ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

AUGUST 2023

JOB CORPS DATA CENTER
PROPERTY DISPOSAL
AUSTIN, TEXAS

Prepared for:

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Office of Job Corps

Division of Facilities and Asset Management

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
APE	Area of Potential Effects
BCC	Birds of Conservation Concern
CCTV	Closed Circuit Television
CD	Candidate
CEQ	Commission on Environmental Quality (Texas)
CEQ	Council on Environmental Quality
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CH^4	Methane
CO_2	Carbon dioxide
CO	Carbon monoxide
DOL	Department of Labor
EA	Environmental Assessment
EO	Executive Order
EPDM	Ethylene propylene diene terpolymer
ESC	Engineering Support Contractor
FE	Federally Endangered
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FONSI	Finding of No Significant Impact
FT	Federally Threatened
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
GIS	Geographic Information System
GSA	General Service Administration
GSF	Gross square feet
HUD	U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
HVAC	Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning
I	Interstate
IPaC	Information, Planning, and Conservation
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
JCDC	Job Corps Data Center
kV	kilovolt
LAN	Local Area Network
N_2O	Nitrous oxide
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NCADAC	National Climate Assessment and Development Advisory Committee

NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NETR	Nationwide Environmental Title Research
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
NWI	National Wetland Inventory
Pb	Lead
PBC	Public Benefit Conveyance
PM	Particulate matter
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Office
SOx	Sulfur dioxides (group)
SO_2	Sulfur dioxide
SPAMIS	Student Pay & Allotment Information System
USC	United States Code
USDA	U.S. Department of Agriculture
USEPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
USGS	U.S. Geological Survey

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) administers the Job Corps, a national residential training and employment program, that helps young people improve the quality of their lives through vocational and academic training. In support of this mission, DOL oversees residential training campuses nationwide and is responsible for facilities and asset management at the Centers, to include construction as well as operations and maintenance. The DOL proposes to dispose of the Job Corps Data Center (JCDC) property totaling 1.23 acres located at 1627 Woodland Avenue, Austin, Texas through a transfer facilitated by the General Services Administration (GSA) for potential reuse.

The JCDC property is no longer needed to accomplish the DOL mission and has been determined excess to DOL need. The existing employees of the JCDC have transitioned to tele-working and the building is no longer required. The proposed project is needed to comply with requirements and procedures for federal real property disposal. When the government disposes of unneeded properties—through transfer, donation, or sale—it generates savings to that agency and the federal government by eliminating costs associated with maintaining the facility.

As required under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), an environmental assessment (EA) must be prepared, detailing an evaluation of the impacts of the Proposed Action Alternative on the natural and built environment. The proposed action is the disposal of the JCDC property in Austin, Texas. Reuse of the excess property would occur as a secondary action under disposal over which the DOL has only minimal control through the property disposal process. In this EA, one "No Action" and one Proposed Action Alternative are considered.

Under the No Action Alternative, DOL would not dispose of or otherwise transfer the JCDC property. The DOL would continue to own and maintain the property, which would be available for continued use for the Job Corps program, as needed.

Under the Proposed Action Alternative, DOL would report a the JCDC to GSA as "excess" property granting GSA the authority to physically assess and appraise the property, and convey or negotiate the sale of the property. Upon acceptance, GSA would act as disposal agent, and would offer a public sale of the property. The 1.23 acre property would be transferred in "as is condition" to the buyer(s).

Table 1 summarizes the evaluation of impacts to resources as a result of the No Action and Proposed Action Alternatives. The evaluation performed for this EA shows that no significant impacts would be expected from the Proposed Action Alternative.

Table 1. Summary of Impact Analysis for the No Action and Proposed Action Alternatives

Impact Topic (Alphabetical)	No Action Alternative	Proposed Action Alternative
Air Quality	No impact	No impact
Biological and Physical Resources		

Table 1. Summary of Impact Analysis for the No Action and Proposed Action Alternatives

Impact Topic (Alphabetical)	No Action Alternative	Proposed Action Alternative
Ecologically Critical Areas or Other Unique Natural Resources	Resource not present	Resource not present
Floodplains and Floodways	Resource not present	Resource not present
Prime and Unique Agricultural Land	Resource not present	Resource not present
Soils and Geology	No impact	No impact
Surface Water (Streams, Ponds, etc.) and Hydrology	Resource not present	Resource not present
Threatened and Endangered Species and Critical Habitats	No impact	No impact
Vegetation	No impact	No impact
Wetlands	Resource not present	Resource not present
Wildlife	No impact	No impact
Climate Change	No impact	No impact
Cultural Resources		
Archeological Resources	Resource not present	Resource not present
Historic Buildings	Resource not present	Resource not present
Historic Properties of Religious or Cultural Significance to Native American Tribes	Resource not present	Resource not present
Energy Requirements and Conservation Potential	No impact	No impact
Hazardous and Toxic Substances	No impact	No impact
Land Use	No impact	No impact
Noise	No impact	No impact
Socioeconomics		
Economic Development	No impact	No impact
Population Demographics	No impact	No impact
Housing	No impact	No impact
Community Services	No impact	No impact
Environmental Justice	No impact	No impact
Indian Trust Resources	Resource not present	Resource not present
Protection of Children	No impact	No impact
Transportation	No impact	No impact
Utilities	No impact	No impact

1.1 Conclusions

Based on the analysis discussed in Section 5 of this EA, the Proposed Action Alternative would have no significant impact on the existing natural or built environment. This EA supports a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the Proposed Action Alternative. Accordingly, preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement is not required.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

Job Corps is a national residential training and employment program administered by DOL. The Job Corps was created during the administration of President Lyndon B. Johnson in 1964 as part of Johnson's War on Poverty and Great Society initiatives that sought to expand economic and social opportunities for Americans, especially minorities and the poor. The Job Corps was modeled on the Depression-era Civilian Conservation Corps of the 1930s, which provided room, board, and employment to thousands of unemployed people. The Job Corps was originally established by the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964; authorization for the program continued under the Comprehensive Employment Training Act, then Title IV-B of the Job Training Partnership Act; and is currently provided for under Title I-C of the Workforce Investment Act, 1998.

The Job Corps' mission is to attract eligible young adults, teach them the skills they need to become employable and independent, and develop careers or prepare them for further education. The Job Corps addresses multiple barriers to employment faced by disadvantaged youth throughout the United States.

In support of this mission, DOL oversees residential training campuses nationwide. The agency is responsible for facilities and asset management at the Centers, to include construction as well as operations and maintenance. The DOL proposes to dispose of the JCDC property totaling 1.23 acres located at 1627 Woodland Avenue, Austin, Texas through a transfer facilitated by the General Services Administration (GSA) for potential reuse, for which an EA is required.

This EA was conducted in accordance with NEPA of 1969 (42 United States Code [USC] 4321 et seq.) and the Council of Environmental Quality (CEQ) Regulations (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 1500 to 1508), as last amended in July 2005.

The purpose and need for the Proposed Action Alternative are defined in Section 3. A description of the project and overview of the alternatives is provided in Section 4. Section 5 describes the affected environment and consequences of the alternatives. Findings and conclusions are reported in Section 6.

3.0 PURPOSE AND NEED FOR ACTION

3.1 Project Location

The Job Corps Data Center (JCDC) is located on 1.23 acres in Austin, Travis County, Texas. The JCDC is located on the southeast corner of the intersection of North I-35 Frontage Road and Woodland Avenue; the property address is 1627 Woodland Avenue, Austin, Texas 78741 (Figures 1 and 2). The JCDC is owned by DOL and is operated by Trowbridge and Trowbridge Information Technology and Telecommunications, doing business as Altech Services, Inc. (DOL 2020). The JCDC is located at approximately 30° north latitude and 98° west longitude. Elevation of the site is approximately 489 feet above mean sea level.

3.2 Background

The JCDC was activated for Job Corps utilization in 2003 (DOL 2020); the previous Job Corps data center functions were located at the Gary Job Corps Center in San Marcos, Texas. The JCDC consists of 41,889 gross square feet (GSF) within one building and 17,000 GSF in an attached three-story parking structure (Figure 3). The building contains a large computer server room and two floors of office space for information technology personnel and training areas. The JCDC was established to provide data processing functions for the Job Corps program and to obtain computer support and network training at its facility (DOL 2020). The JCDC provides computer network support services for 16,000 or more computers at 120 Job Corps Centers through the continental United States and Puerto Rice, including email, word processing, video conferencing, internet services and local area network (LAN) systems (DOL 2020).

The JCDC supports the Student Pay & Allotment Management Information System (SPAMIS) that serves approximately 45,000 students and 15,000 support staff through the United States Job Corps Centers (DOL 2020).

3.2.1 Previous Commercial Entities

The building was originally constructed in 1984 as legal offices. It was formerly known as the Transactive Building (DOL 2020). The facility was later sold to GTECH, a national provider of computer services to support lottery games (DOL 2020).

3.2.2 Job Corps Data Center (JCDC)

The JCDC is located in the Austin commercial business district area. Access to the facility is from Interstate 35 (I-35) to the entry at Woodland Avenue. The property is triangular in shape and the building is constructed into the side of a hill. Woodland Avenue has three curb cuts into the building parking areas. The parking garage is a three-story structure attached to the south end of the building as well as under the building, with a total of 127 parking spaces (DOL 2020). Each level of the garage has a separate entrance off of Woodland Avenue.

Building 1 has a steel structural system and the exterior is brick and glass. The original ballasted ethylene propylene diene terpolymer (EPDM) roofing was replaced in 2010 white membrane “Energy Star” roofing. The parking garage structure is reinforced concrete; one side is infilled with concrete blocks.

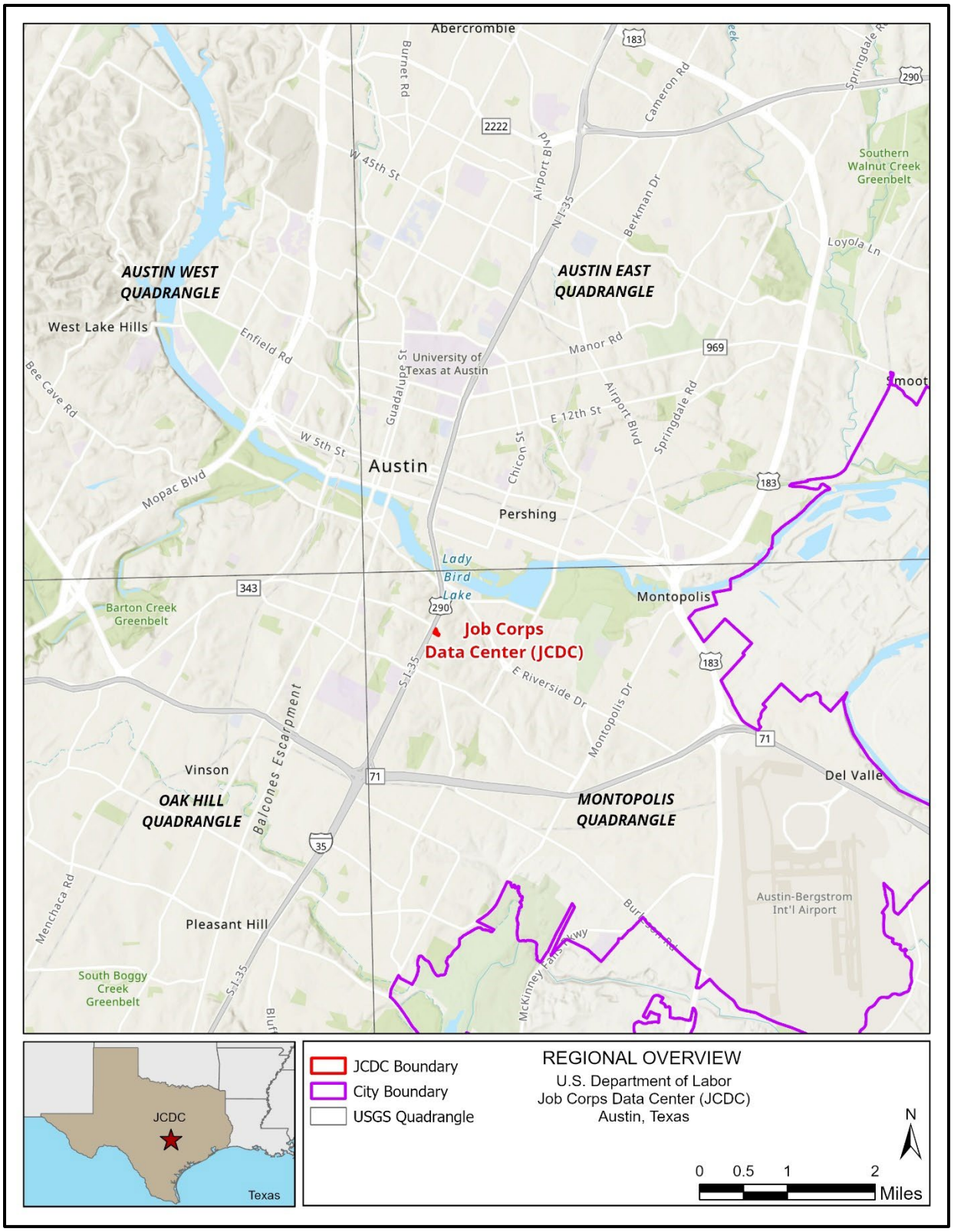

Figure 1. Regional Overview

Figure 2. Project Area Vicinity

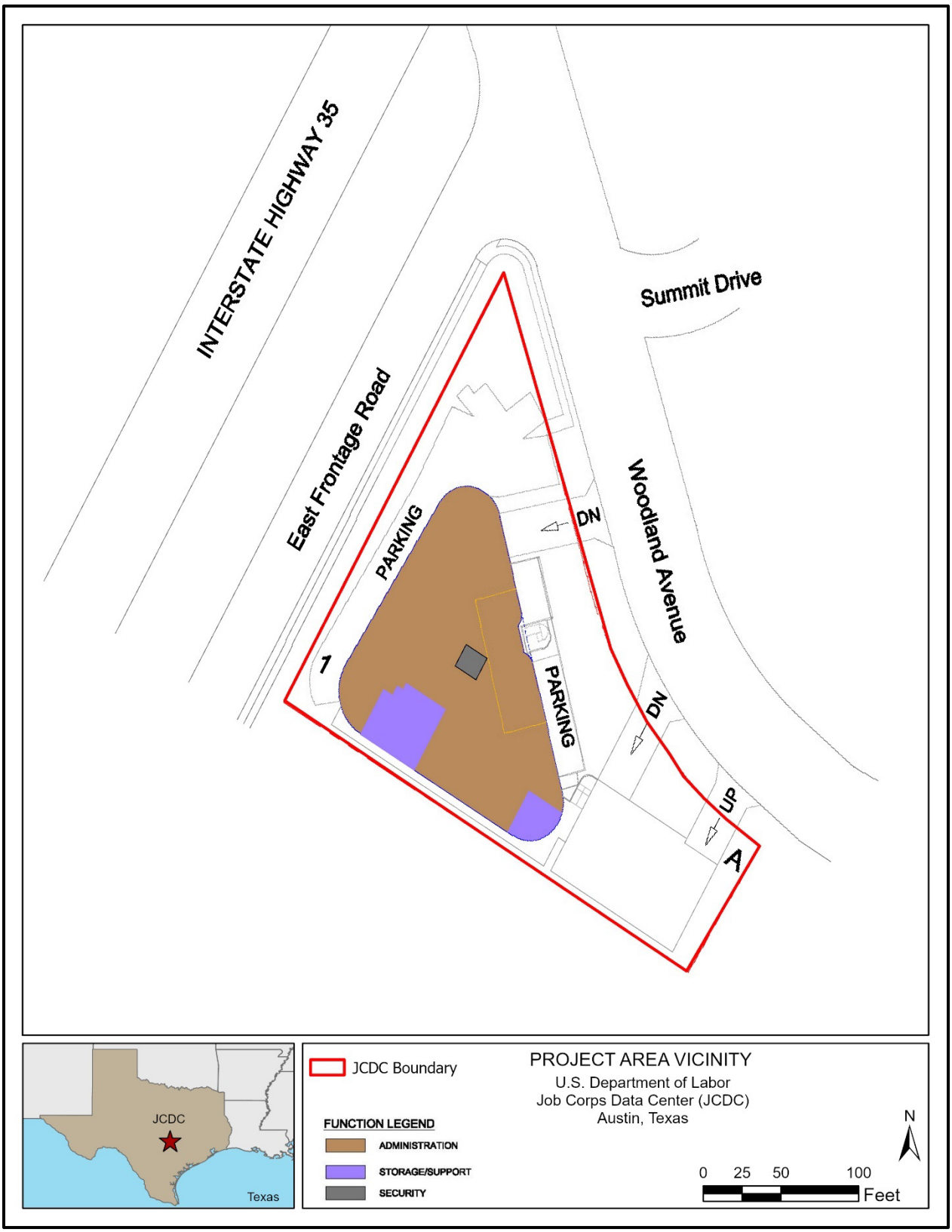

Figure 3. Existing Site Plan

3.3 Project Purpose

The primary purpose for the Proposed Action Alternative is the disposal of the JCDC property totaling 1.23 acres. Reuse of the property by others is a secondary action over which the DOL has only minimal control through the property disposal process.

3.4 Project Need

With the advent of cloud-based computing options, the JCDC property is no longer needed to operate as a data center; all employees now work remotely. The JCDC property has been determined excess to DOL need. One of the primary goals of the Asset Management Plan for the DOL is to reduce the geographic size of real estate and lessen the cost of operating facilities.

4.0 ALTERNATIVES

NEPA requires federal agencies to explore a range of reasonable alternatives and analyze effects that the alternatives could have on the natural and built environment. This section describes the No Action and Proposed Action Alternatives.

4.1 No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, DOL would not dispose of or otherwise transfer the JCDC property totaling 1.23 acres. The area would continue to be federally owned and the DOL through its contractor, would continue to manage the JCDC property. The cost of ownership and property maintenance would remain the responsibility of the DOL.

4.2 Proposed Action Alternative

The Proposed Action Alternative is the disposal of the JCDC property (1.23 acres) located at 1627 Woodland Avenue. This is an action for which the DOL has responsibility, and both the authority and ability to control. The secondary action is reuse development of the property after ownership is transferred, an action taken by others as a result of DOL's decision to dispose of the property.

Methods available for property disposal include 1) a federal transfer facilitated by the GSA, 2) a public benefit conveyance (PBC) (where state or local government entities may obtain the property at less than fair market value when sponsored by a federal agency (e.g., U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development [HUD]) for uses that would benefit the public (e.g., homeless shelter), 3) negotiated sale in which GSA would negotiate the sale of the property to state or local government entities or private parties at fair market value, and 4) competitive sale in which sale to the public would occur through either an invitation for bids or an auction. The reuse planning process is dynamic and often dependent on market, economic, and other conditions. The JCDC property would undergo a series of screenings by GSA to determine the most appropriate or most likely reuse alternatives.

Under the Proposed Action Alternative, DOL would report the JCDC to GSA as "excess" property through completion of Standard Form 118, Report of Excess Real Property, granting GSA the authority to physically assess and appraise the property, and convey or negotiate the sale of the property to another government entity. Upon GSA's acceptance of the Report of Excess Real Property, GSA would become the disposal agent and would handle the disposal process; the entire property would be transferred in "as is condition." GSA will conduct their own NEPA analysis for the disposal and reuse, once known.

5.0 THE AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

This section provides a description of the existing environmental conditions of the geographic area that could potentially be affected by the No Action or Proposed Action Alternatives. Following each impact topic, a description of the potential environmental impacts that could result from implementation of the Proposed Action Alternative compared to the No Action Alternative is presented. The impact topics addressed are described below.

As part of this assessment, scoping letters describing the Proposed Action Alternative were submitted to various federal and state agencies to solicit comments regarding any possible impacts of the Proposed Action Alternative. Copies of the agency correspondence letters are presented in Appendix A.

Cumulative impacts of the Proposed Action Alternative, combined with impacts from past, current, and reasonably foreseeable future actions, are evaluated at the end of this section.

5.1 Impact Analysis Methods

An environmental impact is defined as a change in a resource from the existing environmental baseline conditions caused by or resulting from one of the project alternatives. Impacts may be determined to be beneficial or adverse and may apply to the full range of natural, aesthetic, cultural, and economic resources of the property and its surrounding environment. The term "significant", as defined in Section 1508.27 of the Regulations for Implementing NEPA (40 CFR 1500), requires consideration of both the context and intensity of the impact evaluated. Significance can vary in relation to the potentially affected environment such as society (human, national), the affected region, the affected interests, and the locality. Because of the nature of the proposed project, all impacts may be presumed to be localized unless stated otherwise. Factors contributing to the evaluation of the intensity of an impact are listed in Section 1508.27 of CEQ's Regulations for Implementing NEPA.

The degree of potential impacts discussed in this EA are characterized as follows:

- Significant impact - the impact is severe, major, and highly disruptive to current or desired conditions.
- No significant impact - the impact is slight, but detectable (minor) or the impact is readily apparent and appreciable (moderate).
- Little to no measurable impact - the impact is not measurable at the lowest level of detection (negligible).
- No impact - a resource is present, but is not affected.
- Resource not present.

5.2 Impact Topics Analyzed

No impact topics were assessed in detail for potential impacts resulting from the Proposed Action Alternative because disposal of the JCDC would not affect any environmental resources. Impact topics considered but not further assessed are described in Section 5.2.1. Table 1 at the

beginning of this EA lists each of the impact topics and subtopics and the potential environmental impact from the Proposed Action Alternative. As noted in the following analysis, none of the potential impacts identified in this EA are significant.

5.2.1 Impact Topics Dismissed

Resources that are either not present or for which the Proposed Action Alternative would have no impact were dismissed from further consideration in this EA. The following provides rationale for the dismissal of these topics.

Air Quality. The Federal Clean Air Act (42 USC 7401-7671q) required the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) to establish a series of National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for air quality pollutant levels for the following criteria pollutants: carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen dioxide (NO2), ozone (O3), sulfur dioxides (SOx, measured as sulfur dioxide [SO_2]), lead (Pb), and particulate matter (PM). Particulate matter was subdivided to matter that is less than 10 micrometers (PM10) in size and matter that is less than 2.5 micrometers (PM2.5) in size.. Current standards for these pollutants are available on the USEPA website (https://www.epa.gov/criteria-air-pollutants/naaqs-table) (USEPA 2023a). Areas where ambient concentrations of a given pollutant are below the applicable ambient standards are designated as being in "attainment" for that pollutant. An area that does not meet the NAAQS for a given pollutant is classified as a "non-attainment" area for that pollutant. Areas where pollutants were once designated as nonattainment but are now meeting and maintaining the standard are redesignated as a "maintenance area."

The project area is located within Travis County, Texas which is designated as "in attainment" for all USEPA NAAQS criteria pollutants (Texas Commission on Environmental Quality [CEQ] 2023a). Because the county is in attainment for all NAAQS and the project would occur on a relatively small footprint within the much larger area of Travis County, there would be no impact to the county's status in regard to the NAAQS. Further, the project would comply with all county ordinances and state guidance and regulations concerning emissions and air quality. Therefore, this topic was dismissed from further consideration.

Ecologically Critical Areas. CEQ regulations (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(3)) require consideration of the severity of impact (intensity) on unique characteristics of the geographic area such as proximity to ecologically critical areas. The JCDC is located in an urban area and is not within or near, any ecologically critical areas (Travis County 2023a). This topic was dismissed because the resource is not present within the project area.

Floodplains and Floodways. According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the JCDC is entirely located in an area of minimal flood hazard (FEMA 2020). This topic was dismissed because the resource is not present within the project area. This topic was dismissed because the resource is not present within the project area.

Prime and Unique Agricultural Lands. Prime farmland has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops. Unique land is land other than prime farmland used for production of specific high-value food and fiber crops. Both categories require that the land be available for farming uses. According to the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) web soil online mapping tool, only one soil

type is identified for the JCDC property: Urban Land/Ferris soils (10 to 15 percent slopes) (NRCS 2023). This soil type is not considered prime farmland. This topic was dismissed because the resource is not present within the project area.

Soils and Geology. According to the Texas Almanac, the JCDC lies within the Coastal Plains, which is characterized by rolling to hilly surfaces covered with a heavy growth of pine and hardwoods (Texas Almanac 2021). The interior limit of the Coastal Plains is the Balcones Fault and Escarpment, west of Austin (Texas Almanac 2021). Surface geology in the vicinity of the JCDC is represented by Quaternary fluviatile terrace deposits and Late Cretaceous lower Taylor marl characterized by Pecan Gap Chalk and Ozan Formation (United States Geological Survey [USGS] n.d.; University of Texas, Austin, Bureau of Economic Geology 1981; University of Texas, The Student Geology Society 1977).

As discussed within the Prime and Unique Agricultural Lands section above, the JCDC property is associated with one soil type identified as Urban Land/Ferris soils (NRCS 2023). Soils in the JCDC property, have been compacted and disturbed by excavating, leveling, and grading activities during the original construction of the facility in 1984. No ground disturbing activities are associated with the disposal of the JCDC property. Therefore, the Proposed Action Alternative would result no impact to soils and geology and this topic was not further assessed.

Surface Water and Hydrology. The JCDC is located within the Colorado River watershed; Lady Bird Lake, created by impounding a portion of the Colorado River, is approximately 0.64 miles northeast of the facility. Based of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) mapping, no streams or ephemeral drainages are located within the JCDC property (USFWS 2023). The Proposed Action Alternative would not change the current or historical drainage patterns for the area. This topic was dismissed because the resource is not present within the project area.

Wetlands. USFWS NWI maps were reviewed for the potential occurrence of wetlands at the JCDC (USFWS 2023a). No wetlands are present in the project area. This topic was dismissed because the resource is not present within the project area.

Threatened and Endangered Species and Critical Habitats. The USFWS Information, Planning, and Conservation (IPaC) System was reviewed to determine if any federally-listed endangered or threatened species may occur in the project area. According to the official species list generated for the project in IPaC (Appendix A), the federally-listed species identified in Table 2 are known or expected to be on or in the vicinity of the Job Corps Data Center (USFWS 2023b).

Table 2. Federally Listed Species near the Job Corps Data Center

Common Name	Scientific Name	Status
Mammals		
Tricolored Bat	*Perimyotis subflavus*	Proposed Endangered
Birds		
Golden-cheeked Warbler	*Setophaga chrysoparia*	FE
Piping Plover	*Charadrius melodus*	FT

Red Knot	*Calidris canutus rufa*	FT
Whooping Crane	*Grus americana*	FE
Amphibians		
Austin Blind Salamander	*Eurycea waterlooensis*	FE
Jollyville Plateau Salamander	*Eurycea tonkawae*	FT
Clams		
Texas Fatmucket	*Lampsilis bracteata*	Proposed Endangered
Insects		
Monarch Butterfly	*Danaus plexippus*	CD
Tooth Cave Ground Beetle	*Rhadine persephone*	FE
Arachnids		
Bone Cave Harvestman	*Texella reyesi*	FE
Tooth Cave Spider	*Tayshaneta myopica*	FE

Source: USFWS 2023b

Notes: FE = Federally endangered; FT = Federally threatened; CD = Candidate

The species of birds identified in Table 3 are protected under the Migratory Bird Act (16 USC 703-712) and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (16 USC 668-668d), according to the USFWS, have the potential to occur in the vicinity of the Job Corps Data Center (USFWS 2023b). All nine of the listed migratory birds that have the potential to occur in the project area are listed as Birds of Conservation Concern (BCC), which represent those species in need of the highest conservation priority.

Table 3. Migratory Birds near the Job Corps Data Center

Common Name	Scientific Name
American Golden-plover	*Pluvialis dominica*
Bald Eagle	*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*
Chimney Swift	*Chaetura pelagica*
Kentucky Warbler	*Oporornis formosus*
Lesser Yellowlegs	*Tringa flavipes*
Little Blue Heron	*Egretta caerulea*
Long-billed Curlew	*Numenius americanus*
Prothonotary Warbler	*Protonotaria cirea*
Sprague's Pipit	*Anthus spragueii*

Source: USFWS 2023b

The JCDC is not within any designated critical habitat (USFWS 2023b). The project area is located within an urban commercial area with maintained grass-covered area, limited tree cover or shrubbery vegetation, and no surface waters. This area does not provide suitable habitat for the federally-listed threatened and endangered mammal, bird, amphibian, clam, insect and

arachnid species. Therefore, there would be no impact on federally-listed threatened or endangered species or migratory birds as a result of the Proposed Action Alternative. Based on guidance received from USFWS Austin Ecological Services Field Office (USFWS 2023b), concurrence and further consultation is not required for no effect determinations. No further analysis of this topic is required.

Vegetation. The JCDC property is located within an urban commercial area with maintained grass-covered areas, ornamental trees, and shrubbery. No natural vegetation communities are present on the property. Therefore, there would be no impact on vegetation and no further analysis of this topic is required.

Wildlife. Wildlife identified in Austin, Travis County include white-tailed deer, gray fox, coyote, common raccoon, ringtail, bobcat, North American porcupine, nine-banded armadillo eastern cottontail, opossum, rock and fox squirrels, Mexican free-tailed bat, and a variety of venomous and non-venomous snakes (iNaturalist 2016; City of Austin 2023). As indicated in the Surface Water and Hydrology, and Vegetation sections above, the JCDC is located in an urban commercial area with no source of surface water, and maintained grass-covered areas, ornamental trees, and shrubbery, which is not conducive to habitat for urban wildlife. Therefore, the Proposed Action Alternative would have no impact on wildlife, and no further analysis of this topic is required.

Cultural Resources. Cultural resources are discussed in terms of archaeological resources, including both prehistoric and historical occupations, architectural resources (historic buildings), and properties of religious or cultural significance to Native American Tribes, including Traditional Cultural Properties. Historic properties, as defined by the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), represent the subset of cultural resources listed on, or eligible for, inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP).

The Section 106 process was initiated with the Texas Historical Commission which contains the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), on August 10, 2023 (Appendix A). The Area of Potential Effects (APE) for the Proposed Action Alternative at the JCDC consists of the entire 1.23 acre parcel boundary (Figures 2 and 3). Archival research included a review of listings on the NRHP, assessment of historic cartographic records, and a general literature search. A site files search was conducted on July 13, 2023 using the Texas Historical Commission, Texas Historic Sites Atlas. No cultural resources have been previously recorded in the APE.

Based on historic aerial photographs, the APE was undeveloped land with grasslands and forested areas from at least 1952 (Nationwide Environmental Title Research [NETR] 1952) and was open space from 1964 (NETR 1964, 1966, 1973, 1981) through construction of the building and parking garage in 1984 (DOL 2020). Previous ground disturbance in the APE consists of the excavation and construction of the building and parking garage, surface grading and installation of exterior parking, driveways, and pedestrian walkways, and planting of lawns, ornamental trees, and shrubs in 1984 (DOL 2020). Due to the extensive level of disturbance, no archaeological resources would occur in the APE. The building and parking garage were constructed in 1984 and are modern facilities (less than 50 years old). No architectural resources older than 50 years are located in the APE.

Native American Tribes with a potential interest in the project area based on location or historical ties to the area were identified (Kavanagh 2001; Levy 2001; Newcomb and Campbell 2001,). DOL initiated consultation with three federally recognized tribes, the Comanche Nation, the Kiowa Indian Tribe of Oklahoma, and the Tonkawa Tribe of Oklahoma, in letters dated August 10, 2023 (Appendix A). Based on a preliminary review, no properties of religious or cultural significance to Native American tribes are known to occur within the proposed project area.

Under the Proposed Action Alternative, no impacts to archaeological resources are expected because there is no potential for intact archaeological resources to occur within the previously disturbed APE. No historic architectural resources and no Native American resources occur in the APE. The Proposed Action Alternative is expected to have no impact to cultural resources. Concurrence by the Texas Historical Commission is pending.

Land Use. According to the City of Austin's Comprehensive Plan: East Riverside/Oltorf Combined Neighborhood Plan, the JCDC is classified as "Office" (City of Austin 2006). The parcels immediately adjacent to the JCDC are also office, as well as civic, commercial, and residential. The Proposed Action Alternative would not changing the existing office land use on the JCDC property. Therefore, there would be no impact on land use and no further analysis of this topic is required.

Energy Requirements and Conservation Potential. Executive Order (EO) 13834 requires federal agencies to efficiently operate federal facilities and addresses requirements for energy, water, fleet, buildings, and acquisition management. Currently, only parts 6, 7, and 11 are active (EO 13990). The EO would not apply to the Proposed Action Alternative since the property would be transferred or sold out of federal ownership. Therefore, this topic was not carried forward for analysis.

Climate Change. Climate change refers to any significant changes in average climatic conditions (such as mean temperature, precipitation, or wind) or variability (such as seasonality and storm frequency) lasting for an extended period (decades or longer). A report by the National Climate Assessment and Development Advisory Committee (NCADAC) U.S. Climate Change Science Program and Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) provides evidence that climate change is occurring as a result of human activity and associated rising greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and that it could accelerate in coming decades (NCADAC 2013). GHG trap heat in the atmosphere; the major GHGs are carbon dioxide (CO_2), methane (CH^4), nitrous oxide (N_2O), and fluorinated gases, which are gases that are typically emitted from industrial processes. The majority of CO_2 emissions, the primary GHG emitted through human activities, comes from the burning of fossil fuels (USEPA 2020). While climate change is a global phenomenon, it manifests differently depending on regional and local factors. General changes that are expected in the future as a result of climate change include hotter, drier summers; warmer winters; warmer water; higher ocean levels; more severe wildfires; degraded air quality; more frequent heavy downpours; and increased drought.

The Proposed Action Alternative would not result in an increase in GHG emissions. Therefore, the Proposed Action Alternative would result in no impact to climate change, and no further analysis of this topic is required.

Hazardous and Toxic Substances. The parcel at the JCDC is not listed in EPA databases for hazardous materials sites (e.g., USEPA 2023b). The JCDC on Woodland Avenue is not listed in Petroleum Storage Tank databases maintained by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (Texas CEQ 2023b). Disposal of the JCDC would not result in the generation of any hazardous waste. Therefore, there would be no impact to hazardous and toxic substances, and no further analysis of this topic is required.

Noise. Noise is typically defined as unwanted sound, a definition that includes both the psychological and physical nature of the sound. Under certain conditions, noise may cause hearing loss, interfere with human activities at home and work, and may affect human health and well-being in various ways. The Proposed Action Alternative would not result in an increase of noise. Therefore, there would be no impact due to noise and no further analysis of this topic is required.

Socioeconomic Environment.

Economic development. The Proposed Action Alternative would have no effects on the local or regional economy. The employees at the JCDC have already transitioned to teleworking within the City of Austin/Travis County.

Populations Demographics. The City of Austin has a current population of 917,632 (USEPA 2023c). The Census Tract Block Group that contains the JCDC has a current population of 864 (USEPA 2023d). The Proposed Action Alternative would not result in any detectable changes to the demographics of the local or regional areas and no further analysis of this topic is required.

Housing. The Proposed Action Alternative would not result in any detectable changes to the housing in the local or regional areas and no further analysis of this topic is required.

Community Services. Community services include education, health services, law enforcement, fire protection, and recreation. There are no anticipated impacts to police, fire, or law enforcement public services (i.e., police and fire protection, hospital services) or recreational opportunities as a result of the Proposed Action Alternative. No further analysis of this topic is required.

Environmental Justice. On February 11, 1994, President Clinton issued EO 12898, *Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority and Low-Income Populations*. EO 12898 first addressed environmental justice by requiring each federal agency to "make achieving environmental justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing, as appropriate, disproportionate[ly high] and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations". Subsequent guidance (EO 13985, 14008, and 14096) has updated and further clarified EJ definitions and agency responsibilities. Within the most recent guidance, EO 14096 "Revitalizing our Nation's Commitment to Environmental Justice", environmental justice is defined as the just treatment and meaningful involvement of all people, regardless of income, race, color, national origin, Tribal affiliation, or disability, in agency decision-making and other federal activities that affect human health and the environment.

The Proposed Action Alternative would not affect low-income or minority families with respect to health, community disruption, transportation, planned development, or employment. No

families, whether in these socioeconomic groups or not, would be relocated as a result of the Proposed Action Alternative. There would be no changes in local populations or other social factors as a result of the Proposed Action Alternative. No further analysis of this topic is required.

Indian Trust Resources. Indian trust assets are owned by Native Americans but held in trust by the United States. Requirements are included in the Secretary of the Interior's Secretarial Order No. 3206, *American Indian Tribal Rites, Federal – Tribal Trust Responsibilities, and the Endangered Species Act*, and Secretarial Order No. 3175, *Departmental Responsibilities for Indian Trust Resources*. Indian trust assets do not occur within the project area so this topic was dismissed.

Protection of Children. On April 21, 1997, President Clinton issued EO 13045, *Protection of Children from Environmental Health Risks and Safety Risks*. This EO recognizes that a growing body of scientific knowledge demonstrates that children may suffer disproportionately from environmental health risks and safety risks. There are no anticipated impacts to the safety of children as a result of the Proposed Action Alternative.

Transportation. Access to the JCDC is provided by I-35 and Woodland Avenue. The Proposed Action Alternative would not alter existing transportation access to the JCDC. There would be no impact on transportation resources, and no further analysis of this topic is required.

Utilities. Current utilities located at the JCDC include electrical service, communications, and municipal water and sewer.

Electric. Electrical service at the JCDC is provided by the City of Austin Energy (DOL 2020). The JCDC is serviced by a 1,000 kiloVolt (kV) pad-mounted utility owned transformer located on the lower level of the parking structure. The electrical system has an emergency generator in the event of power loss (DOL 2020).

Communication. Long distance service is provided by Verizon and local service by AT&T as well as Cisco Unified Communication Manager. Communication cables are underground fiber optic cables. Exterior and interior closed circuit televisions (CCTV) cameras are monitored in the security office. A 2020 security upgrade project included installation of (34) new security cameras, and two mag locks, which will be interconnected with the building fire alarm system.

Water and Sewer. The municipal water authority of the City of Austin supplies domestic and a combination of fire protection water systems. The water usage is measured at a master meter. The JCDC owns and maintains the water distribution systems within the property lines (DOL 2020). The underground sewer from the JCDC flows by gravity into the collection system owned by the City of Austin Water Authority. The sanitary sewer piping within the property is owned and maintained by the JCDC.

The Proposed Action Alternative would not alter existing utilities. There would be no impact on utilities, and no further analysis of this topic is required.

5.2.2 Impact Topics Retained for Analysis

No impact topics were retained for further analysis.

5.3 Cumulative Impacts

A cumulative impact analysis evaluates the incremental effects of implementing the Proposed Action Alternative when added to past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions at the JCDC and the actions of other parties in the surrounding area, where applicable. A five-year planning horizon was used for this assessment (five years into the past and five years into the future).

5.3.1 Actions at the JCDC Property

Within the past five years, the operator has completed and began maintenance, repair, and minor renovation projects on the JCDC. These projects have included:

Completed Projects

- Repave parking underneath the building and fill in potholes. The project was partially completed.
- Building fire alarm system was replaced.

Reasonably foreseeable future actions other than the Proposed Action Alternative that may occur at the JCDC include, but are not limited to, the following repair, renovation, and replacement projects that were identified as deficiencies in the most recent Facility Planning Report (DOL 2020):

- Repair retaining wall.
- Repair chain link fence.
- Repair or replace exterior metal stair treads, risers, and handrails.
- Replace interior carpet.
- Repair and paint interior wall and ceiling finishes.
- Renovate toilet rooms to code and ensure they are compliant with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), including install new floor tiles, refinish wall surfaces, and replace toilets, urinals, and sinks.
- Upgrade roof-mounted mechanical equipment.
- Add ventilation to the transformer closet on the second floor and upgrade all exhaust fans.
- Upgrade sprinkler system.
- Replace the heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) system.
- Replace ceiling tile in the parking beneath the building.

5.3.2 Actions by Others in the Surrounding Area

Actions by other entities in the surrounding area, similar to the Proposed Action Alternative, encompass the lease and/or sale of commercial buildings. Within Austin, over 500 commercial properties are for lease (LoopNet 2023a) and over 330 commercial properties are listed for sale (LoopNet 2023b).

5.3.3 Potential Cumulative Impacts

Recent maintenance, repair, and minor renovation projects conducted at the JCDC did not result in any adverse impacts and led to the beneficial impacts of needed improvements to the facility. All potential future projects planned for the facility, as listed above, are expected to result in similar beneficial impacts to continued operation of the JCDC, while any adverse impacts would likely be negligible or mitigated, pending assessment as part of future NEPA studies, if required.

Disposal and public sale of the JCDC, as facilitated by GSA, would be transferred in "as is condition" to the buyer(s). Reasonably foreseeable future actions other than the Proposed Action Alternative, would not be implemented which may result in a decreased purchase price.

5.3.3.1 No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, the proposed disposal of the JCDC property would not occur. Therefore, the proposed project would not contribute to cumulative impacts resulting from past, present and reasonably foreseeable future projects in the surrounding area.

5.3.3.2 Proposed Action Alternative

As presented in Section 5.2, the Proposed Action Alternative (disposal of the JCDC property) would have no impact on air quality, soils and geology, threatened and endangered species and critical habitats, vegetation, wildlife, climate change, energy requirements and conservation potential, hazardous and toxic substances, land use, noise, socioeconomic environment, transportation, or utilities. The following resources were not present in the JCDC project area: ecologically critical areas, floodplains and floodways, prime and unique agricultural farmland, surface water and hydrology, wetlands, cultural resources, and Indian Trust resources. The disposal of the JCDC and subsequent public sale of the property facilitated by GSA would not substantially add to the current commercial properties for sale or lease in Austin. The Proposed Action Alternative, therefore, in combination with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future activities, would not contribute to significant cumulative impacts to the surrounding area.

5.4 Mitigation Measures or Best Management Practices

Implementation of the Proposed Action Alternative would not require any mitigation measures or best management practices.

6.0 FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

This EA was conducted in accordance with the requirements of NEPA, the CEQ regulations implementing NEPA (40 CFR 1500), and DOL NEPA Compliance Procedures (29 CFR §11). As analyzed and discussed in this EA, impacts of the Proposed Action Alternative for the disposal of the JCDC have been considered and no significant impacts were identified. Therefore, issuance of a FONSI is warranted and preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement is not required.

7.0 AGENCY CONSULTATION

DOL contacted federal and state agencies and two federally-recognized Native American tribes regarding the Proposed Action Alternative. The letters are presented in Appendix A. The following agencies were consulted:

- Texas Historical Commission (SHPO)
- U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS)
- Comanche Nation
- Kiowa Indian Tribe of Oklahoma
- Tonkawa Tribe of Oklahoma

8.0 PREPARERS OF THIS ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

The Engineering Support Contractor (ESC) prepared this EA under Contract DOL 121A21848 for the DOL Job Corps program. The ESC's Parsons environmental specialists who prepared this document are listed as follows:

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APPENDIX A
AGENCY COMMENT SOLICITATION LETTERS