

**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 Section (§) 4321 et seq.), as well as in accordance with the Department of Defense (DoD) NEPA Implementing Procedures. 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 allow the storing and integrating of research and experimental equipment into or onto vehicles.

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, the Minute Man National Historical Park, Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe, Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head (Aquinnah), and surrounding towns. Consultation letters were sent to these agencies, tribes, and appropriate town officials on August 30, 2024, and February 10, 2025. A public notice was published in the *Lexington Minuteman* on October 2, 2025, and the *Concord Journal* on October 16, 2025. Copies of the draft documents were made available at the following internet link:

<https://www.hanscom.af.mil/News/Article-Display/Article/4312669/draft-ea-fonsi-available-for-vehicle-maintenance-and-integration-facility/>

The 30-day public comment period ended on November 17, 2025, with no comments received.

ALTERNATIVES INCLUDING THE PROPOSED ACTION

Proposed Action (EA § 2.1, Pages 7-8): Under the Proposed Action, MIT LL would construct and operate a vehicle maintenance and integration facility on Hanscom AFB at the intersection of Wright Street and Scott Drive, in the eastern portion of MIT LL's 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 providing related storage, research, and administrative functions. The proposed SW3 would consist of a 2-story, flat-roof building, approximately 18,000 square feet (sf) and approximately 32,000 sf of usable floor space. Total area needed for the building footprint, required setbacks, and parking areas would be approximately 42,000 and 46,000 sf. The first floor would accommodate six truck bays at the front, one of which would be a maintenance bay with a permanent vehicle lift, as well as a large vehicle and equipment storage area at the back. The remaining first floor and second floor would contain laboratory and/or support space as needed for various MIT LL research and integration programs. The building would also include a small office area with breakrooms, restrooms, and an electrical and mechanical room. The SW3 facility would house a variety of operations, maintenance, and groundskeeping vehicles and equipment (e.g., bobcats, snow blowers, front-end loaders, trucks, mowers, buses, etc.). A small amount of fuel would be stored for refueling lawn mowers, snow blowers, and hand-held landscaping equipment. An emergency generator would be installed 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. The SW3 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 and could include ground-source water loop headers, condenser water pumps, chilled/hot water pumps, dedicated outdoor air system units, and a fan-coil unit. Final design of the HVAC system will be dependent on the results of geothermal well testing.

No Action (EA § 2.2, Page 8): Under the No Action, MIT LL would not construct the new SW3. Instead, MIT LL would have to relocate their vehicle maintenance operations to another existing facility on base. Their current building is scheduled for demolition in 2026 to make room for the new Engineering and Prototyping Facility (EPF). Another option would be to delay construction of the EPF. While the No Action does not meet the purpose and need, it provides the baseline for the rest of the analysis and helps determine the extent the Proposed Action would impact the environment.

Alternative 1 (Wright Street) and Alternative 2 (Scott Drive) (EA §§ 2.3 and 2.4, Page 8): Two alternative locations (EA Fig. 2-1, Page 10) within the MIT LL Master Lease parcels were identified for constructing and operating the SW3 vehicle maintenance and integration facility, referred to as Alternative 1 (Wright Street) and Alternative 2 (Scott Drive).

Alternatives Eliminated (EA § 2.5, Pages 8-12): Consideration was given to locating the vehicle maintenance and integration facility off of Hanscom AFB. MIT LL's using DoD funds for construction; therefore, they are not legally permissible to fund actions not located on a military installation. In addition, locating the SW3 facility off the installation would reduce the effectiveness of the MIT LL mission by slowing down the deployment of personnel to their ground and research equipment. Lastly, the time needed to locate, acquire and build a new facility off base would not meet the 2026 demolish plan for the existing facility. Based on these determinations only the Proposed Action, No Action, Alternative 1, and Alternative 2 were carried forward for further analysis.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Based on the findings within this EA, it was determined the Proposed Action and Alternatives will have no significant direct or indirect impacts to infrastructure and transportation (EA Table 3-1, page 19). The existing utilities have ample capacity to support the SW3 facility operation of the proposed facility. While there would be short-term increases in construction-related traffic traveling to and from the locations, overall traffic would remain within the capacity of local public roads, as well as roads on the MIT LL campus and Hanscom AFB. Once in operation, employment numbers for the new facility would remain the same and not generate any additional traffic on local public or base roads. Environmental resources carried forward include geology, land use, water, biological, cultural, air quality, noise, solid/hazardous material/waste, safety/occupational health, and socioeconomics.

Topography, Geology, and Soils (EA § 3.2, Pages 20-26): Soils at any of the three alternatives would be excavated and relocated to install the SW3 building foundation. During construction, soils 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 Alternative 1 is partially on a hillside and Alternative 2 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): Minor short-term impacts associated with construction are anticipated from elevated noise, increased dust, tree and boulder removal, and interference with roadway access near the site. Only Alternative 1 would result in a change of land use from open space to an industrial use area. This land use change would not constrain or encroach on the adjacent land uses. The Proposed Action and Alternative 2 are currently designated as an industrial use area. Constructing the SW3 building at any of the three alternatives will penetrate the established imaginary surface that determines the maximum height of structures nearby to airport runways. As a result, notification will be provided to the Federal Aviation Administration prior to construction. Overall, impacts with implementing the SW3 facility construction at any of the three locations will not have a significant impact to land use.

Water Resources (EA § 3.4, Pages 30-33): There are no surface waters, wetlands, or floodplains present within or near to the three alternatives; therefore, construction would not directly affect these resources. Surface disturbance from construction would cause periods when bare soil is exposed. All activities would be conducted in accordance with best management practices (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 one acre (43,560 square feet) or more at any of the alternative sites, MIT LL will obtain permit coverage and comply with the USEPA National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Construction General Permit for stormwater discharges from construction activities. With adherence to these permit requirements, implementation of any alternative will not have a significant impact to water resources.

Biological Resources (EA § 3.5, Pages 33-40): Forested areas throughout each of the alternatives could potentially provide summer habitat for northern long-eared bats, a federally listed endangered species. A bat acoustic survey conducted on Hanscom AFB was unable to confirm the presence of these bats. On September 29, 2023, Hanscom AFB extended through March 2024 its original determination, dated October 2, 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 2023, the base conducted updated bat surveys, which also failed to indicate presence of this bat. On March 21, 2024, Hanscom AFB subsequently extended its no effect determination effective for a period of five years and valid for undertakings completed on or prior to March 31, 2029, unless subsequently rescinded based on newly acquired science or information. MIT LL and Hanscom AFB consulted with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on June 16, 2025, and reached a conclusion the Proposed Action may affect but is not likely to 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. Loss of potentially suitable habit for northern long-eared bat 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 species present on base have adapted to living near human activity. It is not anticipated that construction or facility operations 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 alternatives. None of the alternatives would result in any significant short-term, long-term, direct, and/or indirect effects to biological resources.

Cultural Resource (EA § 3.6, Pages 40-45): The site for the Proposed Action was previously disturbed. While there are no buildings of historical significance located on or adjacent to this site, the Proposed Action is located within the Air Force Cambridge Research Laboratories (AFCRL) Historic District. Design of the SW3 facility is subject to the terms outlined in the 2014 Programmatic Agreement (PA) between Hanscom AFB and the MHC,

which state “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.” Alternative 1 is an open field where no buildings of historical significance are found. However, it is located immediately adjacent to the AFCRL Historic District. Two buildings that contribute to the district are located across the street, to the north of Alternative 1 and within visual range. Alternative 2 is a fragmented forested woodlot, which is partially located within the AFCRL Historic District. In addition, the site is adjacent to a building that is a contributing resource to the district. As with the Proposed Action, design for both Alternatives 1 and 2 will be subject to the terms outlined in the 2014 PA. On February 10, 2025, Hanscom submitted a letter to MHC informing the commission of the proposed undertaking, and DAF’s determination there will be **No Adverse Effect** to historic properties. The MHC concurred with this determination on February 27, 2025.

Both the Proposed Action and Alternative 1 are located adjacent to identified areas of archaeological sensitivity but do not overlap the areas. In adherence with the 2014 PA, implementation of either alternative would not have a significant impact on archeological resources. Alternative 2 does overlap an identified area of archaeological sensitivity included in Attachment C of the PA. Despite its overlap, in accordance with PA Section V111.A, construction at the Alternative 3 could proceed in consultation with MHC, if this alternative were selected, because the area “has been adequately inventoried for archaeological resources.” If 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. By adhering to the requirements of the 2014 PA, there will be no significant effects to cultural resources from any of the alternatives implemented.

Hanscom AFB sent consultation letters to the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe and Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head (Aquinnah) on August 30, 2024 and February 10, 2025. No response to date have been received.

Air Quality (EA § 3.7, Pages 45-50): The project is in Middlesex County, Massachusetts, which is in attainment for all six air criteria pollutants. Minor short-term air quality impacts may occur under any of the three 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. The SW3 facility would have an emergency, diesel fuel fired generator meeting USEPA Tier 4 emission standards. The emergency generator would be used as a backup source of power and operate only in emergency situations and during occasional maintenance. 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 (EA Table 3-5, Page 46). 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): The only nearby sensitive noise receptor is an off-base residence area found approximately 200 feet southeast of Alternative 1. The highest levels of construction noise are expected to occur during the first phases of construction, when the site is cleared and the foundation is excavated. To minimize any noise impacts to this residence area, construction would occur primarily during normal daytime working hours. No sensitive noise receptors are found near the Proposed Action or Alternative 2. Once construction is completed, SW3 facility operations would remain the same and be consistent with 55 decibel contour of the surrounding area. Overall, there will be no significant impacts from noise with implementation of each alternative.

Solid Wastes, and Hazardous Materials and Wastes (EA § 3.9, Pages 53-56): Short-term impacts such as an

increase in construction material debris and potential spills typically associated with construction could occur under each of the alternatives. Since SW3 operations will remain the same, there would be no anticipated volume increase in solid or hazardous waste generated by MIT LL. Overall, none of the alternatives will result in significant impacts to solid waste, or hazardous materials/waste generation.

Safety and Occupational Health (EA § 3.10, Pages 56-58): Construction activities under any of the alternatives would comply with all applicable federal, state, local, and DAF regulatory safety standards. Construction workers would be trained to identify and avoid safety hazards, such as those working in and around 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. Only authorized personnel with appropriate personal protective equipment would be allowed to enter the construction zone. SW3 operations would comply with all MIT LL environmental health and safety policies. Overall, SW3 construction and operations will have no significant impacts to safety and occupational health.

Socioeconomics (EA § 3.11, Pages 58-60): For all alternatives, there would be no significant long-term, direct, or indirect impacts to socioeconomics. While there would be a short-term demand for skilled workers and construction materials, no permanent jobs would be created as operations will remain the same. In addition, access to the construction site as well as the SW3 facility would be restricted to credentialed professionals. The action is also consistent with Executive Order 13045, *Protection of Children from Environmental Health 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.

RONALD J. ONDERKO, P.E. NH-04, DAF
Command Senior Civil Engineer
Logistics, Civil Engineering, Force Protection
and Nuclear Integration