



January 27, 2023

Dear Interested Reader,

Please be advised that the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) examining the potential impacts of a proposal by the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) to expand and modernize the Raul Hector Castro (RHC) Land Port of Entry (LPOE) and to construct a new Commercial LPOE in Douglas, Arizona is now available. The DEIS describes the purpose and need for the project; alternatives considered; the existing environment that could be affected; the potential impacts resulting from each of the alternatives; and proposed best management practices and/or mitigation measures. The DEIS also includes the Draft Finding of No Practicable Alternative (FONPA), which provides a floodplain assessment and statement of findings as a result of construction in a floodplain at the RHC LPOE.

Further information on the project, including an electronic copy of the DEIS, may be found online at: <https://www.gsa.gov/about-us/regions/welcome-to-the-pacific-rim-region-9/land-ports-of-entry/douglas-commercial-land-port-of-entry> and <https://www.gsa.gov/about-us/regions/welcome-to-the-pacific-rim-region-9/land-ports-of-entry/raul-hector-castro-land-port-of-entry>.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION: The RHC LPOE is a port of entry for vehicles and pedestrians crossing the U.S.-Mexico border, between Douglas, Arizona and Agua Prieta, Sonora in Mexico. The port is a full-service, multi-modal facility where CBP currently inspects commercially-owned vehicles (COVs), privately-owned vehicles (POVs), and pedestrians. The purpose of the project is for GSA to support CBP's mission by bringing the RHC LPOE operations in line with current land port design standards and operational requirements of CBP while addressing existing operational deficiencies. The project is needed to: improve capacity and functionality of the LPOE to meet future demand while maintaining the capability to meet border security initiatives; ensure the safety and security for workers and users of the LPOE; and improve traffic congestion and safety for the City of Douglas.

The Proposed Action would comprise of two main components: 1) construction of a new Commercial LPOE dedicated to COVs, located approximately 5 miles west of the existing port; and 2) expansion and modernization of existing RHC LPOE facilities to serve as a noncommercial LPOE dedicated to processing POVs and pedestrians. The DEIS analyzes two "action" alternatives and one "no action" alternative. The two "action" alternatives are described as follows:

- **Alternative 1.** Includes construction of the new Commercial LPOE first, followed by a phased expansion and modernization of the existing RHC LPOE *after* the Commercial LPOE is operational. This alternative would require land acquisition near the existing RHC LPOE and at the Commercial LPOE site.
- **Alternative 2.** Includes construction of the new Commercial LPOE and phased expansion and modernization of the existing RHC LPOE *at the same time*, to include additional land acquisition near the existing RHC LPOE, allowing expansion and modernization activities to occur while the existing RHC LPOE remains operational.

Both action alternatives would take place within 100-year and 500-year floodplains at the existing RHC LPOE. In compliance with Executive Order 11988 (Floodplain Management), GSA prepared a Draft FONPA addressing potential impacts on floodplains, which is included in the DEIS for public review and comment. As described in the DEIS, GSA would follow regulatory compliance (e.g., measures outlined in the Arizona Stormwater General Construction Permit) and incorporate design standards at the RHC LPOE to minimize impacts to floodplains.

The “no action” alternative is included and analyzed to provide a baseline for comparison with impacts from the Project and also to satisfy federal requirements for analyzing “no action” under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 1502.14(d)). The “no action” alternative assumes that the current issues with the RHC LPOE would not be addressed and that operations would continue under current conditions.

PUBLIC MEETING AND COMMENT PERIOD: The public is encouraged to attend and participate in an upcoming meeting for the DEIS. The purpose of this meeting is to provide information and receive comments on the environmental analysis presented in the DEIS. The public meeting for the DEIS will be held on **Wednesday, February 22, 2023, from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m.** at:

Douglas Visitor Center
345 16th Street
Douglas, AZ 85607

The meeting will be conducted in an informal open house format, where project information will be displayed and distributed. The open house format will encourage discussion and information sharing through opportunities for the public to speak one-on-one with GSA representatives. **No formal presentation will be provided.**

Interested parties are encouraged to attend and provide written comments regarding the DEIS. Comments on the DEIS and Draft FONPA must be received by **March 13, 2023**. After this date, GSA will prepare the Final EIS. Comments may be submitted by one of the following methods:

- In writing. Submit comments at the public meeting.
- By e-mail. Send to osmahn.kadri@gsa.gov (reference “RHC LPOE EIS” in subject line)
- By U.S. mail. Send to:

Attention: Osmahn Kadri, RHC LPOE EIS
U.S. General Services Administration
c/o Potomac-Hudson Engineering, Inc.
77 Upper Rock Circle, Suite 302
Rockville, MD 20850

For more information or if special assistance is needed to attend and participate in the public scoping meeting, please contact Osmahn Kadri, GSA NEPA Project Manager, at 415-522-3617.