

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
VEHICLE MAINTENANCE AND INTEGRATION FACILITY
HANSCOM AIR FORCE BASE, MASSACHUSETTS**

The Department of the Air Force (DAF) has prepared an environmental assessment (EA) to analyze the effects associated with construction of a vehicle maintenance and integration facility at Hanscom Air Force Base (AFB), Massachusetts. This EA is written in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) as amended by Public Law 118-5 and the Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2023 (42 United States Code § 4321 et seq.), as well as the Department of Defense (DoD) NEPA Implementing Procedures, which replaced the DAF NEPA regulations codified at 32 Code of Federal Regulations Part 989, effective July 1, 2025. The DAF rescinded its regulations because the Council on Environmental Quality's NEPA regulations, which the DAF's were meant to supplement, were rescinded in February 2025. The EA, incorporated by reference into this Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), presents the potential environmental consequences associated with the Proposed Action and provides mitigation measures and best management practices (BMPs) to avoid or reduce adverse environmental effects.

Purpose of Action (EA §1.2, Pages 3-5): The Purpose of Action is for Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Lincoln Laboratory (LL) to secure a permanent location for garaging and maintaining vehicles, as well as allowing the storing and integrating of research and experimental equipment into or onto vehicles, functions which currently have no permanent location on the MIT LL campus.

Need for Action (EA §1.3, Page 5): The Need for Action is to consolidate vehicle garaging and maintenance, and research and experimental equipment storage and integration operations into one permanent location, allowing MIT LL to meet the associated demands of its Federally Funded Research and Development Center mission and priorities.

Intergovernmental Coordination, Public and Agency Participation (EA §1.4 and §1.5, Pages 5-6; and Appendices A, B, and D): Hanscom AFB and MIT LL consulted the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC), which serves as the State Historic Preservation Officer, Minute Man National Historical Park, Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe, Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head (Aquinnah), and surrounding towns. Consultation letters were sent to the consulted agencies, tribes, and appropriate town officials on 30 August 2024 and 10 February 2025.

Copies of the Draft Vehicle Maintenance and Integration Facility EA and FONSI were made available for agencies and public review at the following internet link:

<https://www.hanscom.af.mil/About-Us/Fact-Sheets/Display/Article/379486/civil-engineering/>

Thirty days have been allowed for the agencies and the public to comment on the Draft EA/FONSI. The public comment period will end on 3 November 2025. A public notice was published in the Lexington Minuteman and the Concord Journal on 2 October 2025.

ALTERNATIVES INCLUDING THE PROPOSED ACTION

Proposed Action Alternative (EA §2.1, Pages 7-8): The Proposed Action Alternative would involve MIT LL's constructing and operating a vehicle maintenance and integration facility for the MIT LL facilities and campus on Hanscom AFB at the intersection of Wright Street and Scott Drive, in the eastern portion of Master Lease Parcel 3. The proposed facility is referred to as SW3 and would support garaging and maintaining vehicles, integrating research and experimental equipment into or onto vehicles, and related storage, research, and administrative functions.

The proposed SW3 would consist of a 2-story, flat-roof building, with a footprint of approximately 18,000 square feet and approximately 32,000 square feet of usable floor space. The total area needed for the building footprint, required setbacks, and parking areas would be between approximately 42,000 and 46,000 square feet.

The first floor of the building would accommodate six truck bays at the front, one of which would be a maintenance bay with a permanent vehicle lift, and a large storage area at the back for various equipment and other vehicles. The remaining first floor and the second floor of the building would contain laboratory and/or support space as needed for MIT LL research and integration programs at the facility. The support space would also include a small office area with breakrooms, bathrooms, and an electrical and mechanical room. There would also be a small amount of aboveground fuel storage at the facility for refueling lawn mowers, snow blowers, and hand-held landscaping equipment. The proposed SW3 facility would house a variety of operation, maintenance, and groundskeeping vehicles and equipment.

The proposed facility also would house a new emergency generator as a secondary source of mechanical or electrical power. The generator would be used solely to provide power during disruptions or outages of the primary energy supply, such as power outages or natural disasters. The need for a storage tank to fuel the generator is being assessed. The facility may require a separate, small portable scientific generator unrelated to building systems, to replicate vehicle field conditions for the integration of research and experimental equipment.

Heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) would be provided by ground-source, geothermal heat pumps. Based on the expected HVAC system design, dependent on the results of a geothermal well test, the system would include ground-source heat pumps, ground-source water loop headers, condenser water pumps, chilled/hot water pumps, dedicated outdoor air system units, and a fan-coil unit.

No Action Alternative (EA §2.2, Page 8): Under the No Action Alternative, MIT LL would not construct and maintain a new vehicle maintenance and integration facility, and the existing facility would remain at its current temporary location. If the proposed vehicle maintenance and integration facility were not constructed under this Proposed Action, either another temporary location to garage and maintain vehicles and integrate research and experimental equipment would be required prior to demolition of the current facility in 2025 or 2026, or construction of the Engineering and Prototyping Facility (EPF) would be delayed. The No Action Alternative is the baseline for the rest of the analysis and helps determine the extent to which the Proposed Action would impact the environment. While the No Action Alternative does not fulfill the purpose nor need for the Proposed Action, the consequences of the No Action Alternative are evaluated in the EA in accordance with the DoD NEPA Implementing Procedures.

Alternative 1 (Wright Street) and Alternative 2 (Scott Drive) (EA §§2.3 and 2.4, Page 8): Two alternative locations within the MIT LL Master Lease parcels were identified as potential options for constructing and operating the SW3 vehicle maintenance and integration facility, referred to as Alternative 1 (Wright Street) and Alternative 2 (Scott Drive). The limits of work and total disturbed footprints for project construction for each of the alternatives are estimated to encompass between approximately 42,000 and 46,000 square feet.

Alternatives Eliminated (EA §2.5, Pages 8-12): Consideration was given to locating the vehicle maintenance and integration facility off Hanscom AFB. However, MIT LL's using DoD funds for construction of new buildings not located on a military installation is not legally permissible. It was judged improbable, if not impossible, that MIT LL could construct and commission a new, off-base facility before the current facility is demolished for EPF construction in 2025 or 2026; and locating the vehicle maintenance and integration facility off base would undermine ready access to MIT LL vehicles and equipment, and would slow deployment of snow plowing and groundskeeping equipment throughout the MIT LL campus.

Although consideration was given to locating the facility outside Master Lease parcels, it was judged improbable, if not impossible, that MIT LL could construct and commission a new vehicle maintenance and integration facility on Hanscom AFB, outside the Master Lease parcels before the current facility is demolished for EPF construction.

Based on these determinations only the Proposed Action was carried forward for further analysis.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Based on the analyses in the EA, the Proposed Action would have no significant direct or indirect impacts to infrastructure and transportation. The environmental resource areas potentially impacted comprise the following:

Topography, Geology, and Soils (EA §3.2, Pages 20-26): Soils at any of the three alternative sites would be excavated and relocated in order to install the foundation for the SW3 building and covered by pavement or other impervious structures or surfaces. During construction, soils within the limits of work potentially would be at greater risk of erosion, compaction, and pollution from fuel spills or waste. As construction of the SW3 facility would disturb greater than 5,000 square feet of land, the construction contractor would be required to prepare an erosion, sedimentation, and pollution prevention plan compliant with Standard 8 of the *Massachusetts Stormwater Handbook* and the requirements in the Hanscom AFB Construction Site Stormwater Runoff Control Program. Adherence to measures specified in the erosion, sedimentation, and pollution prevention plan would minimize erosion of exposed soils and sedimentation of receiving water bodies.

As the Alternative 1 site is partially on a hillside and the Alternative 2 site is situated above Scott Drive, soil grading, installation of stormwater management controls, and potentially construction of retaining walls would be required to construct the proposed facility at these locations, and would result in a long-term change in topography. Soil grading at the site would not result in significant long-term impacts to topography, as grading would be limited to that necessary to meet facility construction needs, elevational changes in specific areas within the site would also be minimal, and soil would be stabilized to prevent any potential movement, erosion, or sedimentation.

Land Use (EA §3.3, Pages 26-30): Potential, minor short-term impacts associated with construction are anticipated to include disruption of adjacent land uses due to elevated noise levels, increased dust, tree and boulder removal, and interference with roadway access near the site. Implementing the Proposed Action would result in a change of land use from open field and forested at the Proposed Action Alternative and Alternative 1 sites, and forested at the Alternative 2 site to vehicle maintenance and integration. The anticipated short-term disruptions would be typical of construction projects on Hanscom AFB and the MIT LL campus, and operation of the vehicle maintenance and integration facility would not constrain or encroach on proximate land uses.

The proposed SW3 building would penetrate the established imaginary surface that determines the maximum height of structures nearby to airport runways. Therefore, notification of the proposed construction would be provided to the Federal Aviation Administration.

Water Resources (EA §3.4, Pages 30-33): There are no surface water features, wetland resources, or floodplains present within or near to the three alternative project sites. Therefore, it is not anticipated that construction activities would directly affect these resources. As the project would require surface disturbance and there would be periods when bare soil is exposed, during construction, all activities would be conducted in accordance with BMPs to prevent adverse effects to the receiving waters into which the base stormwater system discharges.

To preserve or restore predevelopment hydrology, Hanscom AFB is required to comply with Section 438 (*Storm water runoff requirements for Federal development projects*) of the Energy Independence and Security Act. According to U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) guidance, Section 438 requirements apply to any project involving a federal facility that disturbs 5,000 square feet or more of ground area, and therefore would apply to the construction of the SW3 facility. As construction may result in the disturbance of 1 acre (43,560 square feet) or more at any of the alternative sites, MIT LL potentially would obtain permit coverage and comply with the USEPA Construction General Permit for Stormwater Discharges from Construction Activities.

The SW3 building foundations would have the potential to minimally impede the flow of groundwater; however, any such effects would be highly localized.

Biological Resources (EA §3.5, Pages 33-40): The forested and wooded areas throughout the alternative locations could potentially provide summer habitat for northern long-eared bats, a federally listed endangered species. However, a bat acoustic survey conducted on Hanscom AFB was unable to confirm the presence of northern long-eared bat on the property. On 29 September 2023, Hanscom AFB extended through March 2024 its original determination, dated 2 October 2018, that proposed undertakings within the boundaries of the base will have “no effect” on the federally listed northern long-eared bat. During the active season in calendar year 2023, the base conducted updated bat surveys, which also failed to indicate presence of northern long-eared bat on the installation. On 21 March 2024, Hanscom AFB subsequently extended its no effect determination effective for a period of 5 years and valid for undertakings completed on or prior to 31 March 2029 unless subsequently rescinded based on newly acquired science or information. MIT LL and Hanscom AFB consulted with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service on June 16, 2025 and reached a conclusion that the Proposed Action may affect, but is not likely adversely affect the northern long-eared bat and the tricolored bat based on prohibiting tree removal between April 15th and September 30th.

Only a small amount of tree removal would be required to construct the SW3 facility. Impacts associated with construction activity and loss of potentially suitable habit for northern long-eared bats and other on-base species would be mitigated to the extent feasible to comply with federal, state, and local regulations. Operation and maintenance of the SW3 facility is not expected to substantially impact wildlife in the area, as the species present on base have adapted to living in close proximity to human activity. It is not anticipated that construction, or facility operation and maintenance would impact biological resources at off-base locations such as the Minute Man National Historical Park, Great Meadows National Wildlife Refuge, or nearby residential properties due to the distance/separation of each from the project sites.

The Proposed Action would not result in any short-term or long-term, direct, and indirect impacts to threatened or endangered species on Hanscom AFB or the MIT LL campus. Implementation would have no significant impacts on biological resources, as the vehicle maintenance and integration facility would be installed in an active area on base, on open field or forested woodlot, depending on the alternative selected.

Cultural Resource (EA §3.6, Pages 40-45): The Proposed Action Alternative site was previously disturbed, and there are no buildings of historical significance located on or adjacent to the proposed location. Therefore, no physical impacts to any historically significant buildings would result from the construction of the proposed SW3 building at this site. The site for the Proposed Action Alternative is located within the Air Force Cambridge Research Laboratories (AFCRL) Historic District, and therefore the design of the proposed new building would be subject to the terms outlined in the 2014 programmatic agreement (PA) between Hanscom AFB and the MHC. The PA states that any new construction within or adjacent to the AFCRL Historic District is to be designed to be responsive to the character of the district, meeting the Secretary of the Interior Standards and the DoD Guidelines, and that plans for such buildings are to be submitted to MHC for review.

The Alternative 1 site is an open grassy field, and there are no buildings of historical significance located on the proposed site. The site for Alternative 1 is located immediately adjacent to the AFCRL Historic District and two buildings that contribute to the district are located across the street, to the north, of the site and are within visual range. Despite the nearby historic resources, no physical impacts to any historically significant buildings are anticipated as a result of the construction of the proposed SW3 building at this site.

The Alternative 2 site is a fragmented forested woodlot, which is partially located within the AFCRL Historic District. In addition, the proposed site sits adjacent to a building that is a contributing resource to the district. Despite its close proximity, no physical impacts to any historic architectural resources are anticipated as a result of the construction of the SW3 building at this site. Due to the location of the Alternative 2 site partially within the AFCRL Historic District, there is the potential for impacts on the district. Therefore, the design of the proposed new building

would be subject to the terms outlined in the 2014 PA.

On 10 February 2025, Hanscom AFB submitted a letter to MHC informing the commission of the Proposed Action, and DAF's determination that there will be **No Adverse Effect** to historic properties from the proposed undertaking. The MHC concurred with this determination on 27 February 2025.

Both the Proposed Action Alternative site and the Alternative 1 site are located adjacent to identified areas of archaeological sensitivity but do not overlap the areas. Parts of the forested woodlots that the Alternative 1 site extends into are previously disturbed area. Therefore, in concert with the PA and provided that all work is contained within the intended site, implementation of either of these alternatives would not pose a concern with respect to archeological resources.

The Alternative 2 site does overlap an identified area of archaeological sensitivity included in Attachment C of the PA. Despite its overlap with this archaeological sensitive area, in accordance with PA Section VI11.A, construction at the Alternative 3 site could proceed in consultation with MHC, if this alternative were selected, because the area "has been adequately inventoried for archaeological resources." In the event that a previously unidentified archaeological resource is discovered, further construction will be halted and the Inadvertent Discovery procedures outlined in Section VIII.B of the PA would be followed. No additional actions are required to address the location of this alternative site's overlap with the area of archaeological sensitivity.

Air Quality (EA §3.7, Pages 45-50): The Proposed Action is in Middlesex County, Massachusetts, which is in attainment for all six criteria air pollutants, just recently meeting attainment standards for ozone. Minor short-term localized air quality impacts may occur under any of the three Proposed Action alternatives, as construction could generate fugitive dust (particulate matter), particularly during site clearing, grubbing, excavation, and grading. Standard BMPs, such as watering to control dust plumes, covering trucks and stockpiled materials with tarps, and revegetating disturbed land as soon as possible, would be implemented to minimize impacts. All construction vehicles and some equipment would produce engine emissions for other criteria pollutants, which could temporarily affect air quality.

After the completion of construction, backup power would be provided to SW3, which could represent a new source of, or an increase in, air emissions, potentially adversely impacting air quality. The proposed SW3 facility would have an emergency, diesel fuel fired generator that would meet USEPA Tier 4 emission standards. The emergency generator would be used as a backup source of power, and thus would be operated only in emergency situations and during occasional maintenance. HVAC would be provided by ground-source, geothermal heat pumps.

The DAF Air Conformity Applicability Model (ACAM) tool was used for predicting emissions during both construction and operational periods from site grading, trenching/excavating, SW3 facility construction, architecture coating, and increased vehicle traffic and operation. The ACAM results show criteria pollutant emissions at *de minimis* levels, indicating that a formal conformity determination is not required. Although some increases in air pollutant emissions are expected during construction and operation, they would not be significant.

Noise (EA §3.8, Pages 50-53): Noise generated during construction of SW3 under any of the three alternatives would vary in volume, duration, and intensity but would be similar to that generated by other construction and development activities occurring on Hanscom AFB and the MIT LL campus with relative frequency. The highest construction noise levels are expected to occur during the first phases of construction, when the site is cleared and the foundation is excavated. Although the proposed facility would garage and maintain several larger vehicles, and various equipment that generate noise would be operated, the contribution of noise to the surrounding area is expected to be consistent with the characteristics of existing noise generated in the surrounding, developed environment.

Solid Wastes, and Hazardous Materials and Wastes (EA §3.9, Pages 53-56): Short-term impacts typically associated with construction would occur under each of the three alternatives, such as an increase in construction material debris and potential spills. Operation of SW3 is not expected to result in an increase in the volume of solid or hazardous waste generated by MIT LL, as the vehicle maintenance and equipment integration activities simply would be relocated from the current, temporary facility to the new, permanent facility. The Proposed Action would not result in a long-term increase in solid waste, or hazardous materials and waste generation.

Safety and Occupational Health (EA §3.10, Pages 56-58): Under the Proposed Action, construction activities under any of the three alternatives would comply with all applicable federal, state, local, and DAF regulatory safety standards. It is expected that the construction workers would be trained to identify and avoid safety hazards, such as those common to working around and with heavy equipment and electrically powered hand tools. A temporary snow fence, or chain link fence if required by Hanscom AFB, would be installed around the perimeter of the construction area, and only authorized personnel with appropriate personal protective equipment would be allowed to enter the construction zone. The design of the proposed SW3 facility, as applicable, is anticipated to incorporate elements that account for employee health and safety.

Operation of the SW3 facility would comply with MIT LL EHS policy to ensure that the activities conducted, as well as the products and services provided and used, are safe for MIT LL employees, other users, and the general public. Construction and operation of the facility is not anticipated to adversely impact safety and occupational health at MIT LL or Hanscom AFB in the short or long-term.

Socioeconomics (EA §3.11, Pages 58-60): Under the Proposed Action, construction activities would generate a minor benefit for the construction industry, as there would be a corresponding short-term increase in the demand for skilled workers and construction materials. As SW3 would replace the existing, temporary facility, its operation and maintenance would not create any new jobs. Similarly, the Proposed Action would not have any impact on the population or housing of Hanscom AFB or the surrounding communities.

Access to the construction site and to the SW3 facility during operation would be restricted to credentialed professionals. No disproportionate environmental health or safety risks to children would occur. The proposed project is consistent with the objectives of Executive Order 13045, *Protection of Children from Environmental Health Risks and Safety Risks*.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Based upon my review of the facts and analyses contained within the EA and as summarized above, I find implementation of the Proposed Action involving the construction and operation of a vehicle maintenance and integration facility at any of the alternative sites will not have a significant impact on the human environment. Therefore, an environmental impact statement is not required. The analysis for this action fulfills the requirements of NEPA and the DoD NEPA Implementing Procedures.

Name
Base Civil Engineer