

September 18, 2024

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

From: Joe Barger  
NEPA Coordinator

Subject: Categorical Exclusion  
Record of Environmental Consideration

Project Title: Acquisition and Renovation of the Aerospace Simulation Center

Location: Kansas State University  
Salina Aerospace and Technology Campus  
2310 Centennial Road  
Salina, KS 6701

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and associated implementing regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508) require that all major actions by federal agencies be reviewed with respect to the environmental consequences on the human environment. The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) is providing a congressionally directed funding grant for the Acquisition and Renovation of the Aerospace Simulation Center at Kansas State University. Consequently, NEPA and the associated implementing regulations apply to this project.

This memorandum provides a Record of Environmental Consideration and summarizes the determination that the Acquisition and Renovation of the Aerospace Simulation Center at Kansas State University has been found to be categorically excluded from any further environmental review under NEPA.

**Description of the Action**

Kansas State University intends to deploy the Aerospace Simulation Center at the Kansas State University Salina Campus. The Aerospace Simulation Center is a 15 x 10.31-meter immersive dome. The dome will provide a 180-degree simulation environment that will allow the user to

experience simulations in multiple axes and can be combined with other static or motion-enabled control devices to provide a completely immersive simulation. This project includes the design, development and deployment of the immersive dome. Kansas State, Salina is located on a 12,300-foot runway developed in support of Schilling Air Force Base. The Aerospace Simulation Center will be installed in a building owned by Kansas State University on the south side of the Salina Campus. The building is known as the Kansas Immersive Technology Environment (KITE) Facility.

This project will be accomplished in accordance with all applicable state and federal environmental and safety regulations. All applicable regulatory permitting will be obtained.

### **Specific Considerations of this Action and any Extraordinary Circumstances**

#### **- Existing Site**

The immersive dome will be installed inside of the KITE facility. The KITE is located on the south side of the campus at the corner of Scanlan Ave and Neeley Rd.

#### **- Endangered Species and Critical Habitats**

This project will solely impact the interior of the KITE facility. No endangered species or habitats will be impacted.

#### **- Wetlands, Flooding Potential and Resilience**

The site is located outside of any 100- and 500-year flood hazard areas (FEMA); however, the site is designated as an “area of reduced flood risk due to a levee” and near an area of "0.2% Annual Chance Flood Hazard, Areas of 1% annual chance flood with average depth less than one foot or with drainage areas of less than one square mile." The building foundation is at an elevation (0.75 to 2.25 feet) above the elevation of these flood hazard areas. No flooding impacts are expected.

#### **- Stormwater**

This project will solely impact the interior of the KITE facility. No impacts to stormwater are expected.

#### **- Building Staffing/Utilities**

Staffing and student populations are not expected to increase significantly due to the operation of the immersive dome.

The immersive dome will not require any specialized utilities. It will utilize normal building heating and cooling, electrical services, sprinkler protection, and internet connectivity.

Local roadways have capacity for a temporary increase in traffic during construction and for the ongoing increase in traffic expected for staff and students.

- **Air Quality/Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

Greenhouse Gas emissions are expected to increase due to the energy requirements of the immersive dome; however, the increase is not expected to be significant.

- **Hazardous Materials**

No hazardous materials are expected to be generated in the completion or operation of this project.

- **Historic/Cultural Significance**

This project will solely impact the interior of the KITE facility. No impacts are expected to any historic properties.

- **Environmental Justice**

Due to the nature of the project, no disproportional adverse human health or environmental impacts to overburdened and underserved communities, including minority, Tribal, or low-income populations are expected.

**Effects of the Action**

No significant adverse impacts on the environment are expected from this action.

**Categorical Exclusion**

The activities associated with this project fall within the criteria of the following Department of Commerce Categorical Exclusion (CATEX):

A-1 Minor renovations and additions to buildings, roads, airfields, grounds, equipment, and other facilities that do not result in a change in the functional use of the real property (e.g. realigning interior spaces of an existing building, adding a small storage shed to an existing building, retrofitting for energy conservation, or installing a small antenna on an already existing antenna tower that does not cause the total height to exceed 200 feet and where the FCC would not require an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement for the installation). This CE does not apply in instances where the project must be submitted to the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) for review and NCPC determines that it does not have an applicable Categorical Exclusion.

This project is considered a minor renovation of a building that does not change the functional use of the real property. The project does not require review by the NCPC.

The proposed activity: Acquisition and Renovation of the Aerospace Simulation Center at the Kansas State University Salina Campus is categorically excluded from the need for further environmental review under NEPA. Any changes to the above project will require additional NEPA review.

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Joe Barger  
NIST NEPA Coordinator

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September 19, 2024

Date

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Robert C. Vaughn  
NIST Chief Facilities Management Officer

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September 19, 2024

Date