

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ES.1 BACKGROUND

ES.1.1 GENERAL

The purpose of the proposed replacement of St. George Municipal Airport (SGU) is to remedy numerous design standard deficiencies and enable the forecast growth in aircraft activity and commercial passenger demand to be accommodated safely and efficiently.

The existing SGU is located atop a mesa that drops off steeply to the south, east, and west in the central portion of the City of St. George, Utah. It consists of a single 6,606 foot runway, 16/34, which is oriented north/south, and one full and one partial parallel taxiway. In 2003, the airport accommodated a total of 43,714 aircraft operations of which 6,056 were commercial passenger-service operations and 2,104 were commercial air cargo operations. Commercial passenger service at SGU is currently provided by Sky West Airlines, which operates as both Delta Connection and United Express, and commercial air cargo operations, conducted by firms such as United Parcel Service (UPS) and Federal Express with small aircraft.

Due to the physical constraints of the existing airport property, SGU cannot be expanded or modified to meet design standard deficiencies or forecast aviation needs of the community (see **Exhibit ES.1, Topography at Existing Airport Site**). The proposed replacement airport would be designed and constructed to meet the future needs of the area, including service by commercial regional jet aircraft.

ES.1.2 COURT CASE DECISION

Since the mid-1990's, the City of St. George has devoted extensive study and effort to the consideration of the development of the proposed replacement airport. In 1998, the *Site Selection and Master Plan Study (1998 Master Plan)*¹ examined the feasibility of continuing the use of the existing SGU, compared to replacing the airport at a new site. The *1998 Master Plan*, which identified design deficiencies at the existing airport, concluded that the airport could not accommodate forecast demand at its present site, and evaluated potential replacement sites in the vicinity of the existing airport.

After completion of the *1998 Master Plan*, the city began to pursue the development of a replacement airport that would meet FAA design standards and accommodate, in a safe and efficient manner, forecast demand for passenger enplanements. In order to move toward this objective, the city prepared a *Draft Environmental Assessment (DEA)*.² The *DEA* was released on June 16, 2000, for a 45-day public comment period. A public hearing on the *DEA* was held in St. George on July 18,

¹ *Site Selection and Master Plan, St. George Municipal Airport*, prepared by Creamer & Noble Engineers and Barnard Dunkelberg & Company, October 1998.

² *Draft Environmental Assessment for the Proposed Replacement Airport at St. George, Utah*. Prepared by Creamer & Noble, Engineers and Barnard Dunkelberg & Company. June 16, 2000.

2000. Comments on the DEA reflected concerns for several environmental issues, with a primary focus on potential noise impacts of the project to Zion National Park, located approximately 20 miles northeast of the proposed site identified in the *DEA*. Additional concerns about potential noise affects on the community of Washington City, which is immediately north of the preferred site, were reflected in comments received on the *DEA*.

On January 30, 2001, the FAA issued a Record of Decision (ROD)/Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the development of a replacement airport at St. George, Utah. The *Final Environmental Assessment (2001 FEA)*³ addressed each area of public and agency concern, through modifications to the text of the *DEA*, or by specific responses to written comments submitted during the public comment period.

On April 22, 2001, the Grand Canyon Trust filed suit against the FAA in the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit. The suit petitioned for a review of the FAA decision to approve the Federal actions necessary to allow the City of St. George to develop a replacement airport. They challenged the adequacy of the *2001 FEA* and the FAA's conclusion that there would be no significant environmental impacts from the project, due to the potential noise impacts on Zion National Park, and FAA's failure to adequately consider the cumulative impact of noise from all sources on the natural quiet of the park.

On May 24, 2002, the court issued its decision, stating the FAA must evaluate the cumulative impact of noise on Zion National Park, resulting from the development of the proposed replacement airport, in light of the following:

- Air traffic near and over Zion National Park
- Air tours near or in Zion National Park
- Acoustical data collected by the National Park Service (NPS) in Zion National Park in 1995 and 1998, which was mentioned in the NPS' comments on the *DEA*

The court remanded the case to the FAA, because it found that the Administrative Record was insufficient for the court to determine whether an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was required.

In response to the court's order, the FAA decided to prepare an EIS for the proposed project. In the October 7, 2002 *Federal Register*, the FAA's Northwest Mountain Region Airports Division, acting as lead agency, announced its Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS for the development of a replacement airport at St. George, Utah. Two other announcements followed in the October 31, 2002, and November 7, 2002, issues of the *Federal Register*, to clarify the original notice.

These announcements are included in **Appendix K, Notice of Intent to Prepare an EIS and Scoping Comments** in the Draft EIS.

³ *Final Environmental Assessment for the Proposed Replacement Airport at St. George, Utah.*
Prepared by Creamer & Noble, Engineers and Barnard Dunkelberg & Company. January 30, 2001.
Landrum & Brown *Executive Summary*
May 2006 *Replacement Page ES-2*

ES.2 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

ES.2.1 ENVIRONMENTAL PROCESS

The FAA is responsible for the preparation and content of this EIS. The FAA selected a third party contractor to assist in the preparation of the EIS, which includes independent evaluation of environmental information submitted by the City of St. George and other entities that became part of the environmental analysis included in this EIS.

The purpose of this EIS is to provide a clear, comprehensive, and appropriately detailed document that provides the agency decision makers and the public with a full and fair discussion of the potential for significant environmental impacts of the proposed action. This analysis also was defined to address the direction given by the court.

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires the identification of possible conflicts between the proposed replacement airport and the objectives of Federal, regional, state, tribal, and local land use plans, policies, and controls for the area concerned, and the extent to which the FAA would reconcile its proposed action with the plan or law. The preferred alternative for the proposed replacement airport is described in this EIS, as well as the reasons why the other alternatives were eliminated from consideration. NEPA requires the identification of the methodologies and sources used; determines where information is incomplete or unavailable; lists the preparers, agencies, organizations, and persons to whom copies of the EIS are sent; and summarizes the major conclusions and areas of controversy encountered through its preparation, including issues raised by agencies and the public, and issues to be resolved. The FAA's response to comments on the Draft EIS are included in **Appendix R** in the Final EIS.

ES.2.2 AGENCY COORDINATION AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The FAA is committed to agency input and public involvement throughout the development process of an EIS. In meeting the intent of this guidance, the FAA developed and implemented a comprehensive and proactive public involvement program that included the following elements:

- Public and Agency Scoping
- Agency Coordination
 - The FAA appreciates the comments and assistance provided by the National Park Service (cooperating agency) in preparing this EIS. The two agencies have been in regular and frequent communication since September of 2004.
 - The FAA also acknowledges and appreciates the assistance of the following agencies in this EIS process by either serving as cooperating agencies or working with the FAA to provide information necessary for the development of the EIS:
 - U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
 - U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service

- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
 - Federal Highway Administration
 - Utah Department of Transportation
 - Utah State Historic Preservation Office
 - Arizona State Historic Preservation Office
 - Nevada State Historic Preservation Office
- Tribal Coordination
- Coordination with Local Governments
- Public Information
 - Public information meetings
 - Public information kiosks
 - Public information web site: www.airportsites.net/sgu-eis.

ES.3 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

ES.3.1 PURPOSE AND NEED FOR THE PROPOSED REPLACEMENT AIRPORT

The City of St. George's proposal provides for a replacement airport to be constructed with one fully instrumented and lighted runway, oriented at 010 degrees/190 degrees and at a length of 9,300 feet, and a parallel taxiway designed to meet current and future aviation demand levels. Runway 1/19 will be equipped with approach lighting and navigational systems to support instrument procedures. A passenger terminal and apron and associated parking would be developed on the eastern side of the runway, as would an aircraft rescue and fire-fighting (ARFF) facility; facilities for general aviation, fixed-base operator, corporate aviation, and air cargo; fuel farm facilities; airport maintenance facilities; and airport access to the Southern Corridor Highway. The west side of the airport property would be reserved for a future airport traffic control tower and future aviation development. All proposed facilities are further described in **Section 1.3.2** of the Draft EIS.

The purpose of the proposed replacement airport is to develop an airport that would fully accommodate forecast demand for air service in the community and meet all applicable FAA design standards. The need for the replacement airport is based on forecast demand levels, current facility deficiencies, and an inability to address these issues at the existing location. The current design deficiencies, which cannot be corrected at the existing airport site because of topographical constraints, are projected to become increasingly problematic due to forecast growth in passenger travel demand and the change in aircraft type projected to occur through the year 2020.

In order to meet the forecast demand at SGU, an airport must be developed that meets the standards for the Airport Reference Code (ARC) Design Category D-III, with a runway of sufficient length to accommodate commercial regional jets and business jets. The current airport is classified as ARC Design Category B-II. The topography of the existing site does not allow for the required expansion to meet ARC D-III standards.

The existing airport's ARC Design Category B-II classification accommodates aircraft with approach speeds in the range of 91 to 121 knots, and wingspans ranging from 49 to 79 feet. The proposed replacement airport at St. George would be classified as ARC Design Category D-III, which accommodates aircraft with approach speeds in the range of 141 to 166 knots and wingspans in the range of 79 to 118 feet.

ES.3.2 FUTURE AVIATION DEMAND

Demand forecasts for SGU were developed in this EIS for both constrained and unconstrained future conditions (see **Chapter Three, Purpose and Need for the Proposed Replacement Airport**, and **Appendix E, Aviation Activity Forecasts**, in the Draft EIS for detailed information). The constrained condition assumes that the existing airport would remain in service as the only local airport, without facility improvements. Thus, future aviation activity would be constrained by the limitations of the existing facility with a forecast growth of 23 percent in aircraft operations and 81 percent in passenger enplanements by the year 2020. The unconstrained condition, on the other hand, assumes that the future demand for air service could be fully met through any necessary airport facility improvements. The unconstrained forecast indicates a 17 percent growth in operations (owing to the use of the larger regional jet aircraft) and 158 percent growth in enplanements by the year 2020.

ES.4 SUMMARY OF ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS

ES.4.1 GENERAL

Federal guidelines concerning the environmental review process require that all prudent, feasible, reasonable, and practical alternatives that might accomplish the objectives of a proposed replacement airport be identified and evaluated. NEPA requires that the no-action alternative be evaluated along with the proposed replacement airport, other airport development, and existing alternatives.

For the purposes of this EIS, initial screening of alternatives for the proposed replacement airport have been exhaustively considered in the *1998 Master Plan*, and the *2001 FEA*. This document describes these alternatives in detail in **Chapter Four, Alternatives** in the Draft EIS.

ES.4.2 ALTERNATIVES EVALUATED AS PART OF THIS ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

The *2001 FEA* and the *1998 Master Plan* evaluated a total of 15 potential replacement airport sites in the vicinity of St. George. From these 15 sites, six potential locations were identified for initial analysis as part of this EIS. The six sites selected for initial analysis were evaluated in accordance with the goals of the City of St. George, to determine their feasibility for development of a replacement airport capable of meeting FAA design standards and accommodating reference code D-III and commercial regional jet aircraft.

Three of the six sites were eliminated due to limitations of the natural terrain, runway orientation constraints, or distance to the site from the City of St. George. The remaining three sites (designated 1, 1A, and 2, as shown in **Exhibit 4.2** in the Draft EIS) were further evaluated in greater detail. This further analysis included a preliminary environmental review.

In addition to evaluating these various sites, the EIS considered the following alternatives:

- No-Action
- Other airports
- Highway travel
- Rail travel

It should be noted that under these four alternatives, the existing SGU would continue to operate.

ES.4.3 PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

The preferred alternative is the development of the proposed replacement airport at site 1, combined with the southern portion of site 1A, which brings the total land area to approximately 1,306 acres. The proposed replacement airport site is located approximately five miles southeast of the City of St. George within the limits of the City of St. George and Washington City. The proposed airport layout is depicted in **Exhibit ES.2, Proposed Airport Layout**.

ES.5 ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

ES.5.1 STUDY AREA

This EIS process identified an initial area of investigation (IAI)⁴ that is 80 by 88 nautical miles. The proposed replacement airport lies at the center of this area. Within this area, 44 Department of Transportation (DOT) Section 4(f)/303(c) locations were identified. This is explained in **Chapters Six, Seven, and Eight**. These 4(f)/303(c) locations were grouped into three categories: Zion National Park, Little Black Mountain Petroglyph Site, and the remaining 42 other 4(f)/303(c) locations.

ES.5.2 NOISE ANALYSIS

The noise analysis examined the cumulative impacts of aviation noise within the environs of the existing and replacement airport, as well as over all of these 4(f)/303(c) properties. The cumulative noise was comprised of flights to and from the existing and proposed St. George airports; high altitude flights traversing

⁴ The purpose of the "IAI" terminology was to describe the initial area for the noise screening process (see **Section 8.4.1** in the Final EIS). The IAI helped determine what 4(f) properties should be evaluated and the required level of effort for the resulting noise analysis. It turned out that the area didn't change in size.

southern Utah (typically above 8,000 feet and below 50,000 feet mean sea level (MSL)); flights arriving and departing Las Vegas area airports; air tour operations within the IAI; and other general-aviation and military traffic within the IAI.

This analysis allows decision-makers to better understand the total cumulative aviation noise levels. It is a tool to determine and compare how much of the aircraft noise is attributable to flights from either the existing or the proposed replacement airports. This analysis is also key to understanding the contribution the SGU makes within the context of all aviation noise over Zion National Park.

In typical noise analyses associated with airport development projects, the FAA relies on noise contours in the immediate vicinity of the airport using the average day-night sound levels (DNL). These noise contours are generated based only on flights to and from that airport. In this instance, and due to the location of various park or similar properties within the IAI, substantial additional analysis was undertaken (including an audibility analysis for Zion National Park; see **Appendix T in the Final EIS**). This was done since traditional methods do not adequately address the effect of noise on the expectations and purpose of people visiting areas within a national park or national wildlife refuge or similar land management unit.

Very few increases for cumulative exposure and single event loudness were discovered. Overall, an early Screening Analysis and subsequent detailed evaluations found that, at nearly all 4(f)/303(c) locations within the IAI, noise generated by aircraft operating from either the existing or replacement airport made very small contributions to the total aviation noise levels already present within the IAI.

ES.5.2.1 Zion National Park

While usual FAA airport noise analysis extends only a mile or two from the ends of a runway, the analysis in this EIS extends 40 or more miles. The Zion National Park is approximately 20 miles from the proposed airport site. Because of this distance, the typical FAA analysis was not sufficient. The FAA and the NPS agreed to use a Time Above Ambient (TAA) metric with the L50 level (the noise level exceeded 50 percent of the time) defining either existing or natural ambient sound levels (see **Chapter Seven** and **Appendix B, Attachment B-1** for an explanation). In addition, Equivalent Sound Level (Leq), Maximum Sound Level (LAMax), and Number of Aircraft Events Above specified noise thresholds in excess of the ambient level noise metrics were calculated. This additional analysis was completed to better understand the affects of aircraft noise on Zion National Park from the existing and proposed airport sites.

The FAA and NPS also considered the use of a new FAA noise model, Integrated Noise Model (INM) Version 6.2b⁵, which would yield aircraft audibility data. This model is in the final stage of beta testing prior to public release. The work on the noise analysis for this EIS began in the summer of 2004, using the current publicly

⁵ The audibility evaluation for this study was performed with the latest (beta) version of INM 6.2b, noted here with the suffix "b."

available noise model INM Version 6.1. FAA agreed to use Version 6.2b to conduct an audibility evaluation of aircraft over Zion National Park. A summary of this evaluation follows and the evaluation is included as **Appendix T** of the Final EIS.

An analysis of the audibility of aircraft over Zion National Park was conducted for the Final EIS. Detailed measurements of ambient noise levels are required to evaluate audibility; therefore it was not computed at other 4(f)/303(c) locations because such measurements were not available at those sites. Audibility is the amount of time aircraft noise can be distinguished above the existing and natural ambient noise levels in the park. It is expressed in terms of either Time Audible (minutes in the period under evaluations) or as Percent Time Audible (the percentage of the period under evaluation that aircraft can be heard). The INM computes audibility by determining whether an individual aircraft can be heard within any one of many frequency bands and then adds the total number of minutes of audibility of each aircraft to the total minutes of every other aircraft. Consequently, the model frequently overestimates Time Audible in areas of high activity because it does not account for events that occur at the same time.

The results of the audibility analysis indicated that all locations within Zion National Park would be exposed to audible aircraft noise 100 percent of a 24-hour day when cumulative conditions assessing both St. George Airport related noise and noise from other aviation sources are considered. When the Time Audible is assessed for the existing and replacement airport only, the results indicate that each location within the park would experience less time audible with the replacement airport than the existing airport. This reduction of time audible for the replacement airport is associated with the replacement of turboprop commuter aircraft with larger commuter regional jet aircraft if a longer runway becomes available. Furthermore, the Time Audible with airport-only conditions is less than three hours daily at all points in the park.

Details of the noise analysis showed that Zion National Park, with the replacement airport in place at the proposed site, generally would experience average 24-hour aircraft noise levels that remain below both the Existing Ambient and Natural Ambient noise levels mapped throughout the park. In other words, there would be no change, on the average, in cumulative aircraft noise above ambient noise levels. In addition, the property would experience only slight increases in the TAA noise levels resulting from the development of the replacement airport. The cumulative DNL level would increase a maximum of 0.4 decibels (dBA) by 2020 while both $Leq_{(24)}$ and $Leq_{(day)}$ would increase by no more than 0.3 dBA in 2020.

In regard to Number of Events Above various noise level thresholds, the average change associated with the replacement airport tends to reduce the number of events at the lower noise levels with only slight or no increases at the higher noise levels. The cumulative amount of time that aviation noise would be above the existing or natural ambient levels would be by one percent, calculated as the difference between operating the existing airport and operating the replacement airport in future years. In 2010, the change would be an increase of less than one minute a day and in 2020, the change would be approximately two minutes a day.

None of these increases would result in a substantial incremental change in aircraft-related noise impacts to Zion National Park and would not be considered a substantial impairment to any resource of the park.

FAA and NPS have reviewed the results of the multi-metric noise analysis and have agreed that it is reasonable to rely on these metrics plus an additional TAA, A-weighted analysis to represent possible aircraft-related impacts on the natural soundscape of Zion National Park. The metrics show a consistent pattern of noise impacts of the proposed replacement airport, both as an individual project and on the basis of its cumulative effects.

The additional TAA, A-weighted analysis used available data to study aviation noise over five defined management zones in Zion National Park. This should assist the public in understanding aviation noise, relative to the percentage of the day and percent area affected by aircraft noise within those zones.

The FAA has concluded that the above-referenced quantitative data, reflecting, at most, very minor increases in cumulative noise; do not approach a substantial impairment of the values of Zion National Park as a 4(f)/303(c) property. The projected minor increases in project-related overflight noise reflected by this quantitative data do not constitute a "taking" of these properties. Therefore, the FAA finds no constructive use under Section 4(f)/303(c).

ES.5.2.2 Little Black Mountain Petroglyph Site

The noise analysis also examined the impacts on Little Black Mountain Petroglyph Site, which is approximately 1.5 miles southeast of the proposed airport. The primary purpose in visiting the petroglyph site itself is to view the historically and culturally important rock art.

The noise analysis, detailed in **Chapter Eight** in the Final EIS, revealed that the existing noise levels at Little Black Mountain are generally louder than the forecast replacement airport related noise levels. The exception to this is found in the TAA metrics that show an increase of approximately two hours in which aviation noise will be heard at the site. However, in light of the fact that quiet currently is not the primary feature of the site and due to the existing noise from motorized vehicles, the FAA finds that the additional noise from the replacement airport project would not substantially diminish any activities, features, or attributes of Little Black Mountain that contribute to its significance or enjoyment, and thus would not result in a constructive use of the property.

ES.5.2.3 Other 4(f)/303(c) Locations

The cumulative noise levels for each of the 42 other 4(f)/303(c) sites within the IAI were evaluated for each sound level metric, as well as the amount of time experienced above the average existing L50 level (as measured in Zion National Park by an NPS contractor in 2000-2001), and the number of cumulative aircraft events above 20, 25, 35, 45, 55, and 65 dBA of L_{Amax}. Although many of these

properties are geographically distant from the project, due to the inclusion of Zion National Park because of its special significance, these other properties were added to the IAI.

Based on the noise analysis conducted, slight incremental noise increases are found to occur in nine of the 42 other 4(f)/303(c) resources (4 wildernesses – Beaver Dam Mountain Wilderness, Cottonwood Point Wilderness, Paiute Wilderness, and Pine Valley Mountain Wilderness; 4 Wilderness Study Areas – Canaan Mountain WSA, Cottonwood WSA, Moquith Mountains WSA, and Orderville Canyon WSA; as well as Quail Creek State Park). These slight increases would not, however, individually or cumulatively, substantially impair any defining characteristic or attribute of any of these sites.

ES.5.3 PILOT EDUCATION AND SENSITIVE AREA AVOIDANCE

Pilots using the replacement airport will be encouraged to avoid flying over Zion National Park as well as the Little Black Mountain site. Commercial operators would be able to fly departure routes from the replacement airport that do not cross over the center of Zion National Park. These are voluntary options, but the City of St. George has agreed to develop a pilot education program to address the concern. (See **Appendix X, Monitored Noise Abatement Initiatives** in the Final EIS).

The FAA also has developed an instrument approach procedure for flights arriving from the north, flying south to the replacement airport. This procedure skirts the western edge of Zion National Park, but at a higher elevation and, thus, would establish a less intrusive path than would be present without the instrument procedure (see **Exhibit 1-3** in the Draft EIS).

ES.5.4 OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

In addition to the extensive noise analysis, the other environmental analyses conducted as part of this EIS (see **Chapter Six** for further details) have shown that the construction and operation of the proposed replacement airport at St. George would result in no significant environmental impacts. No land uses would become incompatible due to exposure to new noise in excess of 65 DNL. Additionally, the nominal increase in air emissions with the proposed replacement airport are below the de minimis thresholds as set by the Clean Air Act. Furthermore, the proposed replacement airport would not result in any impacts to jurisdictional wetlands and impacts to waters of the U.S. (dry washes) would be minimal (0.264 acres).

ES.5.5 SUMMARY OF MITIGATION AND APPROVALS

The following mitigation commitments would be implemented with construction and operation of the proposed replacement airport at St. George. These mitigation measures would be implemented by the City of St. George or in combination with the FAA Northwest Mountain Region Office and/or the FAA Airports District Office in Denver.

Airport Noise and Department of Transportation 4(f)/Section 303(c) Properties and Resources

Even though no significant impacts would result as part of the proposed project, the FAA and City of St. George have elected to establish an aircraft approach procedure for the replacement airport designed to keep aircraft as high as possible and west of Zion National Park without negatively affecting final approach minimums. In addition, the FAA and the City of St. George would develop voluntary noise abatement initiatives involving a pilot education program, commercial operator agreements, printed informational materials, and flight monitoring. The FAA will also continue to work with the NPS to establish an Air Tour Management Plan for Zion National Park.

Water Quality and Wetlands

To initiate construction, the City of St. George would file a *Notice of Intent* with the Utah Division of Water Quality (UDWQ) to obtain coverage for construction activities under the UPDES General Permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Construction Activity and develop a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) for the replacement airport. The City of St. George would require that construction of the proposed replacement airport follow the procedures outlined in FAA AC 150/5370-10, Standards for Specifying Construction of Airports. The City would require the contractor to install oil traps and waste oil tanks to manage petroleum wastes during construction, and also to use absorbent materials to remove small spills from work areas.

The City of St. George would also request authorization for the placement of fill materials with waters of U.S. on the airport site under a General Permit issued by the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and under a 401 water quality certification issued by the Utah Department of Environmental Quality (UDEQ). Compensatory mitigation required to offset impacts to waters of the U.S. would be determined through discussions between the City and USACE at the time permit authorization is obtained. Once airport construction is complete, the City of St. George would obtain an UPDES permit from the UDWQ for the discharge of stormwater resulting from normal airport operations.

Biological Resources, Threatened and Endangered Species

Potential unavoidable impacts to state-listed sensitive reptile species - the desert tortoise, burrowing owl, kit fox, and migratory birds (i.e., raptors) - would be mitigated by the FAA/City of St. George through continued coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (UDWR). Mitigation commitments include: conducting surveys prior to initiating construction to identify the presence or absence of the above listed species; relocating individual animals or nests/borrows, as deemed necessary by the FWS/UDWR; installing barriers to the construction site to limit access by certain protected species; providing access from the construction site for other species; and coordinating monitoring and removal of species during construction with the FWS and UDWR per existing conservation plans.

The City of St. George would conduct a survey of the airport site for invasive species prior to initiating construction and would require the construction contractor to wash equipment prior to entering the construction site and to stabilize and seed cleared areas with native plant species to minimize the introduction of invasive species.

Construction Impacts

As described under *Water Quality and Wetlands* mitigation (see above), the appropriate permits would be obtained by the City of St. George to initiate construction. In terms of fugitive dust, the City of St. George would require the contractor to use best management practices (BMPs) to minimize impacts on water quality and air quality. Exposed/disturbed surfaces, haul roads, and construction staging areas would be wetted down to minimize the generation, stirring, and entrapment of fugitive dust. In addition, covered trucks would be used where feasible and practical to transport waste, fill, or construction materials to and from the construction site. Haul roads would be designated to minimize the impact of construction traffic on local traffic patterns.

FAA Actions and Approvals

This Final EIS constitutes the environmental review of the development of the proposed replacement airport at St. George, Utah depicted on the Airport Layout Plan (ALP) approved by the FAA. In order to take these actions and issue a Record of Decision (ROD), the FAA must make the following determinations and approvals:

- Determination of project eligibility for Federal funding approval,
- Approval and funding of proposed airport development,
- Approval of air traffic procedures,
- Determination of obstructions to navigable airspace,
- Approval of airspace for the proposed replacement airport, and
- Other certifications and approvals pertaining to the operation and compliance of the airport with current FAA standards.

In order to take the actions listed above, the FAA must make environmental findings in compliance with the following regulations and statutes: local land use consistency and airport use compatibility with existing land use plans; Executive Order 11990, *Protection of Wetlands*; DOT Order 5660.1A, *Preservation of the Nation's Wetlands*; Sections 401 and 404 of the *Clean Water Act*; Executive Order 11998, *Floodplain Management*; DOT Order 5650.2, *Floodplain Management and Protection*; Section 7(c) of the *Endangered Species Act of 1973*; *Clean Air Act*; Section 106 of the *National Historic Preservation Act*; Section 4(f)/Section 303(c) of the *Department of Transportation Act*; Executive Order 12898, *Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low Income Populations*; and DOT Order 5610.2, *Environmental Justice*; DOT Order 5301.1, *Department of Transportation Programs, Policies and Procedures Affecting American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Tribes*; and FAA Order 1210.20, *American Indian and Alaska Native Tribal Consultation Policy and Procedures*. (see **Section 1.5.7** in the Draft EIS).

ES.6 CONCLUSIONS

The proposed replacement airport would provide for an airport configuration that allows for operations of larger aircraft and commercial regional jets in order to accommodate existing and future airport demand in a safe and efficient air traffic environment. As discussed previously, the environmental analyses conducted as part of this EIS have shown that the construction and operation of the proposed replacement airport at St. George would result in no significant environmental impacts. Therefore, the construction of the proposed replacement airport would meet the needs identified by the sponsor and the FAA without any significant environmental impacts to the built or natural environment.

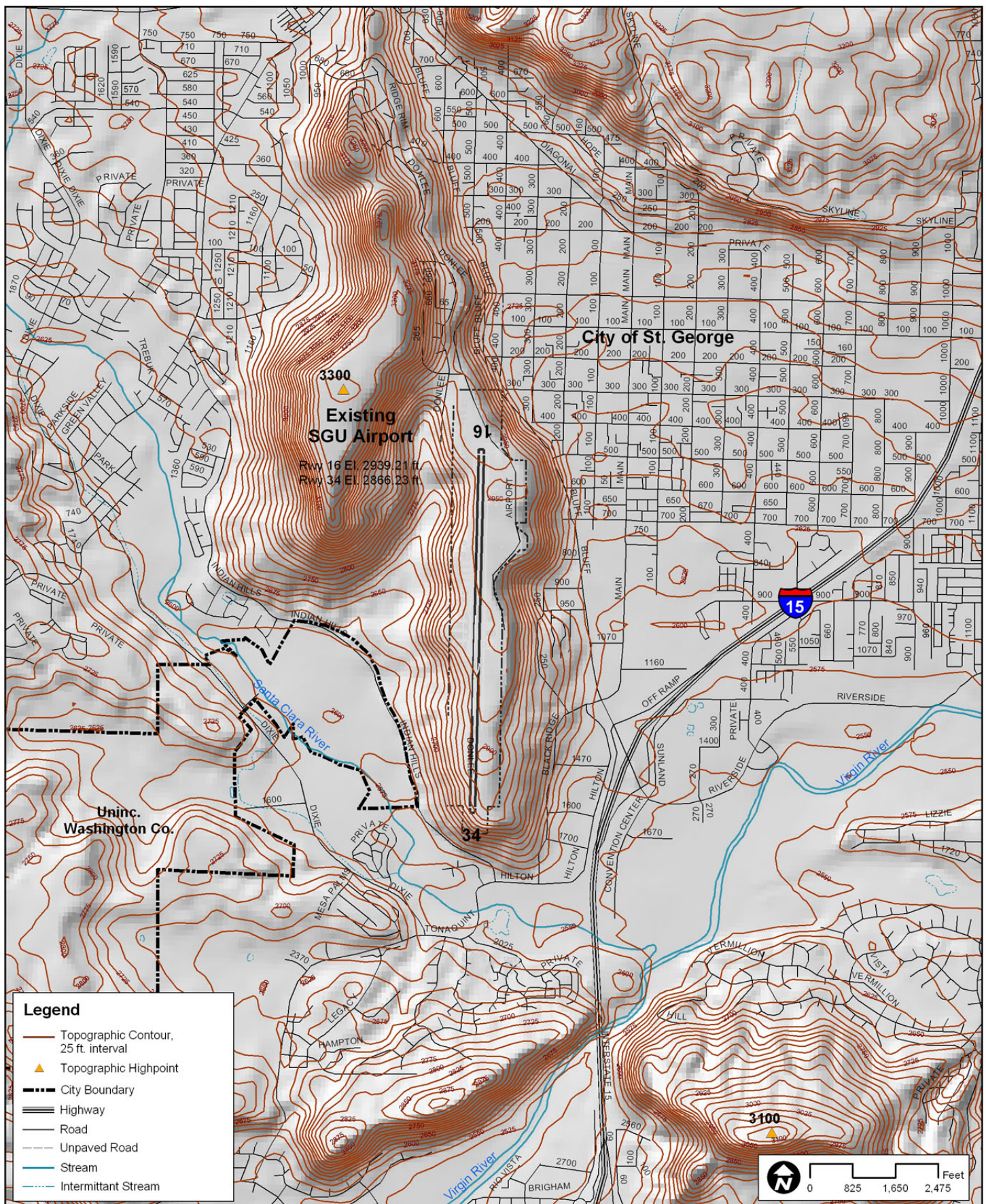
Additionally, the FAA conducted a comprehensive cumulative impact analysis which considered the cumulative impact of noise from all sources on the natural quiet of Zion National Park and Little Black Mountain Petroglyph Site as well as 42 other 4(f)/303(c) locations throughout the area. This analysis considered all air traffic sources including high altitude overflights, local air tours, and general aviation traffic throughout the IAI including near and over Zion National Park. The analysis took into account noise measurement data collected over the past several years by the NPS to determine noise levels representative of the natural ambient condition in various locations in Zion National Park. These analyses constitute a comprehensive evaluation of the cumulative impacts on Zion National Park, as well as other similar resources.

After careful and thorough consideration of the facts contained herein and following consideration of the views of those Federal agencies having jurisdiction by law or special expertise with respect to the environmental impacts described, the undersigned finds that the proposed Federal Actions are consistent with existing national environmental policies and objectives as set forth in section 101(a) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969.

Douglas R. Murphy
Regional Administrator, Northwest Mountain Region

Date

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Topography Existing Airport Study Area

EXHIBIT
ES.1

