



## BEAUFORT COUNTY News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Environmental Assessment Approved for Hilton Head Island Airport Runway Extension Project**

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has approved an environmental assessment associated with the planned runway extension at the Hilton Head Island Airport (HXD) and issued a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), clearing the way for Beaufort County to proceed with design and permitting of the project.

The environmental assessment, initiated in 2011 and completed last year by the County's consultant Talbert, Bright and Ellington (TBE), utilized a systematic interdisciplinary approach based on over 20 environmental and regulatory criteria, and involved federal and state agencies, such as the South Carolina Aeronautics Commission, as well as individuals and firms with environmental knowledge.

Part of the environmental assessment involved excavation of the Historic Mitchelville African American site by Brockington and Associates, charged by TBE on behalf of the County to uncover and preserve artifacts found on land the community once occupied in the area needed for the airport expansion.

"The runway extension to 5,000 feet is the signature undertaking of seven projects included in the Hilton Head Island Master Plan Update that will make our airport better and improve our level of service," said Beaufort County Airports Director Jon Rembold. "The determination by the FAA that our project is consistent with national environmental policy marks an important milestone in our mission to provide an efficient, modern facility. We are excited to continue this great momentum and look forward to move the runway extension project forward."

The FAA and state grants will pay for 95 percent of the approximate \$9.25 million cost of the project.

To learn more about Historic Mitchelville and to watch a video about excavation of the site, visit [www.bcgov.net/mitchelville](http://www.bcgov.net/mitchelville).

