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memorandum

date September 6, 2019

to Lance Vanderbeck, Airport Director, Newport Municipal Airport

from Susan Cunningham and Sarah Hartung, Environmental Science Associates

subject Environmental Screening: Obstruction Removal

The Newport Municipal Airport (Airport) proposes to remove obstructions from the approach and departure surfaces of Runway 16-34 and the approach surface of Runway 20 during the fall/winter season of 2021. The need for obstruction removal has been identified in the Airport's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). Obstructions consist largely of tall trees and shrubs. The project would be funded by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and therefore must comply with the review requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). An environmental assessment (EA) will be prepared that assesses the potential environmental effects of the project, pursuant to NEPA requirements.

This environmental screening memorandum identifies the environmental impact categories, as presented in FAA Order 1050.1F (Environmental Impacts: Policies and Procedures), that have the potential to be affected by the proposed project and will need analyses in the EA. The screening is supported by an initial site reconnaissance and by reviews of existing information from sources that are identified in the "References" section of this memorandum. The purpose of this memo is to provide a high-level review of resources that occur in the study area and to identify resources that may be affected by the proposed project.

PROJECT LOCATION

The project is located within and adjacent to Newport Municipal Airport, bounded by the SW Coast Highway (U.S. Highway 101) on the west, and by undeveloped lands on the south, east and west in Sections 29, 30, 31, and 32 of Township 11 South, Range 11 West on the Newport South 7.5-minute series topographic map (Figure 1, attached). Obstruction removal would occur in the approach and departure surfaces of Runway 16-34 and the approach surface of Runway 20. Affected tax lots include city- and county-owned parcels and private property where rights of entry have been granted (Figures 2, 3a and 3b, attached). The study area comprises several project sites north and south of the airport where obstructions or tall trees have been identified through light detection and ranging.

PROJECT SUMMARY

The project involves removing trees that have been identified as obstructions in the associated surfaces of Runway 16-34 and Runway 20. A Geographic Information Systems survey of the Airport that was completed in 2019 identified numerous obstructions in the Federal Aviation Regulation Part 77 approach surfaces and runway departure surfaces for Runway 16-34. These trees are potential hazards to the Airport's operational safety because of their height. The EA for the proposed project will assess the potential effects of vegetation removal to allow the improvement of the associated surfaces for Runway 16-34 and Runway 20.

At this time, it is proposed that the trees would be cut at the base using hand-held equipment (e.g., chainsaws), leaving the stumps and roots in place. The project would attempt to use existing access roads and staging areas that are present across the majority of the area of potential effects as remnants of prior logging activities, and that serve the Airport's ongoing operations and maintenance needs. However, the final system of roads that would be used and the exact placement of the staging areas have not yet been determined.

ENVIRONMENTAL SCREENING

Chapter 4 of FAA Order 1050.1F (Environmental Impacts: Policies and Procedures) identifies environmental impact categories that may be relevant to FAA actions. The environmental screening presented in the following subsections of this memorandum discusses the proposed obstruction removal project in the context of the impact categories identified in FAA Order 1050.1F. Table 1 summarizes the resources in the study area and expected effects of the project.

Air Quality

The Airport is not located within an air quality attainment area or maintenance area. The nearest areas of concern for air quality are several miles to the northeast and southeast in Salem and Eugene, respectively, in the Willamette Valley (DEQ, 2019).

Because no changes to air traffic patterns or volume are proposed, the EA would not need to address long-term air quality impacts. The EA would, however, address short-term impacts on air quality caused by construction activities (e.g., dust, construction equipment emissions). Air quality modeling and detailed analyses are not expected to be needed for the EA.

Biological Resources

Table 1 summarizes special status species that may occur in the study area and vicinity based on a review of records from Oregon Biodiversity Institute (ORBIC 2019), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS, 2019a), and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS, 2019).

Table 1. Special Status Species that May Occur in the Project Vicinity

	Species Name (Scientific Name)	Federal Status/State Status*	Habitat Requirements	Critical Habitat Present in Study Area or Vicinity?
Fish	Oregon Coast Coho Salmon (<i>Oncorhynchus kisutch</i>)	FT, CH	Clear, cold streams and rivers; clean gravels and deep pools	Yes, Thiel Creek
	Oregon Coast Steelhead (<i>Oncorhynchus mykiss</i>)	FT, CH	Clear, cold streams and rivers; clean gravels and deep pools	Yes, Thiel Creek
Reptiles	Leatherback sea turtle (<i>Dermochelys coriacea</i>)	FE, CH	Marine habitat	No
	Loggerhead sea turtle (<i>Caretta caretta</i>)	FE	Marine habitat	N/A
	Olive Ridley sea turtle (<i>Lepidochelys olivacea</i>)	FT	Marine habitat	N/A
Mammals	Fisher (<i>Pekania pennanti</i>)	PT	Coniferous old-growth forests	N/A
	Red tree vole (<i>Arborimus longicaudus</i>)	C	Mature or old-growth forests	N/A
Birds	Marbled murrelet (<i>Brachyramphus marmoratus</i>)	FT, CH	Mature or old-growth forests for nesting	Yes, 0.25 mile east of study area
	Northern spotted owl (<i>Strix occidentalis caurina</i>)	FT, CH	Mature or old-growth forests for nesting and foraging	No
	Short-tailed albatross (<i>Phoebastria [+Diomedea] albatrus</i>)	FE	Open ocean habitat and remote islands	N/A
	Western snowy plover (<i>Charadrius alexandrinus nivosus</i>)	FT, CH ST	Beach and dune habitat	No

*FE – federal endangered, FT – federal threatened, SE – state endangered, ST – state threatened, PT – proposed threatened, C – candidate, CH – critical habitat

Sources: ORBIC, 2019; USFWS, 2019a; NOAA Fisheries, 2016

Fish. Several small tributaries of the Pacific Ocean flow across the study area and vicinity: Henderson Creek, Grant Creek, Thiel Creek, and Moore Creek. Thiel Creek is the only stream mapped as critical habitat for federally-listed Oregon Coast Steelhead and Coho Salmon (Figure 2, Table 1; 73 *Federal Register* 7816). Data from the ORBIC indicate that Steelhead may be present in Henderson Creek (ORBIC, 2019). This information is based on the best professional judgment of Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) District fisheries biologist. The streams in the study area would be considered essential fish habitat for Pacific Salmon under the Magnuson-Stevens Fisheries Conservation and Management Act, based on the accessibility (current or historic) of these waters to salmon (Pacific Fishery Management Council 2014).

Reptiles. Three federally protected sea turtles are mapped as potentially occurring in the Pacific Ocean approximately two miles west of the study area. No direct or indirect impacts on sea turtles are anticipated from the project.

Mammals. The fisher, a forest-dwelling member of the weasel family, is proposed for listing as threatened because of habitat loss and over-hunting (84 *Federal Register* 644). No fishers are known to occur in the study area or immediate vicinity (ORBIC, 2019). The fisher is limited to small regions in Southern Oregon, Northern California, and the southern Sierra Nevada. Despite the lack of records of fisher in the study area, this species

prefers coniferous forests, which are present on-site. The red-footed tree vole inhabits mature and old-growth forests, pockets of which are present on-site. Additional analysis is recommended for special-status mammals.

Birds. Listed birds with the potential to occur in the study area and vicinity include the marbled murrelet and northern spotted owl (Table 1). Although no critical habitat is mapped for these species within the obstruction removal areas or nearby, the study area contains pockets of mature trees that may be suitable nesting habitat for both species. The nearest critical habitat for marbled murrelet is mapped 0.25 mile southeast of the study area. The nearest critical habitat for northern spotted owl is mapped more than a mile from the study area. No marine or beach habitat would be affected by the project, and no further analysis of the short-tailed albatross and western snowy plover is recommended.

Other types of wildlife with the potential to be affected by the project include bald eagle, songbirds, woodpeckers, mule deer, elk, black bear, bobcat, mountain lion, coyote, fox, porcupine, raccoons, weasels, and rodents.

The EA will need to further evaluate the potential effects of the proposed project on biological resources, including protected or special-status species and habitat. Either a No Effect letter or a Biological Assessment would need to be prepared to support the EA and facilitate FAA consultation with USFWS and NMFS for species listed and proposed for listing under the Endangered Species Act. Key issues to be addressed in Endangered Species Act documentation include the effects of tree removal on fish habitat, marbled murrelet, northern spotted owl, and fisher.

Climate

Greenhouse gases (GHGs) trap heat in the earth's atmosphere. Both naturally occurring and anthropogenic (man-made) GHGs include water vapor, carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, and ozone. Research has shown that there is a direct link between fuel combustion and GHG emissions. All equipment that requires fuel or power is a source of GHG generation. Additionally, land cover change, including deforestation and wood harvesting, contributes to the total net anthropogenic emissions of carbon dioxide (IPCC, 2019).

The project would not increase air traffic operations or change the aircraft fleet mix, although extensive tree removal is proposed. The EA would need to document the potential effects of project construction activities on GHG emissions and the potential effects of land cover change on regional temperatures. Modeling or detailed analyses for GHG emissions are not expected to be needed for the EA.

Coastal Resources

The project is within a coastal zone as defined by the State's Coastal Zone Management Plan. Oregon's coastal zone is defined as the state's coastal watersheds extending from the crest of the Coast Ranges to a point three nautical miles seaward of the shore (ODLC, 2019). Activities with the potential to cause nonpoint-source pollution in the coastal zone, such as construction work and vegetation removal, needs to be addressed for consistency with the State's Coastal Zone Management Plan.

Department of Transportation Act Section 4(f) Resources

Resources potentially covered under Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act (1966) include publicly owned parks, recreation areas, wildlife refuges, and historic sites. No publicly owned parks, recreation areas, or wildlife refuges are located on the Airport property. Refer to the section below on historical and cultural resources for a summary of field survey results to date.

Farmlands

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) web soil survey (NRCS, 2019) was reviewed to assess the presence of prime, unique, State, or locally important farmland in or near the study area. The study area does not contain any soils designated by the NRCS as “prime” farmland. Four mapped soil units within the study area are classified as “farmland of statewide importance” (NRCS, 2019).

The proposed project would not involve the acquisition or conversion of land that is currently or was recently used or zoned for farming purposes. The study area is within the Newport city limits and in Lincoln County. No parcels in the study area are zoned as Exclusive Farm Use (EFU).

The proposed project would not affect properties designated for farm use or with a reasonable potential for future farm use. Because the Airport is not zoned EFU and no prime farmland would be affected by the project, the EA will not need to discuss farmlands.

Hazardous Materials, Solid Waste, and Pollution Prevention

The project would not involve the generation of solid waste or the use or storage of hazardous materials. Potential pollutants such as gasoline and diesel fuel would be required to operate construction equipment (chainsaws and haul trucks) to complete the project. The EA will briefly address construction management (e.g., staging, access) and best management practices to minimize or avoid fuel spills and degradation of natural resources.

Historical, Architectural, Archaeological, and Cultural Resources

A cultural resources field survey has been conducted to support the EA. No cultural resources were found during pedestrian surveys. A survey of the built environment identified a total of eight historic aged (older than 50 years) properties. Based upon background research and archaeological fieldwork, Environmental Science Associates recommends that the undertaking will result in no adverse effect to historic properties (36CFR800.4(d)(1)). Additional recommendations include the preparation of an inadvertent discovery plan (IDP) for use during construction. The IDP will provide guidance and procedures to be followed in the event of an archaeological resource discovery.

A cultural resources report that meets the standards of the National Historic Preservation Act (Section 106) and the Oregon State Historic and Preservation Office is in preparation. The findings of the cultural resources assessment will be incorporated into the EA and used by FAA for government-to-government consultation with potentially affected tribes, and for Section 106 consultation.

Land Use

The study area is within the Newport city limits and Lincoln County. Affected parcels within the city limits are zoned Light Industrial (I-L), Public Structures (P-1), and Residential-high density Multi-family (R-4). Affected parcels within the county are zoned Planned Industrial (I-P), Residential (R-1-A) (the Pruner Subdivision off of SE Cedar Street), Rural Residential (RR-5), and Timber Conservation (T-C). Based on a preliminary review of the City of Newport municipal code and the Lincoln County municipal code (Lincoln County 2018), removal of hazard trees appears to meet local development standards for the base zones.

The City of Newport regulates tree removal and other activities within geologic hazard overlay zones as described in Chapter 14.21 of the municipal code (City of Newport 2019). Lincoln County regulates activities within designated fish and wildlife habitat and significant natural resource areas, including tree removal adjacent to streams. These regulated resources are identified in the Lincoln County Comprehensive Plan Inventory, which is not available online. Further evaluation is recommended to determine if the study area overlaps with city geologic hazards or county designated fish of habitat and significant natural resources.

Natural Resources and Energy Supply

Construction of the proposed project would require the use of consumable natural resources (e.g., fuels for construction equipment). However, the project would not increase Airport energy demands or change aircraft/vehicle traffic patterns to an extent that would substantially alter fuel usage. The EA would not need to provide further analysis of natural resources and energy supply.

Noise and Compatible Land Use

The proposed project would not change the airfield configuration, runway use, or flight patterns in the long term. The project also would not result in an increase in aircraft operations or nighttime operations, or change the aircraft fleet mix.

Removal of mature trees that currently buffer the Pruner Subdivision from air traffic has the potential to modify ambient noise conditions in the neighborhood. FAA Advisory Circular 150/5320-14 states that “tree and vegetative screens can achieve moderate noise attenuation in selective situations.” The effectiveness of a tree barrier in absorbing noise frequency is influenced by the thickness, height, and overall density of the barrier (FAA, 1978). It is recommended that the EA further address potential changes to the noise levels in the Pruner Subdivision attributable to the project and address short-term noise impacts during construction.

Socioeconomics, Environmental Justice, and Children’s Health and Safety Risks

The proposed project would not displace any existing or planned residences or businesses and would not be expected to cause any disproportionately high and adverse impacts on minority and/or low-income populations. The EA will present U.S. Census data or other available data documenting minority or low-income populations in areas affected by the project, as applicable. The project does not appear to present any particular risks to children’s health and safety, and this topic will be addressed briefly in the EA.

Visual Effects

Several mature trees would require removal from residential tax lots located off of SE Cedar Street in the Pruner Subdivision. Consequently, the proposed project has the potential to alter screening and views of residences. Visual or aesthetic impacts will be addressed further in the EA.

Water Resources

Floodplains

The Federal Emergency Management Agency administers the National Flood Insurance Program to reduce the impact of flooding on private and public structures. The proposed project is not located within, would not encroach upon, and would not otherwise affect a floodplain (FEMA 2009). Therefore, floodplains do not need to be addressed further in the EA.

Wetlands and Surface Waters

Several locations within the study area are mapped as wetlands or streams by the National Wetland Inventory (USFWS, 2019b). A wetland and waterway delineation of the areas where tree removal is proposed has been conducted to support the EA. Several wetlands and waterways were delineated using the methods described in the 2010 *Regional Supplement (Western Mountains, Valleys, and Coast) to the Corps of Engineers 1987 Wetlands Delineation Manual* (USACE, 2010). Impacts on aquatic resources would need to be further evaluated in the EA.

Water Quality

No new impervious surface is proposed as part of the project; however, construction activities such as tree removal have the potential to cause erosion and sedimentation of nearby wetlands and streams. It is recommended that the EA include a list of best management practices to minimize erosion and sedimentation of aquatic resources.

Groundwater

The project would not involve grading, the addition of impervious surfaces, or other activities that may affect precipitation infiltration and groundwater recharge. The effects of vegetation removal on groundwater should be further analyzed in the EA.

Wild and Scenic Rivers

There are no rivers on the Nationwide Rivers Inventory or State Scenic Waterways near the study area (NPS 2019; OPRD 2019). The nearest designated Wild and Scenic River is the Elk River located near Port Orford, more than 150 miles from the study area. Wild and Scenic Rivers will not need to be addressed in the EA.

Table 2. Summary of Environmental Screening for Newport Obstruction Removal

	Screening Recommendation	Explanation/Justification
Air Quality	Brief Evaluation	The project is not in an air quality attainment area or maintenance area and no changes to air traffic or the aircraft fleet mix would result. Short-term air quality impacts associated with construction activities will be addressed.
Biological Resources	Further Evaluation	Critical habitat for Oregon Coast Coho and marbled murrelet is mapped adjacent to the project and the EA will evaluate the effects of removing mature trees on fish and wildlife habitat.
Climate	Brief Evaluation	The EA will briefly document the potential effects of project construction activities on GHG emissions and the potential effects of land cover change on regional temperatures.
Coastal Resources	Further Evaluation	The project is within Oregon’s coastal zone and the EA will evaluate potential watershed effects from obstruction removal.
Dept. of Transp. Act, Section 4(f)	Further Evaluation	Eight historic aged properties were identified during a field survey performed for the project. The undertaking is judged to result in no adverse effect to historic properties. Findings will be summarized in the EA.
Farmlands	No Further Evaluation	The proposed project does not involve the acquisition or conversion of land that is currently or was recently used or zoned for farming purposes. No parcels within the study area are zoned as Exclusive Farm Use (EFU).
Hazardous Materials, Solid Waste, Pollution Prevention	Brief Evaluation	Potential pollutants such as gasoline and diesel fuel would be required to operate construction equipment to complete the project. The EA will briefly address construction management (staging, access, re-fueling).
Historical and Cultural Resources	Further Evaluation	No cultural resources were identified in the study area during pedestrian surveys. A determination of “no adverse effect” is recommended for eight historic properties identified in the study area. Findings will be summarized in the EA.
Land Use	Brief Evaluation	Removal of hazard trees appears consistent with local development standards of the base zones, although the EA will briefly discuss how the project meets local regulatory guidelines and the intent of overlay zones.
Natural Res. and Energy Supply	No Further Evaluation	The project would not increase Airport energy demands or change aircraft/vehicle traffic patterns to an extent that it would substantially alter fuel usage.
Noise and Compatible Land Use	Further Evaluation	Tree removal in the Pruner Subdivision has the potential to increase noise, which will be evaluated further in the EA.
Socioeconomics/Enviro. Justice	Brief Evaluation	Potential project effects on socioeconomics and environmental justice issues will be addressed briefly.
Visual Effects (including light emissions)	Further Evaluation	Several mature trees will require removal from residential tax lots located off of SE Cedar Street in the Pruner Subdivision, and visual or aesthetic impacts will be addressed further in the EA.
Water Resources		
<i>Floodplains</i>	No Further Evaluation	Tree removal would not occur in floodplains and no further analysis is recommended.
<i>Wetlands and Surface Water</i>	Further Evaluation	Wetlands and waterways have been delineated within and adjacent to the study area. The EA will discuss potential project impacts on regulated wetlands and streams.
<i>Water Quality</i>	Brief Evaluation	The EA will briefly discuss best practices to prevent sediments from entering nearby streams during construction.
<i>Groundwater</i>	Brief Evaluation	The EA will briefly discuss potential effects of tree removal on infiltration or groundwater recharge.
<i>Wild and Scenic Rivers</i>	No Further Evaluation	The Elk River, the nearest Wild and Scenic River, is located more than 150 miles to the south.
Table Shading Key:	No Shading = No Further Evaluation; Medium Shading = Brief Evaluation Recommended; Dark Shading = Further Evaluation Recommended	

SUMMARY

Chapter 4 of FAA Order 1050.1F (Environmental Impacts: Policies and Procedures) identifies environmental impact categories that may be relevant to FAA actions. Based on the above assessment, the following environmental categories are recommended to be evaluated further in the EA:

- Biological Resources
- Department of Transportation Act Section 4(f) Resources
- Historical, Architectural, Archaeological, and Cultural Resources
- Visual Effects
- Wetlands
- Surface Water
- Noise and Compatible Land Use

Based on the above, the following environmental categories will be evaluated briefly in the EA:

- Air Quality
- Climate
- Hazardous Materials, Solid Waste, and Pollution Prevention
- Land Use
- Socioeconomics, Environmental Justice, and Children's Health and Safety Risks
- Groundwater
- Water quality

Based on the above, the following environmental categories will not need to be evaluated in the EA:

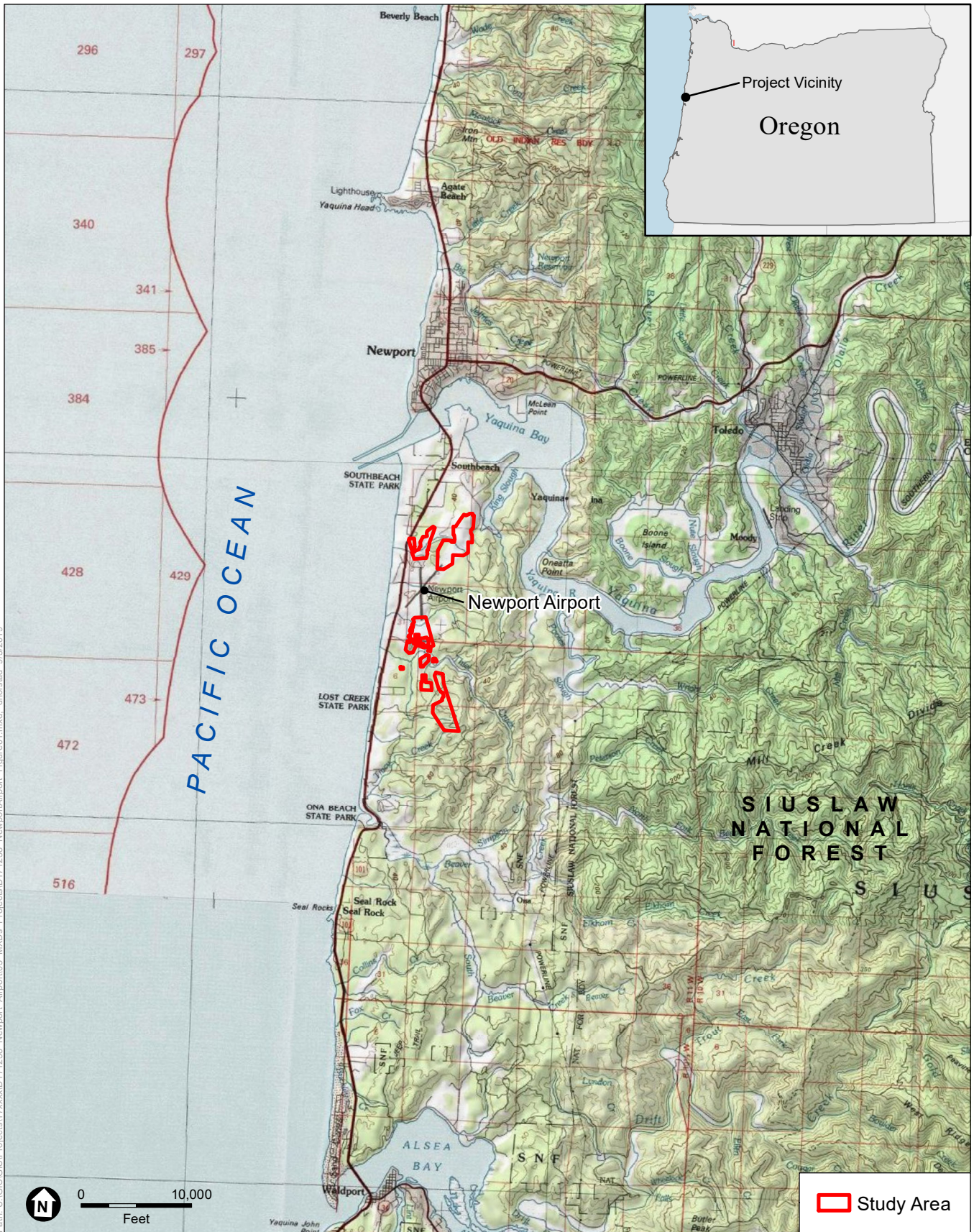
- Farmlands
- Natural Resources and Energy Supply
- Floodplains
- Wild and Scenic Rivers

In addition, the EA will assess short-term construction impacts and secondary and cumulative effects as required.

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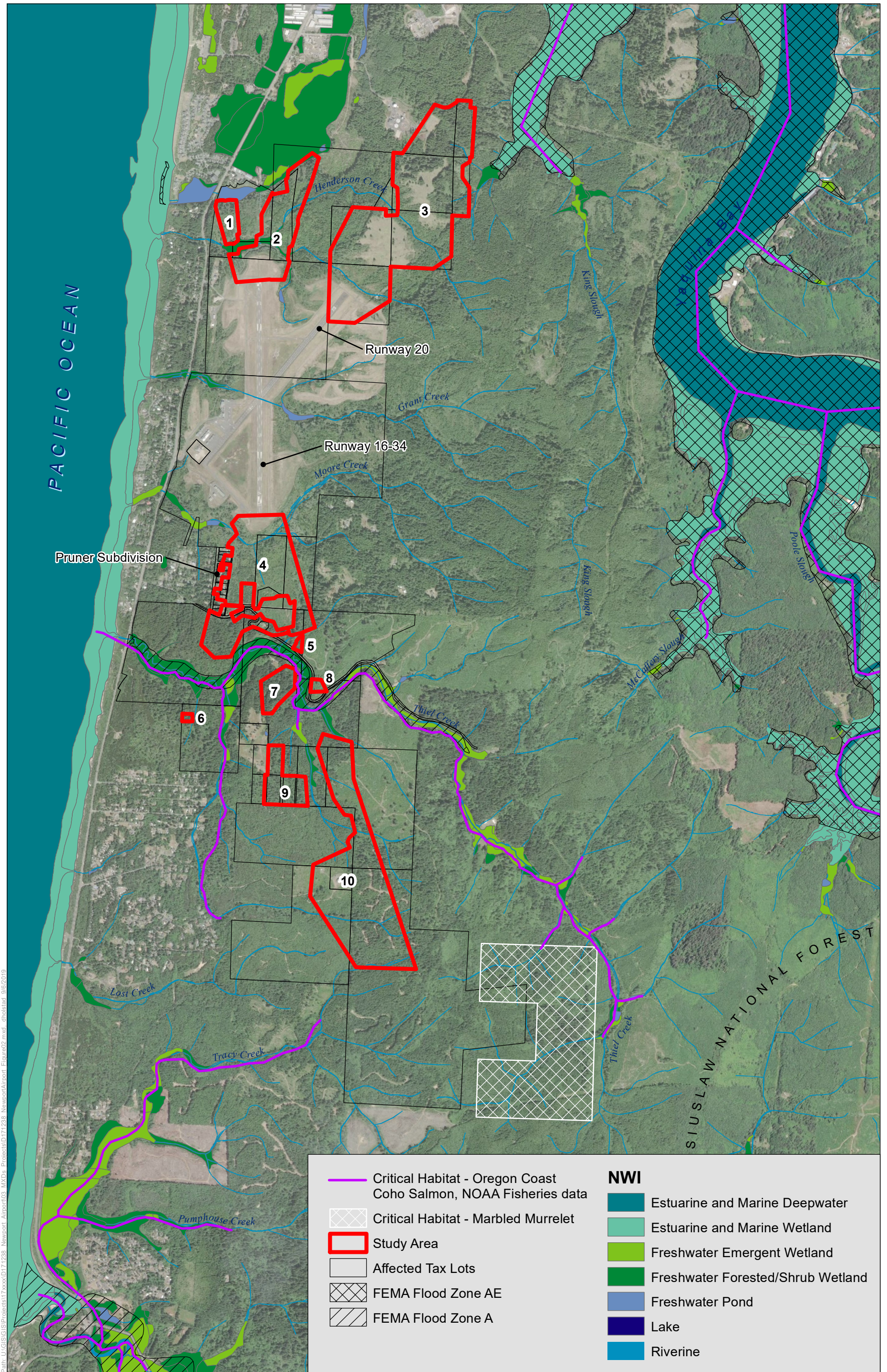
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SOURCE: USGS 2013

D171238 Newport Airport

Figure 1
Vicinity Map
Newport Airport EA
City of Newport, Oregon





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SOURCE: Aerial photo, ESRI, Digital Globe; Critical Habitats, NOAA, USFWS; NWI, USFWS; Flood Zones, FEMA; Parcels, Lincoln County.

D171238 Newport Airport

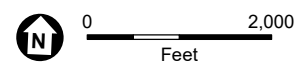
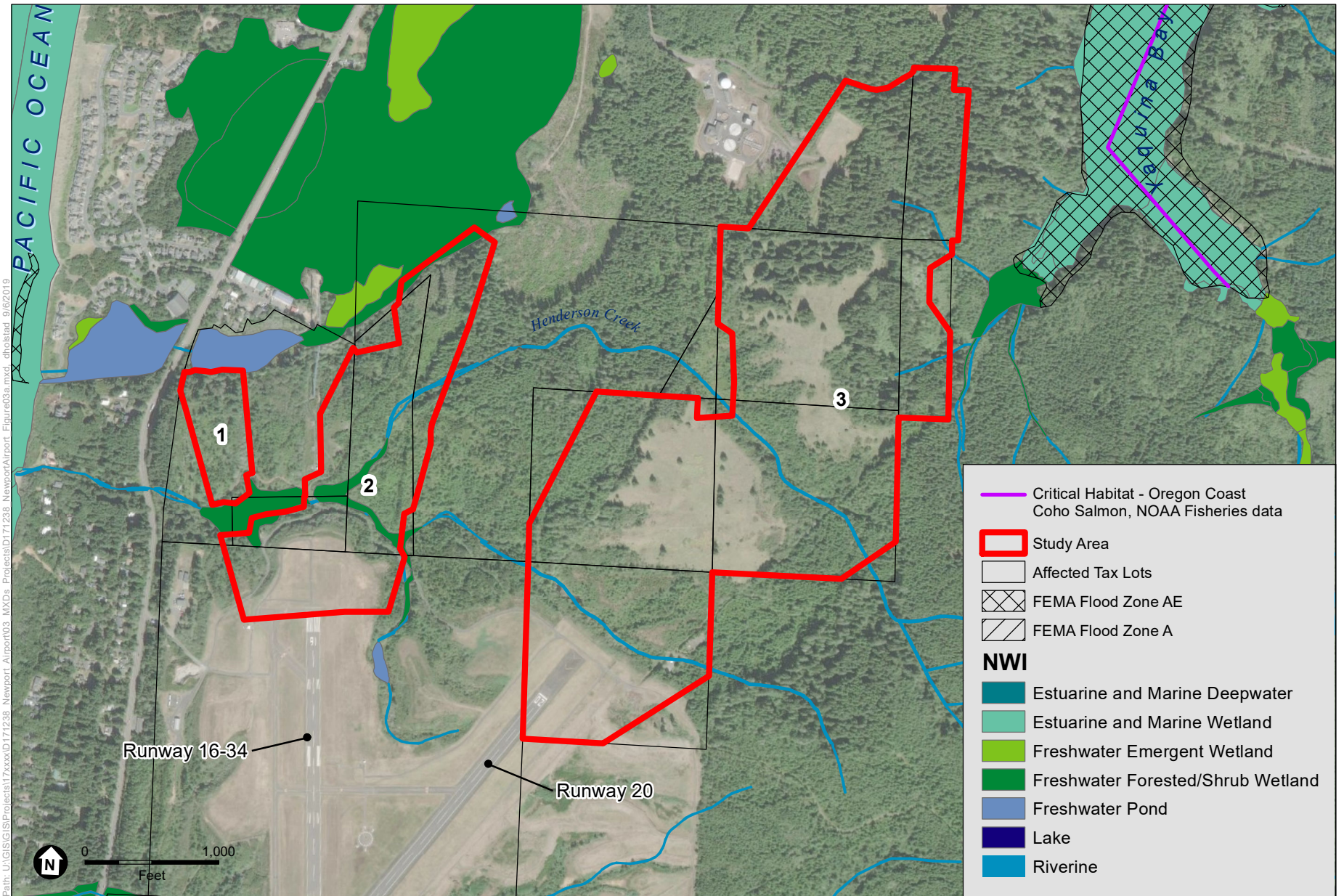


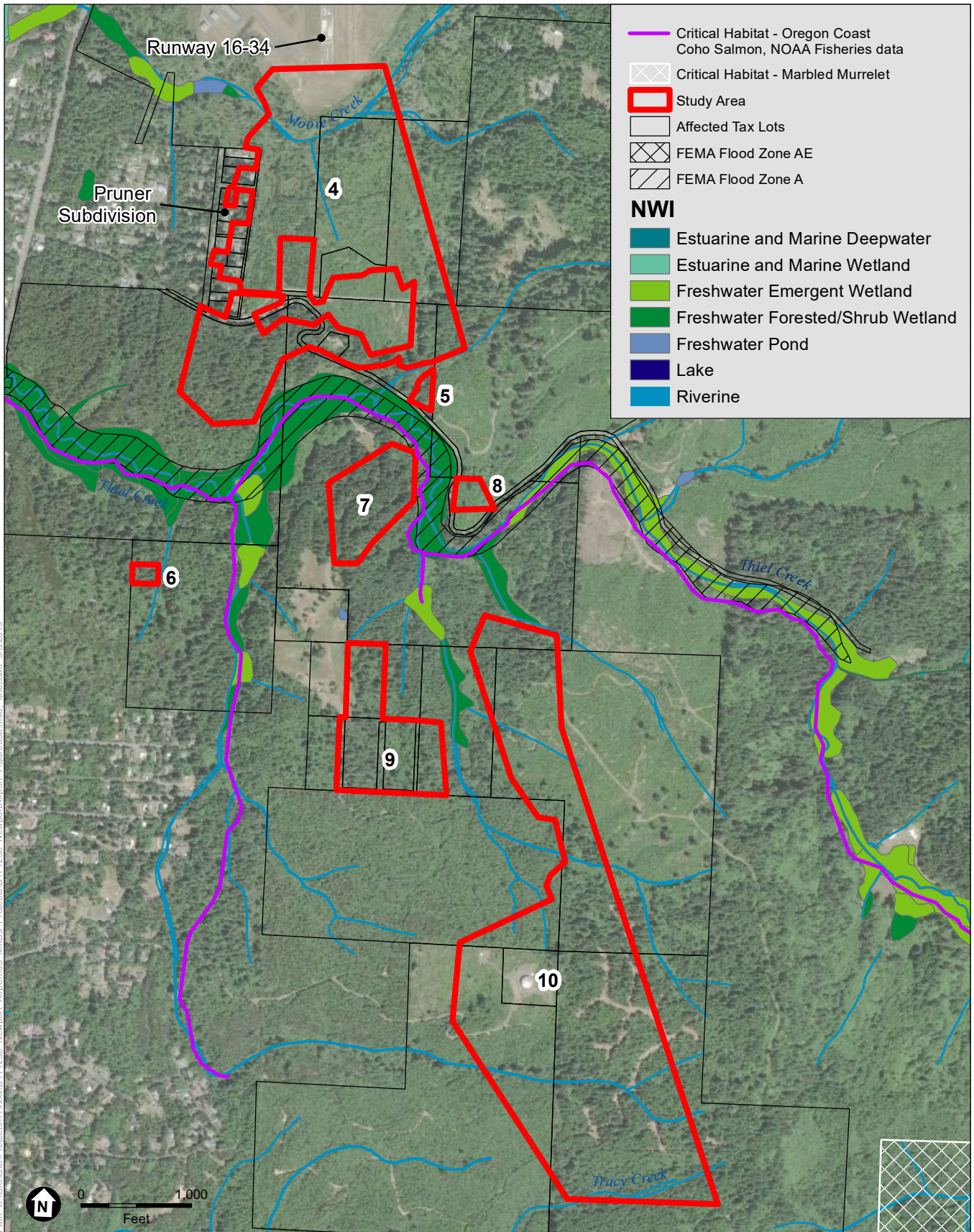
Figure 2
Study Area and Site Conditions
Newport Airport EA
City of Newport, Oregon



SOURCE: Aerial photo, ESRI, Digital Globe; Critical Habitats, NOAA, USFWS; NWI, USFWS; Flood Zones, FEMA; Parcels, Lincoln County.

D171238 Newport Airport

Figure 3a
 Study Area and Site Conditions - North
 Newport Airport EA
 City of Newport, Oregon



SOURCE: Aerial photo, ESRI, Digital Globe; Critical Habitats, NOAA, USFWS. NWI, USFWS; Flood Zones, FEMA; Parcels, Lincoln County.

D171238 Newport Airport

Figure 3b
 Study Area and Site Conditions - South
 Newport Airport EA
 City of Newport, Oregon