

## 6 OUTREACH

This chapter and Appendix J describes the FAA's process for involving Native American Tribes, government agencies, elected officials, and the general public while developing the EA.

### 6.1 Initial Coordination

This section describes the initial coordination efforts undertaken from the beginning of the EA draft process until the time of its official release.

#### 6.1.1 Early Coordination Letters to Tribes, Agencies, and Elected Officials

The FAA distributed an early notification letter to the Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas, as well as 20 Federal, state, and local agencies, and 44 Federal and state elected officials in July and August 2012. The FAA sent the early notification letter for the following reasons:

- To advise of the initiation of the EA study
- To request any background data that those agencies or officials may have regarding the study areas associated with this EA
- To obtain an understanding of any issues, concerns, policies or regulations that the recipients may have regarding the environmental analysis planned as part of this EA

See Appendix J.1, *Letters to Native American Tribes, Government Agencies, and Elected Officials*, for examples of the early coordination letters (and attachments), as well as the distribution list.

#### 6.1.2 Public Notice

The FAA placed public notice advertisements announcing this EA in 19 area newspapers. The newspapers published the notices twice between late July and early August in each of the 19 area newspapers. Appendix J.2, *Public Notices*, notes the specific publication dates for each newspaper. As with the letters described above, the purpose of the notices was to communicate the FAA's plan to conduct this EA and to solicit comments.

#### 6.1.3 Website

The FAA created a website<sup>181</sup> to provide interested parties with a description of the OAPM projects, to provide periodic updates on the status of the EA, and to provide a venue for receipt of comments electronically via a dedicated e-mail account.<sup>182</sup> The

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<sup>181</sup> OAPM Environmental, "Houston OAPM EA":

[http://www.oapmenvironmental.com/houston\\_metroplex/houston\\_introduction.html](http://www.oapmenvironmental.com/houston_metroplex/houston_introduction.html)

<sup>182</sup> [9-ASW-HoustonOAPMcomment@faa.gov](mailto:9-ASW-HoustonOAPMcomment@faa.gov)

FAA provided the web address in the Public Notice advertisements as well as the letters to elected officials.

#### **6.1.4 Comments during Early Coordination**

The Houston OAPM comment period occurred from July 20, 2012 to September 21, 2012. During and subsequent to this period, but prior to the publication of this EA, the FAA collected six (6) comment letters and two (2) comment emails containing 26 comments about the Early Coordination letters. Agency representatives and the general public provided a variety of comments from potential impacts to endangered species and migratory birds, scoping and EA categorical responses, to comments on potential aviation noise impacts. A majority of the comments required no further action by the FAA. See Appendix J.3, *Responses and Comments*, for comments received during the early coordination period and the FAA's responses to those comments.

#### **6.2 Subsequent Coordination**

Concurrent with the public release of this EA, the FAA published notices of availability of the document in the area newspapers. The FAA updated its project website to reflect the release of this document, including making the entire EA available electronically. In addition, the FAA sent letters to the previous recipients of the early coordination letters to update them on the status of the project planning, advise them of the release of this document, and solicit comments. For more information, see Appendix K, *List of Receiving Parties*.<sup>183</sup>

Prior to implementing the Proposed Action, the FAA will review comments received during a 30-day period that begins with the release of this EA. The FAA would address any substantive comments and revisions to this document prior to signing the FAA's Finding of No Significant Impact and Record of Decision, currently anticipated for no earlier than February 22, 2013.

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<sup>183</sup> The FAA updated the mailing list because of comments received to the July and August coordination letters. Appendix K reflects the updated mailing list.