

Scoping Summary Report

April 2016



Welcome



PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING

Spaceport Camden Environmental Impact Statement



December 7, 2015 • 5:00 pm to 8:00 pm
Camden County, Georgia
Please sign in!

Scoping is your opportunity to provide comments to help us
improve our analysis



**Federal Aviation
Administration**

**Office of Commercial
Space Transportation**

Executive Summary

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is preparing the Spaceport Camden Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to evaluate the potential impacts of the Camden County, Georgia, Board of Commissioners' (the County's) proposal to develop a commercial space launch site ("Spaceport Camden"). Under the Proposed Action presented during the public scoping comment period, the County would construct and operate Spaceport Camden, which would consist of a vertical launch site, a landing zone, a control center complex, and another facility similar to the control center that would include provisions for visitors and viewing launches. The County plans to offer the site for up to 12 vertical launches and up to 12 landings of associated launch vehicle first stages per year. Prior to conducting operations at the proposed Spaceport Camden, the County must obtain a Launch Site Operator License from the FAA. In addition, launch vehicle operators proposing to launch from Spaceport Camden must obtain a launch license(s) from the FAA for the operation of their vehicle(s) from Spaceport Camden. The Spaceport Camden EIS will evaluate the potential direct, indirect, and cumulative environmental impacts that may result from the Proposed Action of constructing and operating Spaceport Camden, including related activities and actions considered connected to the Proposed Action.

Scoping is a required component of the EIS process and is conducted in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA); Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Regulations (Title 40 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Parts 1500-1508 [40 CFR Parts 1500-1508]); the Environmental Quality Improvement Act of 1970, as amended (Title 42 United States Code, Section 4371 et seq.); executive orders; FAA Order 1050.1F, *Environmental Impacts: Policies and Procedures*; and other applicable FAA orders, directives, and guidance. Scoping is an open process for determining the range of issues to be addressed in the EIS and identifying potential significant issues related to a Proposed Action, including environmental concerns, from government agencies and the public.

This Scoping Summary Report provides an overview of the activities conducted and the comments received during the public scoping comment period for the Spaceport Camden EIS, which began with issuance of the Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare an EIS, Open a Public Scoping Period, and To Hold a Public Scoping Meeting in Camden County, Georgia (80 *Federal Register* 68893) on November 6, 2015. The NOI provided the date and time for the public scoping meeting and a summary of the Proposed Action; invited interested agencies, organizations, Native American tribes, and members of the public to submit comments; and formally initiated the public scoping comment period. The FAA also notified, by postcard or email, individuals; Federal, State, and local agencies; elected officials; and various interest groups that were likely to be interested in the Proposed Action and the scoping process. The public scoping comment period was originally scheduled to close on January 4, 2016, but in response to public requests, the period was extended by the FAA an additional 14 days (81 *Federal Register* 1280).

The FAA held a public scoping meeting on Monday, December 7, 2015, from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Camden County Public Services Authority Recreation Center located at 1050 Wildcat Drive in Kingsland, in Camden County, Georgia. The public scoping meeting began with an open-house poster session from 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., during which members of the public could speak to FAA representatives and view posters about the proposed project, the Spaceport Camden EIS, and the NEPA process. After the open house, the FAA began the formal meeting with a brief presentation about the proposed project and the licensing and NEPA processes, followed by the public comment session. Speakers were called during the comment session in the order in which they signed up to speak.

A total of 909 comment submissions were received during scoping; this total includes 770 comment submissions received during the time the public scoping comment period was officially opened (November 6, 2015 to January 18, 2016). **Table ES-1** summarizes the number of comment submissions

provided through the various methods available to the public. All comments received during the scoping period are being given equal consideration in the preparation of the draft EIS.

Table ES-1. Comment Submission Method Summary

<i>Method of Submitting Comments^a</i>	<i>Total Number of Comment Submissions Received</i>
Written Comments at Scoping Meeting	45
Oral Comments at Scoping Meeting	53
Electronic (Email) ^b	770
U.S. Mail	41
Total	909

^a Duplicate comment submissions provided via different methods were only counted once.

^b A total of 125 comment submissions were received prior to the scoping comment period and 14 comment submissions were received after the conclusion of the scoping comment period.

The potential impacts from the Proposed Action and alternatives on the environmental impact categories (or resource areas) listed in Paragraph 4-1 of FAA Order 1050.1F will be analyzed as part of the draft EIS. Additional resource areas recommended by commenters which are not listed in FAA Order 1050.1F, Paragraph 4-1 will be analyzed, as relevant.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CAA	Clean Air Act
CEQ	Council on Environmental Quality
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
DoD	U.S. Department of Defense
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
FAA	Federal Aviation Administration
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NOI	Notice of Intent
NPCA	National Parks Conservation Association
NPS	National Park Service
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

1.0 Introduction

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is preparing the Spaceport Camden Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to evaluate the potential impacts of the Camden County, Georgia, Board of Commissioners' (the County's) proposal to develop a commercial space launch site ("Spaceport Camden"). Under the Proposed Action presented during the public scoping comment period, the County would construct and operate Spaceport Camden, which would consist of a vertical launch site, a landing zone, a control center complex, and another facility similar to the control center that would include provisions for visitors and viewing launches. The County plans to offer the site for up to 12 vertical launches and up to 12 landings of associated launch vehicle first-stages per year. Prior to conducting operations at the proposed Spaceport Camden, the County must obtain a Launch Site Operator License from the FAA. In addition, launch vehicle operators proposing to launch from Spaceport Camden must obtain a launch license(s) from the FAA for the operation of their vehicle(s) from Spaceport Camden. The Spaceport Camden EIS will evaluate the potential direct, indirect, and cumulative environmental impacts that may result from the Proposed Action of constructing and operating Spaceport Camden, including related activities and actions considered connected to the Proposed Action.

Scoping is a required component of the EIS process and is conducted in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA); Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Regulations (Title 40 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Parts 1500-1508 [40 CFR Parts 1500-1508]); the Environmental Quality Improvement Act of 1970, as amended (Title 42 United States Code, Section 4371 et seq.); executive orders; FAA Order 1050.1F, *Environmental Impacts: Policies and Procedures*; and other applicable FAA orders, directives, and guidance. Scoping is an open process for determining the range of issues to be addressed in the EIS and identifying potential significant issues related to a Proposed Action, including environmental concerns from government agencies and the public. The scoping process helps the FAA identify issues that will be analyzed in depth in the Spaceport Camden EIS, identify any other environmental reviews and consultation requirements necessary for the Proposed Action, and assign responsibilities among lead and cooperating agencies for inputs to the EIS. Scoping also serves to identify issues not requiring detailed analysis and issues that have been addressed by prior environmental review, set the temporal and geographic boundaries of the EIS, determine reasonable alternatives, and identify available technical information. During the public scoping comment period, the FAA requested input from government agencies, Native American tribes, organizations, interest groups, and the public on issues of concern and alternatives to be analyzed.

This Scoping Summary Report provides an overview of the activities conducted and the comments received during the public scoping comment period for the Spaceport Camden EIS, which began with issuance of the Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare an EIS, Open a Public Scoping Period, and To Hold a Public Scoping Meeting in Camden County, Georgia (80 *Federal Register* 68893) on November 6, 2015. The public scoping comment period was originally scheduled to close on January 4, 2016, but in response to public requests, the period was extended by the FAA an additional 14 days. This extension was announced by:

- Issuing a Notice of Extension of Public Scoping Comment Period in the *Federal Register* on January 11, 2016 (81 *Federal Register* 1280);
- Posting a notice on the FAA Spaceport Camden website that the comment period was extended: http://www.faa.gov/about/office_org/headquarters_offices/ast/environmental/nepa_docs/revi ew/documents_progress/camden_spaceport/; and
- Sending email notifications to those on the FAA's Spaceport Camden mailing list.

Copies of the *Federal Register* notices are provided in Appendix A to this Scoping Summary Report. Copies of the email notifications are provided in Appendix B.

2.0 Scoping Process

Scoping provides an opportunity for the general public, government agencies, and interested groups to learn about the Purpose and Need, the Proposed Action, and alternatives for implementing the Proposed Action. The scoping process also provides an opportunity for the public to help define the scope of the draft EIS, the alternatives, and the analyses through suggesting alternative approaches that meet the Purpose and Need and raising concerns and issues.

The NOI to prepare an EIS, Open a Public Scoping Period, and To Hold a Public Scoping Meeting in Camden County, Georgia was published on Friday, November 6, 2015, in the *Federal Register*. The NOI provided the date and time for the public scoping meeting and a summary of the Proposed Action; invited interested agencies, organizations, Native American tribes, and members of the public to submit comments; and formally initiated the public scoping comment period. The FAA also notified, by postcard or email, individuals; Federal, State, and local agencies; elected officials; and various interest groups that were likely to be interested in the Proposed Action and the scoping process. As discussed in Section 1.0, the public scoping comment period was extended by 14 days. Copies of the postcard and email notifications are provided in Appendix B to this Scoping Summary Report.

Advertisements announcing the public scoping meeting were placed in *The Brunswick News* and the *Tribune & Georgian* newspapers in the 2 weeks preceding the public scoping meeting (**Table 1**). *The Brunswick News* and the *Tribune & Georgian* provide service to the potentially affected communities in proximity to the proposed project. The newspapers determined the placement of the notices. The advertisements summarized the Proposed Action; provided the time, date, and location of the public scoping meeting; and described the methods for submitting scoping comments. Copies of the advertisements as they appeared in print are provided in Appendix C to this Scoping Summary Report.

Table 1. Scoping Meeting Notices – Publication Dates for Newspapers

<i>Newspaper</i>	<i>Publication Date</i>	<i>Page Number</i>
The Brunswick News	November 28, 2015	2A
	December 5, 2015	4A
Tribune & Georgian	November 26, 2015	5A
	December 3, 2015	6A

In December 2015, the FAA mailed letters to the leaders of the following Native American tribes, initiating formal government-to-government consultation: Chickasaw Nation, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Muscogee (Creek) Nation, Poarch Band of Creek Indians, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Seminole Tribe of Florida, and Thlopthlocco Tribal Town. In January 2016, the FAA mailed National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) Section 106 consultation letters to the Georgia State Historic Preservation Officer, the Tribal Historic Preservation Officers of the aforementioned tribes, and the Cherokee of Georgia Tribal Council, Georgia Tribe of Eastern Cherokee, and the Lower Muskogee Creek Tribe. The FAA also emailed a NHPA Section 106 consultation letter to the Chair of the Gullah Geechee Commission. See Appendix D to this Scoping Summary Report for copies of these letters.

3.0 Public Scoping Meeting

The FAA held a public scoping meeting on Monday, December 7, 2015, from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Camden County Public Services Authority Recreation Center located at 1050 Wildcat Drive in Kingsland, in Camden County, Georgia. Meeting attendees were welcomed at the entrance of the Recreation Center and were asked to fill out scoping meeting sign-in cards. Members of the public who wished to speak during the public comment portion indicated their intention to speak when they registered. Speakers were then called during the comment session in the order in which they signed up to speak.



3.1 Format and Public Meeting Materials

The public scoping meeting began with an open-house poster session from 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., during which members of the public could speak to FAA representatives and view posters about the proposed project, the Spaceport Camden EIS, and the NEPA process. Posters provided information on the NEPA process and environmental impact categories (or resource areas); an overview of the Proposed Action, activities, and facilities; the FAA licensing and permitting process; and the public involvement process. These and other materials presented at the public scoping meeting can be found on the FAA Spaceport Camden website: http://www.faa.gov/about/office_org/headquarters_offices/ast/environmental/nepa_docs/review/documents_progress/camden_spaceport/.



After the open house, the FAA began the formal meeting with a brief presentation about the proposed project and the licensing and NEPA processes, followed by the public comment session. During the poster session and after the public comment session, FAA project team representatives were available to explain the proposed project and alternatives, answer questions about the project, and describe the environmental impact analysis process and related timeline. Representatives from the Spaceport Camden Project were also present to answer questions about the proposed project.



Handouts about the Proposed Action, the NEPA process, how to provide comments, and other relevant information were available in various locations in the meeting and poster session rooms, and handouts of the posters were available at each poster table. Comment forms and pens were

available for attendees to fill out and submit comments at the public scoping meeting, or the comment forms could be taken home and mailed to the FAA after the meeting. A court reporter was present during the open house to record oral comments for those who did not wish to speak publicly at the

meeting and to record the public comment session (see the FAA Spaceport Camden website for the transcript of the public comment session:

http://www.faa.gov/about/office_org/headquarters_offices/ast/environmental/nepa_docs/review/documents_progress/camden_spaceport/).

3.2 Attendance

A total of 460 individuals signed in at the public scoping meeting. Attendees included members of the public, representatives of Federal and State elected officials, city government agencies, and the community groups shown in **Table 2**.

Table 2. Elected Officials, Agencies, and Community Groups at the Public Scoping Meeting

<i>Attendee</i>	<i>Affiliation</i>
Jared Downs	on behalf of U.S. Senator Johnny Isakson
Representative Jeff Jones	Georgia House of Representatives, District 167, Brunswick
Representative Jason Spencer	Georgia House of Representatives, District 180, Woodbine
Kenneth E. Smith	Mayor, Kingsland
Louise V. Mitchell	City of Woodbine Council (Mayor Pro-tem)
Steve Howard	Camden County Administrator
Michael J. Fender	Camden County Board of Commissioners, Director of Finance and Budget
Charles Clark	Camden County Board of Commissioners, District 2 Commissioner
Jimmy Starline	Camden County Board of Commissioners, Chairman and District 3 Commissioner
Gary Blount	Camden County Board of Commissioners, District 4 Commissioner
Al Crace	Charlton County Board of Commissioners
Julie T. Martin	Brunswick City Commission
Linda Williams	St. Marys City Council
Elaine Powierski	St. Marys City Council
Rachel Baldwin	Camden County Chamber of Commerce
Douglas Cooper	Camden County Chamber of Commerce
Amy Hendricks	Camden County Chamber of Commerce
Gary Straight	Camden County Chamber of Commerce, St. Marys Downtown Development Authority
M.H. Woodside	Brunswick-Golden Isles Chamber of Commerce
Michael B. Johnson	Brunswick-Golden Isles Chamber of Commerce
Missy Nev	Brunswick-Golden Isles Chamber of Commerce
Mike Henley	Brunswick-Golden Isles Chamber of Commerce
Brittany Miller	Camden County Joint Development Authority
James Coughlin	Camden County Joint Development Authority
Teira Cole	Camden County Joint Development Authority
Charlie Smith, Jr.	Camden County Joint Development Authority
Mel Baxter	Brunswick and Glynn County Development Authority
Shavona Williams	Glynn County Airport Commission
John J. Holman	City Manager, City of St. Marys
Sandra Rayson	City Administrator, City of Woodbine
Kyle Tibbs	City Administrator, City of Woodbine
Ken Kessler	Planning & Zoning Director, City of Kingsland
Jeffrey S. Adams	Community Development Director, City of St. Marys

3.3 Media

Representatives from seven television, radio, and print media organizations attended the public scoping meeting. **Table 3** lists the media organizations present at the meeting (media sign-in sheets can be found on the FAA Spaceport Camden website: http://www.faa.gov/about/office_org/headquarters_offices/ast/environmental/nepa_docs/review/documents_progress/camden_spaceport/).

Table 3. Media Attendees at the Public Scoping Meeting

<i>Television</i>
NBC 12 WTLV First Coast News, Jacksonville
<i>Radio</i>
NPR Atlanta, WABE 90.1
<i>Print Media</i>
The Brunswick News
Camden County Press
Florida Times-Union
St. Marys Magazine
Tribune & Georgian

4.0 Scoping Comments

Five methods were available to the public for providing comments:

- submitting written comments at the public scoping meeting;
- providing oral comments during the public scoping meeting;
- providing oral comments privately to the court reporter during the poster session preceding the comment portion of the public scoping meeting;
- submitting comments electronically to FAACamdenSpaceportEIS@Leidos.com; and
- sending written comments by U.S. mail to Ms. Stacey M. Zee, FAA Environmental Specialist for the Spaceport Camden EIS.

The FAA’s written public comment form included the following statement regarding personally identifying information: “Please Note: Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, be advised that your entire comment – including your personal identifying information – may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold from public review your personal identifying information, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.” A good faith effort was made to remove personally identifying information from the comment submissions provided during the public scoping comment period.

Table 4 identifies the number of comment submissions and the method by which they were received.

Table 4. Comment Submission Method Summary

<i>Method of Submitting Comments^a</i>	<i>Number of Comment Submissions Received</i>
Written Comments at Scoping Meeting	45
Oral Comments at Scoping Meeting	53
Electronic (email) ^b	770
U.S. Mail	41
Total	909

^a Duplicate comment submissions provided via different methods were only counted once.

^b A total of 125 comment submissions were received prior to the scoping comment period and 14 comment submissions were received after the conclusion of the scoping comment period.

As indicated in Table 4, a total of 909 comment submissions were received. This total includes 770 comment submissions received during the time the public scoping comment period was officially opened (November 6, 2015 to January 18, 2016). Of these 770 comment submissions, 355 comment submissions were provided as part of a campaign by the National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA). Prior to the initiation of the public scoping comment period, 125 comment submissions were received, 124 of which were from a campaign by the Wild Cumberland Organization. After the close of the public scoping comment period, another 14 comment submissions were received, 10 of which were additional NPCA campaign letters. Comment submissions are posted on the FAA’s Spaceport Camden EIS website at: http://www.faa.gov/about/office_org/headquarters_offices/ast/environmental/nepa_docs/review/documents_progress/camden_spaceport/.

Commenters at the public scoping meeting had 2 minutes in which to make their public statements so that everyone who wanted to speak had the opportunity. This time limit was announced in the NOI to allow speakers to prepare in advance. Attendees also had the opportunity to speak to the court reporter during the open house poster session before the formal FAA presentation and comment session. The court reporter captured these oral comments verbatim (the scoping transcript can be found on the FAA Spaceport Camden website: http://www.faa.gov/about/office_org/headquarters_offices/ast/environmental/nepa_docs/review/documents_progress/camden_spaceport/). There were 53 oral commenters at the public scoping meeting: 51 spoke during the comment session and two spoke privately to the court reporter.

Comment Submission – A communication in the form of a transcript from a public meeting; a paper communication (letter or comment form); or an electronic communication that contains comments from a Native American tribe, government agency, organization, or member of the public regarding the Spaceport Camden EIS.

Comment – A statement, question, or suggestion to assist in identifying significant environmental issues and in determining the appropriate scope of the EIS.

Campaign – A coordinated response, often initiated and organized by a group or organization with a special interest in the Spaceport Camden EIS, resulting in the submission of multiple similar, if not identical, comment submissions. Campaigns often utilize common text or content which is then signed and forwarded by individuals, occasionally with additional commentary.

4.1 Public Mailing List

In addition to providing comments during the public scoping comment period, the public, government agencies, and interested groups were encouraged to continue their participation by requesting their contact information be added to the FAA’s project mailing list on sign-in sheets, comment forms, and the FAA website. In all, 28 commenters specifically requested to be added to the mailing list during the public scoping comment period. Those who attended the public scoping meeting and signed in, and

those who provided comments during the public scoping comment period and provided contact information, were added to the mailing list (unless they expressed a desire not to be added).

4.2 Comments and Issues Analysis

This section describes the number of comment submissions that were received from members of the public (including comments received prior to and after the public scoping comment period), and the range of comment topics.

Concerns raised by commenters about the Proposed Action included the following:

- Disturbance of the natural habitat and visitor experience on Cumberland Island National Seashore;
- Conflict between the Proposed Action and the wilderness designation of portions of the Cumberland Island National Seashore under the Wilderness Act;
- Decreases in tourism and eco-tourism, Cumberland Island visitation, and other local outdoor commerce;
- Impacts on the public and threatened and endangered species from noise, vibration, chemical use and release, and lighting;
- Potential for hazards to the public, land, and wildlife from accidents or failed launches;
- Impacts on Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay, especially from a failed launch or accident;
- The effectiveness of emergency response and preparedness in the event of an accident, including the suitability of the existing road network and water evacuation routes;
- A lack of specific information about the Proposed Action (trajectories, frequency, duration, and vehicle specifications);
- Safety issues with, and lack of precedent for, launches over populated areas and the failure rates of commercial rockets at other launch sites;
- Impacts of evacuations and land and water closures (including closure of the Intracoastal Waterway) on local residents;
- Lowered property values and increased insurance rates;
- Overall reduction in local quality of life;
- Financial liability of Camden County and its residents;
- Impacts on cultural and historic sites from noise and vibration, including those listed on the National Register of Historic Places;
- Potential for vibrations to cause the release of residual hazardous materials from onsite soils;
- Degradation of air quality and the potential for release of toxic fumes during launches;
- Degradation or contamination of groundwater and surface waters;
- Impacts on salt marshes, barrier islands, tidal areas, and other coastal resources; and
- De-confliction of both military and commercial airspace.

Positive impacts of the Proposed Action cited by commenters included the following:

- Ideal setting of site (prior land use, location, isolation, natural buffers);
- Creation of new jobs/high paying jobs;
- Regional economic stimulus;
- Increased tourism; and
- Increased educational opportunities and the retention of graduates with technical degrees.

All comments received during the scoping period are being given equal consideration in the preparation of the draft EIS. The potential impacts from the Proposed Action and alternatives on the environmental impact categories (or resource areas) listed in Paragraph 4-1 of FAA Order 1050.1F will be analyzed as part of the draft EIS. Additional resource areas recommended by commenters which are not listed in FAA Order 1050.1F, Paragraph 4-1 (e.g., airspace; geology and soils; health and safety; transportation) will be analyzed and presented in appendices to the draft EIS.