau).

Levels of NEPA Documentation

Evaluation of the environment under NEPA is typically done through the preparation of Categorical Exclusions (CATEX), Environmental Assessments (EA), or Environmental Impact Statements (EIS). A CATEX is typically prepared when the action does not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the human environment. CATEX's can be performed when the actions meet the definition contained in 40 Code of Federal Regulations and if past experience and similar actions do not involve or induce significant impacts. An EA is prepared when it is not clear if the action will have a significant effect on the human environment. If the EA determines there is no significant impact, a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) is signed by the federal agency responsible for the action, which means that the project has received environmental clearance and may move forward. If the results of an EA determine that there is a potential for a significant impact to the human environment, an EIS must be prepared. For major federal actions with the potential to significantly affect the human environment, an EIS must be prepared and a reasonable number of alternatives must be evaluated.

NEPA Documentation for the Criminal Alien Requirement (CAR) 9 Project

The CAR 9 project, which involves the Federal Bureau of Prisons leasing up to 2,500 beds for criminal aliens, is considered a major federal undertaking, and as a result requires that an EIS be prepared. The EIS must include a purpose and need statement, description of the affected environment, discussion of environmental consequences or impacts, mitigation (if required), and cumulative effects analysis.

Public Scoping

NEPA requires the public be informed and involved throughout the development of the NEPA document, beginning with the public scoping meeting. The public scoping meeting is an opportunity for the federal agency, in this case the Bureau, to introduce the project to the public and receive input from the public on the project. The local public has first hand knowledge of the area where the proposed action may take place, and provides insight into local resources, as well as to the needs, wants, and concerns of the community. Public involvement in the NEPA process is required and is an extremely valuable tool in the successful completion of NEPA documents.

The official scoping period for this project began when the Bureau published a Notice of Intent on June 19,2009 to prepare an EIS in the Federal Register, and lasts until July 20,2009. The purpose of the scoping meeting is to inform you about the proposed project, explain NEPA and the associated environmental impact analysis.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Purpose and Need for the Project

Due to an increase in the federal inmate population, the Bureau has a need for additional bed space to accommodate up to 2,500 low security, adult inmate beds. The purpose of the project is to contract with a private correctional facility to provide the needed bed space.

Proposed Facility Locations to be Evaluated in the EIS.

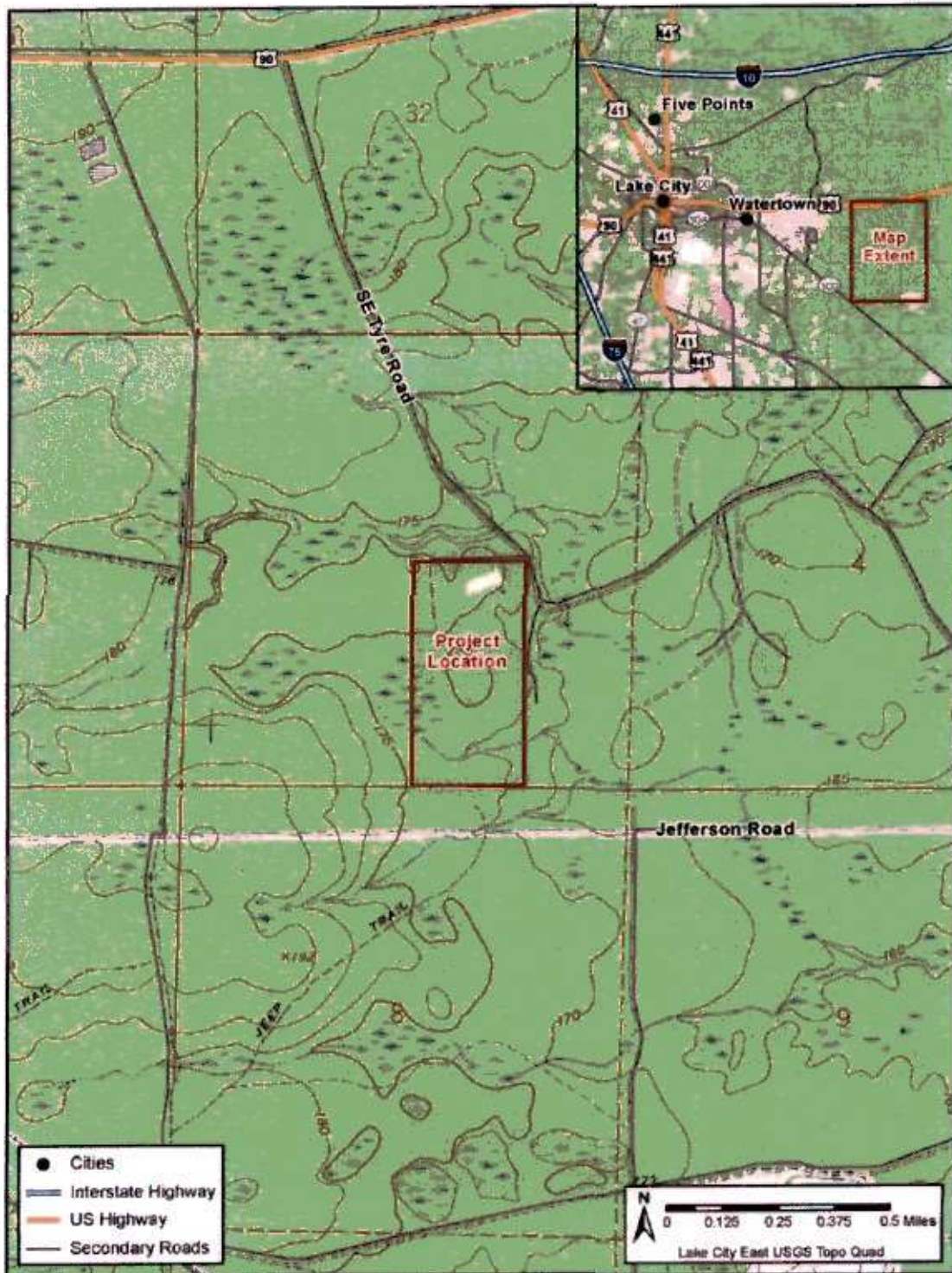
The proposed project will evaluate two locations to provide the needed bed space. One location is in Baldwin, Michigan (**Figure 1**) and the other is located in Lake City, Florida (**Figure 2**). These two alternatives meet the project need and will be evaluated in the EIS. In addition to the proposed alternatives, the No Action alternative is always evaluated in the NEPA process. Although the No Action alternative does not meet the project need, it does provide a baseline in the evaluation of the proposed sites.

The evaluation of these facility locations in the EIS will include resources such as infrastructure and utilities, community facilities and services (fire and police services, emergency services, health care facilities, etc.), socioeconomics, natural resources (threatened and endangered species, wetlands, vegetation, etc.), and cultural resources (historic properties, archaeology). The evaluation will help determine what the impacts of the project may be and if necessary, where impacts can be avoided or minimized, as well as if the impacts will require mitigation. The evaluation of the proposed locations will also help determine which facility will result in the least amount of impact to the environment (natural, cultural, and socioeconomic).

Figure 1. Project Location, Baldwin MI



Figure 2. Project Location, Lake City FL



Tonight's Scoping Meeting

Tonight's scoping meeting is intended to introduce the proposed project to you and provide an overview of the NEPA process, as well as to solicit your comments with regard to the proposed project. The following is an outline of tonight's scoping meeting:

- I. Sign in at the sign in desk- representatives from the Bureau will provide you with a scoping package and comment form.
- II. If you would like to ask questions or comments during the meeting, please check the box on the sign in sheet, so you will be included during the comment period. The Bureau will not be addressing comments during this period to allow time for all interested parties to speak. A court reporter will be documenting tonight's meeting. Additionally, you may complete the attached comment form and drop it in the comment box located at the sign in desk, or it may be mailed to the address on the form. All comments must be postmarked no later than **July 20, 2009** for consideration and incorporation into the Draft EIS.
- III. Representatives from the Bureau will give an overview of the project purpose and need, as well as a description of the proposed sites. The NEPA process and its importance will also be discussed.
- IV. Following the Bureau's presentation of the project and NEPA process, the public comment period with the court reporter will begin. Anyone who indicated on the sign in sheet that they would like to participate will be announced by a Bureau representative. When your name is called, please proceed to the microphone and offer your comments. The court reporter will document your comments and a transcript will be provided to the Bureau for consideration in the Draft EIS. Please understand that your comments will not be addressed at tonight's meeting due to time considerations and to allow everyone interested in commenting, the same opportunity. Please keep your comments to three to four minutes, again, so that everyone who wishes to speak tonight has the opportunity.
- V. If you do not wish to comment publicly, you may complete the attached comment form and drop it in the comment form box located at the sign-in desk or you may mail it to the address indicated on the form.
- VI. The meeting will conclude once everyone who asked to speak has had the opportunity.

NEXT STEPS IN THE PROCESS

The next steps in the process will be to develop the Draft EIS. When the Draft EIS is completed, the document will be made available at local libraries or other appropriate public locations for review by the public. A public hearing will then be held to receive comments from the public on the Draft EIS. The public hearing will follow a similar format as the public scoping meeting. A court reporter will be available to document public comments and questions and a comment form

will also be provided for those who choose not to speak. A notice will be placed in the Federal Register announcing the availability of the Draft EIS, as well as public hearing times and locations. The same information, as well as where the document can be viewed, will be placed in newspaper advertisements at the same time as the Federal Register. The day the public notices are advertised initiates the 45-day public comment period. During this time the public can review the Draft EIS and comment on the document. The public hearings will be held during this 45-day comment period. Comments received during this comment period will be addressed in the Final EIS, which will also be made available to the public.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF PRISONS

Environmental Impact Statement for the Criminal Alien Requirement 9

PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING - WRITTEN COMMENT FORM

Lake City, Florida

June 30, 2009

Your input is important to us; please use this sheet to submit written comments concerning project alternatives, significant effects, and mitigation measures that should be included in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Your comments will assist in preparation of the EIS. Please be sure to provide your name and address, below.

Additional space? Please use other side.

Name* _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip Code_____

Comments, including names and home addresses of respondents, will be made available for public review. Individual respondents may request their home address be withheld from public disclosure. Please check this box if you wish your name and/or address withheld from public disclosure.

Please submit your comments at the sign-in desk or send your comments to:

Mr. Richard A. Cohn, Chief Site Selection and Environmental Review Branch

or

Mr. Isaac Gaston, Site Selection Specialist

Federal Bureau of Prisons

320 First Street, NW

Washington, DC 20534

Please provide your comments by **July 20, 2009** to ensure consideration in the EIS