

Health Resources and Services Administration

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI)

for

**The Kita Center, dba
Camp Kita
114 E Shore Drive
Acton, ME 04002**

Grant Number: CE1HS54358 / CEQ ID: EAXX-009-15--1730317020

BACKGROUND

The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) provides funding through the FY 2024 Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2024 (P.L. 118-47) for congressionally directed spending projects that relate to the construction and renovation (including equipment) of health care and other facilities. This selected activity will be supported through funding awarded by HRSA.

SELECTED ACTION

The Kita Center proposes to use HRSA funding to construct and operate a Mental Health Community Center designed to primarily support suicide-loss survivors and their families while also offering programs for the broader community. Located at 114 East Shore Drive in Acton, Maine, the project aims to enhance the availability of critical mental health resources in Southern Maine. The project is divided into two phases: Phase I, completed in 2024 using non-federal funds, included preliminary site preparations, while Phase II, supported by the HRSA grant, focuses on infrastructure improvements and new construction to enable year-round mental health programming. Key elements of Phase II include the demolition of an existing outhouse, the construction of the Kita Commons Dining Hall, a prefabricated bathhouse, and three prefabricated group therapy cabins. The ADA-compliant Kita Commons will be approximately 3,000 square feet with seating for 100 people, providing space for communal dining and group activities. The group therapy cabins, each approximately 600–700 square feet, will be constructed offsite by Hill View Mini Barns in Etna, Maine, and installed on cast-in-place concrete piers with below-ground substructure framing. Additionally, underground utilities—including electrical conduit, stormwater drainage pipes, sewer pipes, water lines, shutoffs, and two subsurface wastewater disposal systems—will be installed to support the facility improvements. The grant recipient submitted an Environmental Assessment (EA) that documents the impacts of the selected action, which has been incorporated by reference into this FONSI.

RATIONALE FOR THE DECISION

The Kita Center addresses gaps in mental health services for individuals affected by suicide loss or risk. Southern Maine faces high rates of depression, anxiety, and suicide, underscoring an urgent need for accessible and effective mental health resources. The expanded facilities will provide low- or no-cost services to diverse populations, offer programming—including year-round training sessions, and seasonal support groups, and wellness retreats—and reduce reliance on limited crisis intervention resources by focusing on preventative care.

The Environmental Assessment (EA) concluded that the proposed project will not result in significant adverse environmental effects. The proposed action will comply with all applicable local, state, and federal regulations and will not introduce long-term changes to the environment, ensuring responsible stewardship of community resources.

PUBLIC COMMENT

As required by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), The Kita Center made the Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) available for public review and comment. To ensure transparency and accessibility, The Kita Center implemented multiple outreach strategies based on best practices for notifying interested and affected stakeholders. These efforts included the following:

- **Online Notification & Public Comment Submission**

On January 24, 2025, The Kita Center launched a designated webpage (www.thekitacenter.org/ea) to provide public access to the Draft EA. Additionally, the organization established an email-based submission process for public comments, instructing individuals to send their feedback to the general email address with the subject line “PUBLIC COMMENT.” On the same day, The Kita Center announced the availability of the Draft EA and the public comment period on its official Facebook page to further engage the community.

- **Community Engagement via Social Media**

Recognizing the importance of reaching local residents where they actively engage, The Kita Center shared announcements in two widely used Facebook groups: “*What’s Up in Acton, Maine*” and “*What’s Up on Loon Pond*.” These groups serve as primary online forums for residents of Acton and the Loon Pond neighborhood, where The Kita Center’s project is located. By posting in these groups, the organization ensured that community members most directly impacted by the project were informed of the opportunity to review and provide input on the Draft EA.

- **Local Public Notices & Informational Flyers**

To supplement digital outreach, The Kita Center placed physical flyers in three key community locations that serve as central hubs for residents:

- Acton, Maine Town Hall – The municipal center where local governance and community meetings take place.
- Acton, Maine Library – A community resource frequently visited by residents of all ages.
- Springvale, Maine Library – A well-trafficked regional library serving Acton and surrounding towns. These locations were strategically chosen due to their geographic proximity to the project site and their role in disseminating local information.

- **Print Media & Public Notices in Local Publications**

On January 24, 2025, The Kita Center submitted a press release to the *Sanford/Springvale News* and placed a paid advertisement in the *Waterboro Reporter* to formally announce the availability of the Draft EA for public review. The *Waterboro Reporter*, a widely circulated weekly newspaper, is distributed to residents in Acton as well as neighboring communities, including Alfred, Buxton,

Cornish, Dayton, Hollis, Lebanon, Limerick, Limington, Lyman, Newfield, Sanford/Springvale, Shapleigh, and Waterboro. Additionally, the newspaper promoted the public review period via its official Facebook page to expand reach beyond its print readership

The public review and comment period was approved for a duration of 15 days, concluding on February 9, 2025. No public comments were received during this period. As a result, the Draft EA was finalized without modifications.

AGENCY CONSULTATION

As part of a comprehensive project review, Sebago Technics, Inc. and The Kita Center consulted with multiple agencies to ensure compliance with all relevant regulations and standards. These consultations included the Health Resources and Services Administration, Maine Department of Environmental Protection, Maine Natural Areas Program, Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife, Maine State Historic Preservation Commission, and Tribal Officers.

Agency reviews confirmed that the project will have no adverse effects on cultural or historical resources. Additionally, environmental agencies evaluated the proposed stormwater management and wastewater systems to ensure full compliance with state and federal environmental standards.

In addition to agency consultations, a public hearing was held by the Town of Acton Planning Board on October 6, 2022. Abutters within 500 feet of the project site were notified via U.S. mail at least ten days prior to the hearing. Notifications included details about the nature of the application and the time and location of the public hearing.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Based on the evaluation of environmental impacts detailed in the EA, a Finding of No Significant Impact is warranted for The Kita Center project. The Selected Action introduces no substantial long-term changes to the existing environmental baseline. The previously developed site has been utilized for youth recreation and camping since 1944, and the proposed construction activities are designed to enhance these services without introducing significant environmental stressors.

The project incorporates engineered stormwater management systems, vegetative buffers, and erosion control measures that comply with Maine DEP standards to mitigate potential impacts. Given the project's scale, adherence to Best Management Practices, and thoughtful design, all impacts to environmental resources are considered de minimis. The Selected Action enhances existing operations while preserving the ecological and cultural integrity of the site.

MITIGATIONS [OR CONSTRUCTION BMPS]

The Kita Center is situated along approximately 886 feet of shore frontage on Loon Pond in Acton. Neither Loon Pond nor the Heath Brook watershed are considered at risk from development due to the implementation of comprehensive stormwater management systems and erosion control measures.

To mitigate risks of sedimentation and nutrient overload, the project includes the following measures:

1. **Vegetated Buffers:** A maintained vegetative buffer around the pond will reduce chlorophyll growth by providing shade and cooling water temperatures.

2. **Stormwater Infrastructure:** Engineered systems, including foundation drains and shallow swales, will direct water away from buildings towards a reinforced stormwater detention pond and riprap level spreaders. These systems are designed to manage runoff effectively and meet Maine DEP standards.
3. **Permanent BMPs:** The site will include riprap slopes, aprons, level spreaders, and a 5-foot level berm reinforced with erosion control blankets to ensure long-term stormwater management and site stability.
4. **Temporary Erosion Control:** Filter barriers, erosion control blankets, and other measures will be employed during construction to prevent sedimentation until the soil is stabilized and revegetated.

The erosion control plan will be implemented and managed by a Maine DEP-Certified Contractor, ensuring adherence to approved Best Management Practices and minimizing environmental impacts throughout construction

CONCLUSION

HRSA hereby adopts the EA prepared by the applicant for the selected action described above. After reviewing the assessment and the supporting materials provided by the award recipient, HRSA finds that the assessment properly documents the proposal's status of compliance with the environmental laws and requirements listed therein.

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act, the Council on Environmental Quality regulations for implementing NEPA (40 CFR Parts 1500 through 1508) and the HHS General Administration Manual Part 30 Environmental Protection (February 25, 2000), HRSA has determined that, with the mitigation measures described above, the selected action will have no significant adverse impact on the quality of the human environment. As a result of this FONSI, an Environmental Impact Statement will not be prepared.

Approvals:

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| Commander Ali B. Danner, MPH DHHS-U.S. Public Health Service Director, Office of Special Activities Health Resources and Services Administration Office of Federal Assistance & Acquisition Management | Date |
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