

The National Environmental Policy Act

Background

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 was enacted to address concerns about Federal actions and their effects on the environment. NEPA's main objectives are as follows:

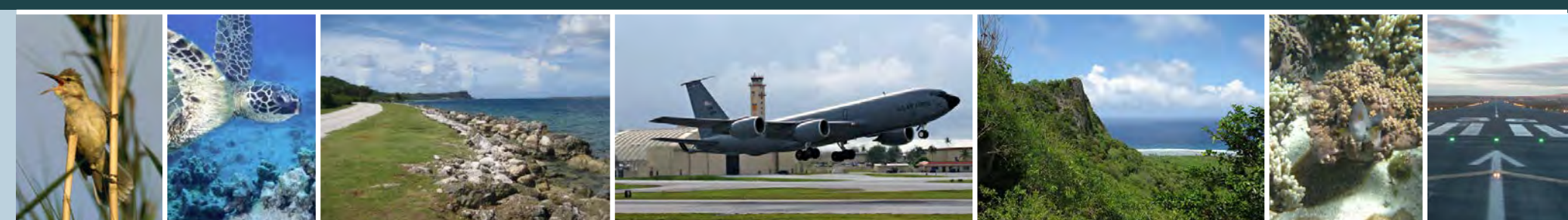
- Ensure analysis of proposed Federal programs, projects, and actions before decision making
- Inform the public of proposed Federal activities that might affect environmental quality
- Encourage and facilitate public involvement in the decision-making process.

What is an EIS?

An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is the most detailed analysis prescribed by regulations for implementing NEPA. An EIS is a detailed public document describing:

- A proposed action
- All alternative actions that were considered
- Environmental impacts of implementing the proposed action and reasonable alternatives.

Steps in the EIS Process



Revised Draft EIS

What is the Revised Draft EIS?

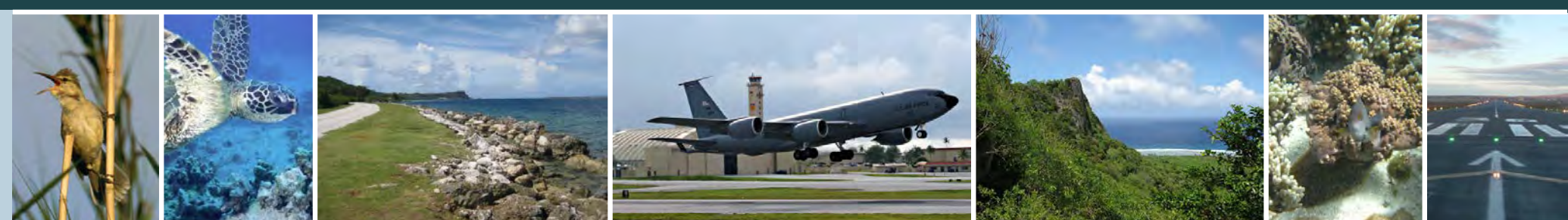
The Revised Draft EIS is a modification of the original Draft EIS for Divert Activities and Exercises that was released for public review on June 9, 2012 ChST (June 8, 2012 EDT). The Revised Draft EIS analyzes potential environmental impacts of modified versions of the alternatives originally presented in the June 2012 Draft EIS.

Why did the Air Force develop the Revised Draft EIS?

The Air Force determined the policies and objectives of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) would be best served by preparing a Revised Draft EIS, and seeking additional comments on changes made as a result of comments received on the 2012 Draft EIS. Many comments received on the 2012 Draft EIS recommended the Air Force consider Tinian as the Preferred Alternative or expressed concern over potential impacts related to munitions storage and fighter jet aircraft operation.

How is the Revised Draft EIS different from the 2012 Draft EIS?

- A preferred alternative is not identified.
- Three modified alternatives are presented, which include a modified Saipan alternative, a modified Tinian alternative, and a hybrid modified alternative. The hybrid modified alternative would combine development on both Saipan and Tinian but would focus most development and operations on Tinian.
- Construction on the north side of the Tinian International Airport runway is considered under two of the alternatives (previously only the south side of the runway was considered).
- Fewer aircraft and fewer support personnel participating during planned training exercises.
- Fewer total aircraft operations during planned training exercises.
- The following elements were removed:
 - Runway extensions
 - Fighter aircraft operations; thereby eliminating the previous high noise concern and munitions storage
 - Permanent navigational aids
 - Aircraft hanger
 - Munitions storage facilities
 - Arm/disarm pad



Proposed Action

General Description of the Proposed Action:

The Proposed Action is to improve an existing airport or airports and associated infrastructure in the Mariana Islands region in support of expanding mission requirements and to achieve divert capabilities in the western Pacific. Proposed facilities would be used on an as-needed basis and would not be used as a permanent full-time beddown or installation location. The proposal does not include the construction of an entirely new airfield, or the full-time use of the facilities by the Air Force.

Elements of the Proposed Action:

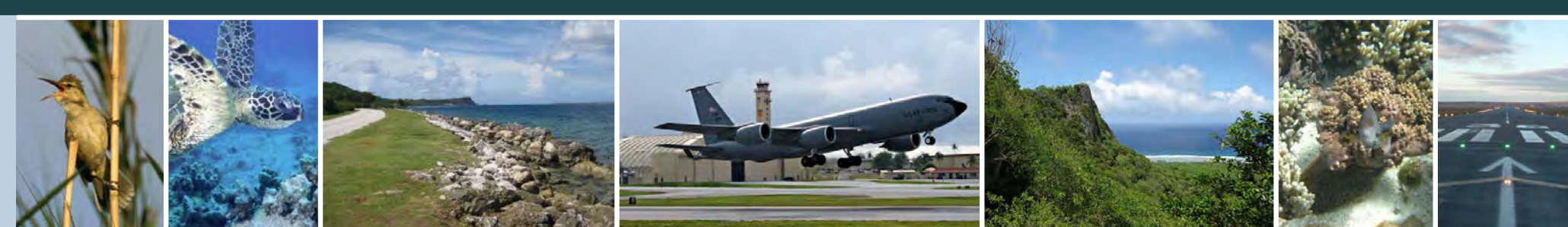
- Construction of aircraft support capabilities:
 - Parking apron
 - Cargo pad
 - Maintenance facility
 - Jet fuel receiving, storage, and distribution facilities
 - Fencing and utilities
 - Taxiway, if needed
 - Road improvements or new access roads.
- Support of divert landings if other locations in the western Pacific are unavailable for landing.
- Up to 8 weeks of military exercises with cargo, tanker, or similar aircraft.
- Fuel transfer from the receiving seaport to the airport.
- Humanitarian airlift staging in the event of an emergency or disaster.
- Temporary lodging, including medical, transportation, and dining services, for up to 265 personnel during planned training exercises.



A KC-135 Stratotanker aircrew refuels four F-15 Eagles over Afghanistan. In 2008, Air Force tankers passed more than 1 billion gallons of fuel to coalition aircraft. (U.S. Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. James L. Harper Jr.)

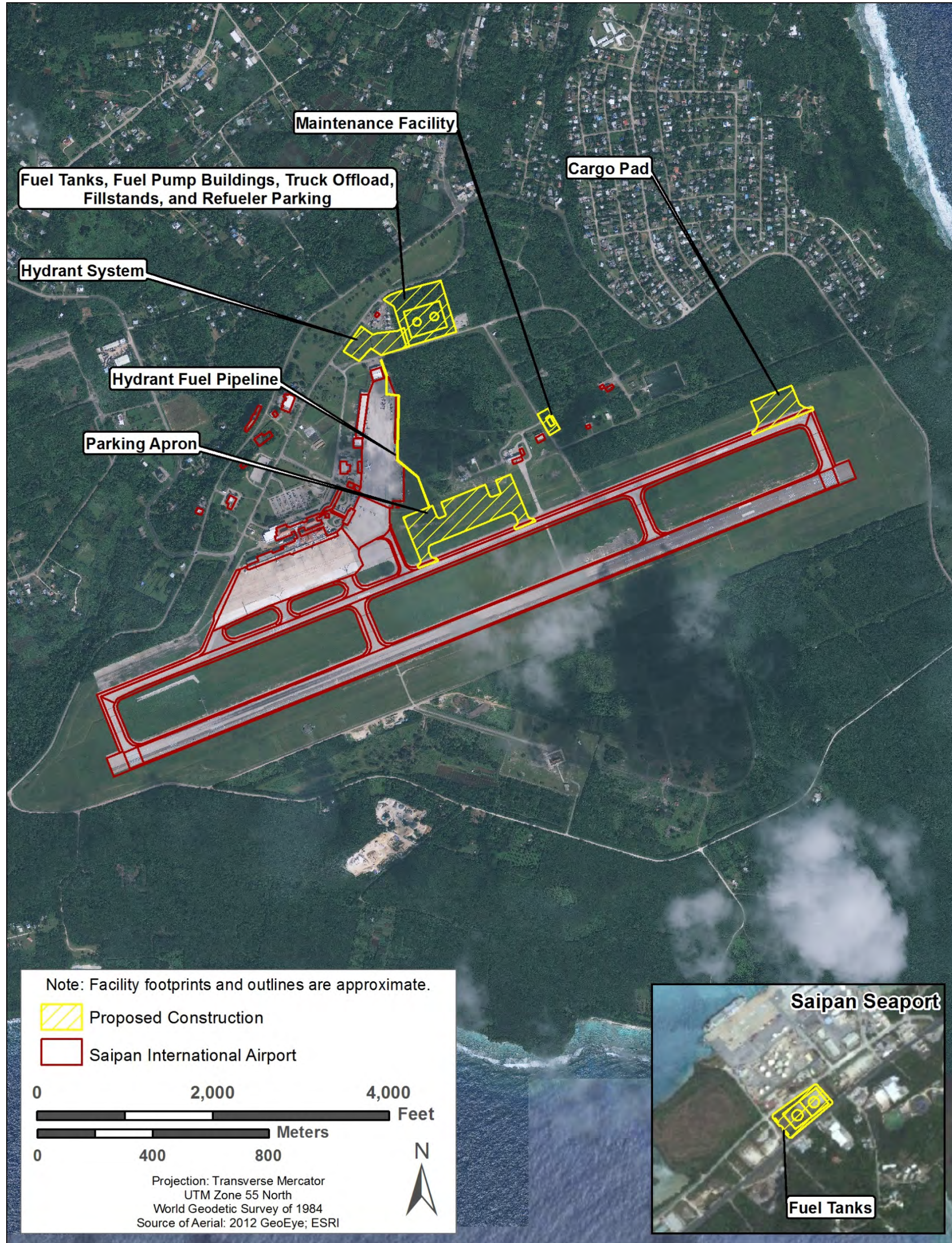
Modified Alternatives Locations:

- **Alternative 1- Modified Saipan Alternative:** Saipan International Airport and Seaport
- **Alternative 2- Modified Tinian Alternative:** Tinian International Airport and Seaport
- **Alternative 3- Hybrid Modified Alternative:** Saipan International Airport and Seaport; and Tinian International Airport and Seaport

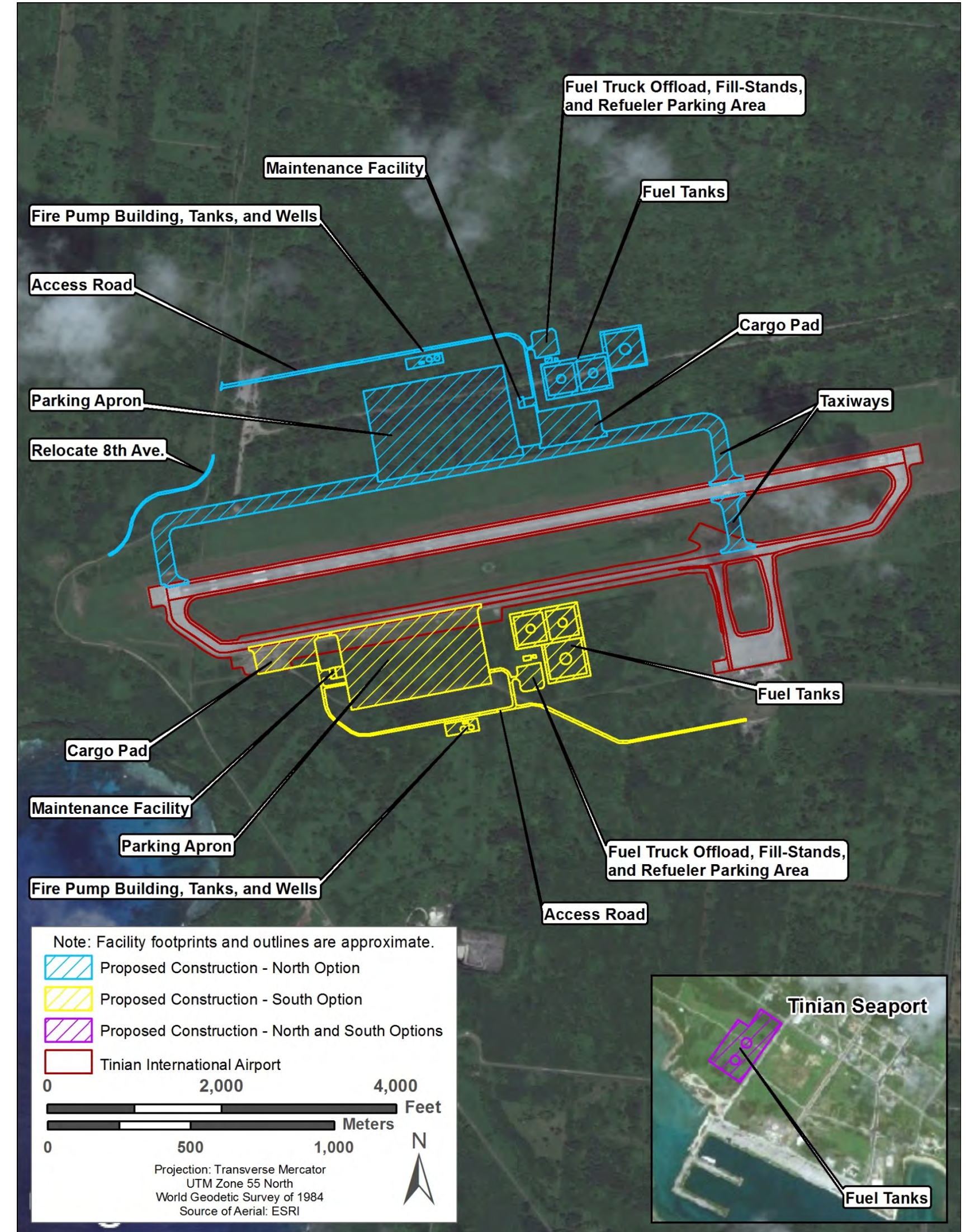


Modified Alternatives

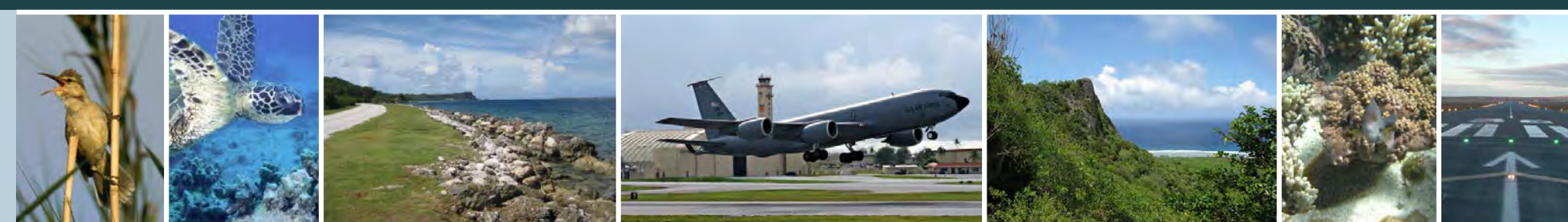
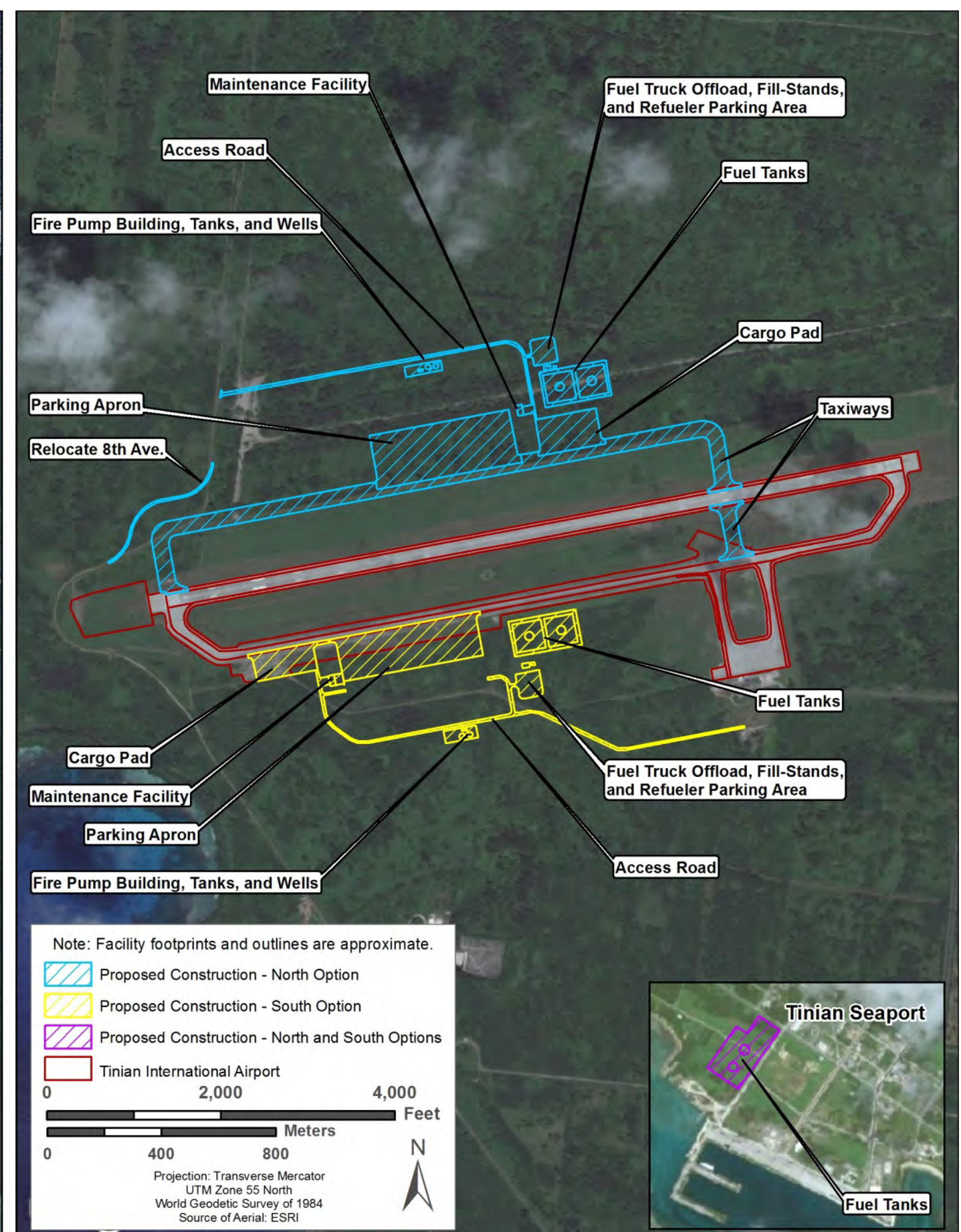
Alternative 1- Modified Saipan Alternative



Alternative 2- Modified Tinian Alternative (North or South)



Alternative 3- Hybrid Modified Alternative Saipan and Tinian (North or South)



Historic Properties and Section 106 Consultation

The National Historic Preservation Act and Section 106

The National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) aims to preserve *historic properties* in the United States and its territories. Section 106 of the NHPA requires federal agencies like the Air Force to consider how their actions could affect historic properties and to consider the input of interested parties and the public.

The Air Force and the Section 106 Process

The steps followed by the Air Force in the Section 106 process are outlined below:

- **Initiate:** The Air Force notified the Historic Preservation Office (HPO) and Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) about the Divert undertaking and invited interested parties and the public to consult.
- **Identify:** The Air Force determined the Area of Potential Effect (APE) and identified historic properties in the APE. The Air Force held public meetings to acquire information from the public about historic properties in the APE and why they are important.
- **Determine Effects:** The Air Force determined how the proposed undertaking could affect historic properties. Consulting parties and the public provided input on effects. Potential adverse effects from the Divert undertaking include:



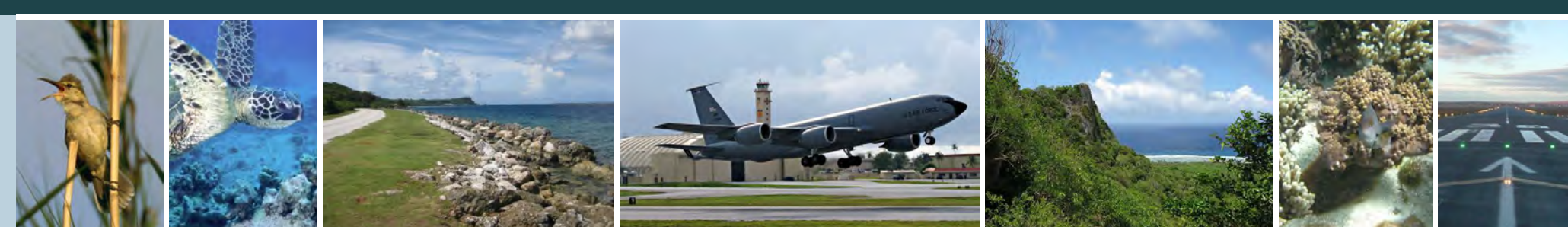
Historic Map of West Field on Tinian



Japanese Concrete Bunker at Saipan International Airport

- Potential adverse effects to Saipan's Isley/Aslito Field under Alternatives 1 and 3. Isley/Aslito Field is part of the National Historic Landmark (NHL). Construction would not physically affect historic features. However, construction of new facilities and aircraft noise could affect historic setting and feeling.
- Potential adverse effects to West Field at Tinian International Airport under Alternatives 2 and 3. Little information is available about the location or condition of individual features within West Field. Construction of Divert facilities could physically affect historic properties. Construction of new facilities and aircraft noise could also affect historic setting and feeling.

- **Resolve Adverse Effects:** With input from HPO, the public, and other consulting parties including the National Park Service, the Air Force is currently seeking ways to avoid, minimize, or mitigate adverse effects. These measures will be outlined in an agreement document developed with the HPO and ACHP.



Environmental Topics Addressed in the Revised Draft EIS

Biological Resources

- Endangered and invasive species
- Wildlife habitat
- Wetlands
- Marine resources and coastal zone

Water Resources

- Water quality
- Groundwater aquifers
- Wetlands

Cultural Resources

- Archaeological resources
- Historic properties

Social Resources

- Land Use
- Socioeconomics and environmental justice

Other Resources

- Health and safety
- Geology/soils
- Infrastructure/utilities
- Noise
- Air quality
- Air space management and aircraft safety
- Transportation
- Hazardous materials and waste



How to Submit Comments

Comments, suggestions, or relevant information on the Revised Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) may be submitted using one of the following methods.



U.S. Air Force Airmen prepare to load logistics equipment aboard a U.S. Air Force 535th Airlift Squadron C-17 Globemaster III bound for Saipan, Aug. 8, 2015, Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii. Pacific Airmen worked alongside their joint and civilian counterparts to support Saipan relief efforts in the aftermath of Typhoon Soudelor. (U.S. Air Force courtesy photo/Released)

- **Public Meetings:** Submit written comments at the public meeting
- **Mail:** Ms. Ashley Conner, PACAF/PA, 25 E Street, Suite G-108, Joint Base Pearl Harbor- Hickam, HI 96853
ATTN: PACAF Divert Marianas EIS
- **Email:** pacaf.paops@us.af.mil
- **Project Web site:** www.PACAFDivertMarianasEIS.com

*Thank you for your participation
in the public comment period for the
Divert Activities and Exercises
Revised Draft EIS*

