

November 4, 2024

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), codified at 42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq., an Environmental Assessment has been prepared for proposed construction of a new Health Sciences Building at Southeast Missouri State University. This project is subject to NEPA review because it is being funded with Federal funding available from the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA).

### **Proposed Action**

Southeast Missouri State University (SEMO) is proposing to construct a new, 3-story, approximate 55,000-sf Health Sciences Building on its main campus in Cape Girardeau, Missouri. The building will be built on an existing site, owned by the University. The site currently includes Dearmont Complex, which will be demolished to make way for the new Health Sciences Building. The building will include classrooms, laboratories, gymnasium, offices, and meeting venues to support STEM, health, life, and allied health sciences research and academic programs. The Health Sciences Building will meet programmatic needs and expectations for students and faculty and provide space for Southeast to enhance preprofessional and other training programs to meet existing and projected health workforce needs in Missouri and across the United States.

### **Project Location**

Southeast Missouri State University Health Sciences Building, 360 Dearmont Circle / 915 Normal Avenue, Cape Girardeau, Missouri 63701.

### **Public Comments**

Interested parties may obtain a copy of the Environmental Assessment from or may submit written comments relating to it to the following address: **Chris Martin, SEMO Chief of Staff & General Counsel, One University Plaza, MS 3300, Cape Girardeau, MO 63701** or via email at [nepacomment@semo.edu](mailto:nepacomment@semo.edu). The draft environmental assessment is available for review at the following locations: **SEMO Academic Hall, 900 Normal Ave., Cape Girardeau, MO 63701** (bulletin board outside President's Office), and online at <https://semo.edu/about/president/presidential-initiatives.html>.

No administrative action will be taken on the project before November 19, 2024, which is 15 calendar days after the public notice of this Environmental Assessment has been posted.

### **Environmental Consequences**

The Environmental Assessment evaluates the environmental consequences of a range of issues as they relate to the proposed project. No, or less than significant effects were identified as a result of the implementation of the proposed project for the following environmental issues: air quality; water quality; solid waste management; land use; transportation; natural environment; human population; construction; energy impacts; coastal zone management act; wild and scenic rivers; endangered species; floodplain management; farmland protection; coastal barrier resources; environmental justice; and ecosystem services. As a result, no mitigation measures were identified in the Environmental Assessment for these items. The Missouri State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) determined that demolition of Dearmont would have an adverse impact on historic preservation due to a conclusion that it may be eligible for inclusion in the National Register. HRSA, SEMO, and SHPO drafted, negotiated and executed a Memorandum of Agreement to address SHPO's concerns and agree upon mitigation stipulations for the cultural resources/historic preservation item.

### **Determination**

HRSA concurred with SHPO's determination of adverse impact. HRSA, SEMO, and SHPO drafted, negotiated and executed a Memorandum of Agreement to address SHPO's concerns. The MOA includes agreed upon mitigation stipulations that allow the project to proceed as SEMO initially proposed while ensuring that the history of Dearmont Complex is documented and preserved.

**Environmental Assessment**

**FOR**

**Proposed New  
Health Sciences Building  
Southeast Missouri State University  
Cape Girardeau, Missouri**

**HRSA-23-117  
HRSA FY23 Congressionally Funded Construction Project  
Grant No.: CE1HS52424**

**Project Site Address:**  
360 Dearmont Circle / 915 Normal Avenue  
Cape Girardeau, MO 63701

**Prepared For:**  
Health Resources and Services Administration

**May 3, 2024**

**Revised:**

**June 25, 2024  
November 4, 2024**

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**Environmental Assessment  
Proposed New  
SEMO Health Sciences Building  
HRSA-23-117, Grant No.: CE1HS52424**

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background and Overview**

The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) proposed to provide assistance for this project through the FY23 Congressionally Funded Construction Project program. Pursuant to guidance from HRSA, this Environmental Assessment (EA) was prepared pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The purpose of the EA is to analyze the potential environmental impacts of the proposed project, and to determine whether to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI).

Southeast Missouri State University (SEMO) is a public, four-year, master's level institution of higher education. SEMO is located in the city of Cape Girardeau, located in Cape Girardeau County, Missouri, a metropolitan statistical area that includes a mix of urban and rural areas. It is in Missouri's 8<sup>th</sup> Congressional District, which includes 30 counties in rural southeast Missouri and south-central Missouri, as well as some counties in southwest Missouri. The region's demographic characteristics and the demand for health care workers in rural areas make the proposed new health sciences building critically important.

The proposed project site for the new Health Sciences Building consists of approximately 1.85 acres, as shown on the tax parcel attached as Attachment 1 and as shown on the proposed building layout as Attachment 2. The legal description identifies the project site as being all of lots eight (8), nine (9), ten (10), and eleven (11) of College Hill Place, in the City of Cape Girardeau Missouri and as reflected in the Filed Notice of Federal Interest attached as Attachment 3. The proposed project site is the current location of Dearmont Dormitory (Dearmont), a 63-year-old building that is off-line and is no longer utilized by the University. Dearmont will be demolished to make way for the new Health Sciences Building.

The proposed new Health Sciences Building is a new, 3-story, 54,608-sf Health Science Building. The building will consist of classrooms, laboratories, gymnasium, offices, and meeting venues to support STEM, health, life, and allied health sciences research and academic programs.

### **1.2 Purpose and Need**

Missouri is suffering from a shortage of healthcare workers. A May 11, 2022, KZRG news story, states that 109 of Missouri's 114 counties have insufficient health care workers. A June 14, 2021 study by the University of Missouri says "Out of the 114 total counties in Missouri, 97 are

designated as health care professional shortage areas.” Data from the Missouri Economic Research and Information Center (MERIC) shows the healthcare industry in Missouri saw a significant negative employment change from 2019 to 2020. Additionally, healthcare is listed as one of the most in-demand occupations. Specific to southeast Missouri, the home of SEMO, The MERIC projects that many of the programs that will be served by the Health Sciences Building will experience employment growth in Missouri between now and 2028. For example, dietitians and nutritionists (10.14% growth), food scientists and technologists (4.47%), physical therapists (18.87%), registered nurses (16.24%) and physiologists (10.7%), among other fields and areas of study. Overall, MERIC data project that Healthcare Support Occupations will grow by 12.77% and Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupation by 13.08% between now and 2028. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects similar growth at the national level over the next decade. The proposed new Health Sciences Building will allow SEMO to help meet these workforce needs.

Many of the academic programs that will be served by the proposed new Health Sciences Building are currently located in the University’s Parker Hall. Parker Hall has significant water infiltration issues and is experiencing many other structural and mechanical failures. Construction of the proposed new Health Sciences Building will allow the University to address the failures of Parker Hall while also ensuring it continues to meet the programmatic needs and expectations for students and faculty, and allow the University to assist in efforts to enhance preprofessional and other training programs to meet existing and projected health workforce needs in Missouri and across the United States.

The population groups to be served by the project include but may not be limited to: (1) students attending SEMO seeking to pursue a career in a STEM, health and life sciences, or allied health field; (2) practicing professional seeking continuing education and professional development or opportunities to engage with faculty or students in academic or research endeavors; and (3) members of the community that will benefit from a trained healthcare workforce.

## 2.0 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

### 2.1 Alternatives Evaluated and Dismissed

#### *Repair/Re-construction of Parker Hall*

Re-construction of the existing Parker Hall was considered, but repair/re-construction was greater than a new Health Sciences Building. Additionally, in 2018 the University's Board of Governors approved a comprehensive University Master Plan that recommends adding new laboratory space to Parker Hall and adding additional office space to accommodate faculty. Due to the water, structural, and mechanical issues of the existing Parker Hall, these recommendations cannot be adequately addressed, and the building will be scheduled for demolition upon completion of the new Health Sciences Building.

### 2.2 Alternatives Considered for Further Review

#### *Alternative 1: No Action Alternative*

Under the No Action Alternative, HRSA would not fund the proposed project and the new Health Sciences Building to replace the existing Parker Hall would not be constructed. If the building is not constructed, the existing deficiencies and inadequacies of the current learning environment would continue, and the University's ability to train and prepare the healthcare workforce would be significantly hindered. This would further impact the City of Cape Girardeau, the southeast Missouri region, and the State of Missouri, all of which are currently struggling to maintain adequate levels of staffing across many health-related occupations.

#### *Alternative 2: Construction of new Health Sciences Building (Proposed)*

Southeast Missouri State University (SEMO) is proposing to construct a new, 3-story, 54,608-sf Health Sciences Building on its main campus in Cape Girardeau, Missouri. The building will be built on an existing site, owned by the University. The building will include classrooms, laboratories, gymnasium, offices, and meeting venues to support STEM, health, life, and allied health sciences research and academic programs. The Health Science Building will meet programmatic needs and expectations for students and faculty, and provide space for Southeast to enhance preprofessional and other training programs to meet existing and projected health workforce needs in Missouri and across the United States.

<b>Affected Environment</b>	<b>Impacts</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
<b>Geology, Topography and Soils</b>	No impacts to geology or topography. There maybe short-term impacts to soils during the construction period.	Area soils would likely be disturbed during construction. Soil loss may occur directly from disturbance or indirectly via wind or water. Best management practices will be developed and implemented, such as erosion and sedimentation control (e.g., silt fences, hay bales, re-vegetating disturbed soils, and other measures to prevent soils from eroding and dispersing off-site).

<b>Affected Environment</b>	<b>Impacts</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
<b>Water Resources</b>	No impacts to ground water resources are anticipated.	None
<b>Surface Water</b>	Temporary short-term impacts to surface water, particularly storm water, are possible during and after construction activities.	Stormwater will be discharged to a local collection system that ultimately drains to the Mississippi River. Stormwater runoff volume will be controlled by use of an above ground or below ground detention system. Stormwater pollutant removal will be provided by landscape filtering and infiltration and/or a hydrodynamic system as required by local stormwater management practices.
<b>Floodplains</b>	No impacts to floodplains are anticipated.	None
<b>Groundwater</b>	No impacts to groundwater resources are anticipated. The new building will use the available public water system.	None.
<b>Biological Resources</b>	No impacts to biological resources (e.g., threatened and endangered species) are anticipated. The proposed building site has contained a building since the early 1960's (e.g., Dearmont Dormitory)	None
<b>Air Quality</b>	Short-term impacts to air quality may occur during the construction period.	Construction contractors would be required to maintain the construction area as necessary and fuel-burning equipment times would be kept to a minimum and engines would be properly maintained.
<b>Transportation</b>	There may be a minor temporary increase in the volume of construction traffic on roads in the immediate vicinity of the proposed project site.  No impacts to daily traffic are anticipated during normal intended usage.	Construction vehicles and equipment would be stored on-site during project construction and appropriate signage would be posted on affected roadways.  None

<b>Affected Environment</b>	<b>Impacts</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
<b>Noise</b>	Short-term impacts to noise may occur at the proposed project site during the construction period.	Construction would take place during normal business hours (e.g., daytime hours).
<b>Cultural Resources</b>	SEMO determined no impacts to archeological or historic resources are anticipated and that no archeological or historic resources were identified on the proposed land parcels. Missouri SHPO found that the proposed project would have an adverse effect due to a conclusion that Dearmont Complex may be eligible for inclusion in the National Register.	HRSA, SEMO, and Missouri SHPO drafted and negotiated a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) that includes mitigation stipulations to take into account SHPO's determination of effect on historic properties. Examples of agreed upon mitigation include, but are not limited to: SEMO will create a visual display in its new Health Sciences Building recounting the history of Dearmont, and SEMO will preserve the history of Dearmont through pictures and written narrative in its Kent Library Archives.
<b>Socioeconomic Resources</b>	No impacts to socioeconomic resources are anticipated.	None
<b>Environmental Justice</b>	No disproportionately high or adverse effects on minority or low-income populations are anticipated.	None
<b>Hazardous Materials</b>	No impacts from hazardous materials or wastes are anticipated.	<p>Construction activities could expose or otherwise affect unknown subsurface hazardous wastes or materials. Any hazardous materials discovered, generated, or used during construction would be disposed of and handled in accordance with applicable local, state, and federal regulations.</p> <p>Prior to the demolition of Dearmont Dormitory to make way for the proposed new Health Sciences Building, Dearmont will be undergo asbestos abatement. The abatement will be conducted in coordination with the Missouri Department</p>



		of Natural Resources and other agencies as necessary and appropriate.
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**3.0 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENTS AND POTENTIAL IMPACTS OF THE ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED**

**3.1 Geology, Seismic Activity and Soils**

**3.1.1. Soils Existing Conditions**

A soils classification of the site according to the National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) on-line database indicates that the following soils are present on the subject property: site soil consists of Menfro silt loam (Menfro) as indicated in Attachment 4. The Menfro series consists of well drained soils with a 5-14 percent slope. It is primarily composed of silt loam and silty clay loam. There is no frequency of flooding or ponding, and available water capacity is high with moderate or no run-off.

Local topography indicates that drainage is through a local collection system that ultimately drains to the Mississippi River. Stormwater runoff volume will be controlled by use of an above ground or below ground detention system.

Executive Order 12699 directs Federal agencies to incorporate cost-effective seismic safety measures in all new buildings that are constructed, leased, assisted, or regulated by the Federal Government. The area of southern Missouri that includes the project site is in the New Madrid Seismic Zone (NMSZ), which includes all of southeastern Missouri, northeastern Arkansas, western Tennessee, western Kentucky, and Southern Illinois. Information from the Missouri Department of Natural Resources utilizing modeling from the United States Geological Survey (USGS) notes a possible reoccurrence interval of a major earthquake in the NMSZ somewhere between 500 to 1,200 or somewhere between year 2395 and 3095. The proposed new Health Sciences Building will be built with these considerations in mind. Specifically, the building will be designed and constructed in accordance with appropriate seismic design and construction standards.

**3.1.2 Impacts to Soil**

*Alternative 1 – No Action Alternative:*

Normal occurrences of soil erosion would be expected to occur if the site remains in its current state. The proposed site location is not located within a 100-year floodplain and is not subject to flooding or ponding, due to its elevation and topography.

*Alternative 2 – Construct the new Health Sciences Building (Proposed Action)*

Area soils would likely be disturbed during construction. Soil loss may occur directly from disturbance or indirectly via wind or water. Best management practices will be developed and implemented as necessary at the construction location, such as erosion and sedimentation control

(e.g., silt fences, hay bales, re-vegetating disturbed soils, and other measures to prevent soils from eroding and dispersing off-site).

### **3.2 Land Use and Zoning**

A multi-story building has existed on the proposed project site for more than 60 years. The project, at its current location (e.g., the project site) for many decades. The site is surrounded by other academic and university-related facilities on all sides. The area is zoned R-4- Medium Density Multi Family Residential as shown in Attachment 5. The project will maintain consistency with current, and future, land use and will not affect surrounding areas.

#### **3.2.1 Impacts to Land Use and Zoning**

*Alternative 1 – No Action Alternative:*

No impact.

*Alternative 2 – Construct the new Health Sciences Building (Proposed Action)*

No impact.

### **3.3 Floodplain Encroachment**

Executive Order (EO) 11988 (Floodplain Management) requires that a Federal agency avoid direct or indirect support of development within a 100-year floodplain whenever there is a practicable alternative. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) uses Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) to identify the regulatory 100-year floodplain for the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). The proposed project site for the new Health Sciences Building is located in Zone X as shown in Attachment 6, which is not within a 100-year floodplain.

#### **3.3.1 Impacts to Floodplains**

*Alternative 1 – No Action Alternative:*

No impact.

*Alternative 2 – Construct the new Health Sciences Building (Proposed Action)*

No impact.

### **3.4 Traffic**

Southeast Missouri State University (SEMO) and the City of Cape Girardeau (City) are responsible for the design, construction, and maintenance of streets surrounding the proposed project site.

Available facilities near the proposed project site include Normal Ave. to the North, Pacific Street to the East, College Hill to the South, and Dearmont Circle to the West. There may be a minor temporary increase in the volume of construction traffic on these roads during the construction period. During project construction, appropriate signage would be posted on affected roadways. No impacts to daily traffic are anticipated post-construction during normal intended usage.

### **3.4.1 Impacts to Traffic Patterns**

*Alternative 1 – No Action Alternative:*

No impact.

*Alternative 2 – Construct the new Health Sciences Building (Proposed Action)*

The impact to traffic would be short-term during the time of active site preparation and construction activities.

## **3.5 Hazardous Materials Current Conditions (Public Health & Safety)**

CERCLA (commonly referred to as Superfund) is the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act. CERCLA's major emphasis is on the cleanup of inactive hazardous waste sites. CERCLA complements the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA), which primarily regulates ongoing hazardous waste handling and disposal. CERCLA provides for two basic ways to respond to a release of hazardous waste, either by a removal or a remedial action. Asbestos is a hazardous waste under CERCLA. Dearmont Dormitory (Dearmont), which is the building currently located on the project site, is over 60 years old. Due to its age, a NESHAP Asbestos Material Inspection Survey was completed for Dearmont in November 2022. The asbestos survey was completed by a licensed asbestos inspector of Trutest Environmental Solutions, LLC. Samples of suspect asbestos-containing materials (ACMs) collected during the inspection survey were sent to SanAir Technologies Laboratory for analysis via Polarized Light Microscopy (PLM) Bulk Identification method EPA 600/r-9/116. The asbestos material inspection survey identified ACM throughout Dearmont. Once the project is given approval to proceed, Dearmont will undergo abatement by trained personnel and ACMs will be properly disposed. When abatement is complete, Dearmont will be demolished, and the proposed new Health Sciences Building will be built in its place.

### **3.5.1 Impacts from Hazardous Materials**

*Alternative 1 – No Action Alternative:*

No impact.

*Alternative 2 – Construct the new Health Sciences Building (Proposed Action)*

The impact of the proposed action would be negligible with respect to the presence of hazardous materials and potential exposure, because any hazardous or toxic materials or waste will be properly abated and dealt with prior to demolition of Dearmont and the eventual construction of

the proposed new Health Sciences Building. An abatement plan will be developed to address the asbestos in Dearmont and to ensure that removal does not create a health hazard during the demolition or in the future reuse of the site. Abatement will be done by trained personnel and will be conducted in coordination with the Missouri Department of Natural Resources or other agencies as necessary and appropriate. All necessary permits, certifications, or other authorizations will be secured prior to the commencement of any work. Overall construction activities could expose or otherwise affect unknown subsurface hazardous wastes or materials. Any hazardous materials discovered, generated, or used during construction would be disposed of and handled in accordance with applicable local, state, and federal regulations.

### **3.6 Socioeconomic Issues**

Executive Order (EO) 12898 (Environmental Justice in Minority Populations) requires Federal agencies, departments, and their contractors to consider any potentially disproportionate human health or environmental risks their activities, policies, or programs may pose to minority or low-income populations.

Executive Order (EO) 13045 (Protection of Children from Environmental Health Risks and Safety Risks) required Federal agencies to identify and assess health risks and safety risks that may disproportionately affect children. As such, agencies must ensure that its policies, programs, activities, and standards address disproportionate risks to children that results from environmental health risks or safety risks.

Based on U.S. Census Bureau information from 2023, the percent populations of zip code 63701 (which is the zip code for the proposed new Health Sciences Building) are 77.7% White, 13.8 % Black or African American, 2.8% Asian, 3.8% Hispanic or Latino, and 0.1% American Indian or Alaska Native. The median household income (in 2024 adjusted dollars) for the areas is \$57,401.18, and 21.6% of persons in zip code 63701 are in poverty.

#### **3.6.1 Socioeconomic Impacts**

*Alternative 1 – No Action Alternative:*

No impact.

*Alternative 2 – Construct the new Health Sciences Building (Proposed Action)*

The project will not displace or relocate low-income or minority populations, and it will not have disproportionately high or adverse human health or environmental effects on minority and low-income populations. Construction of the proposed new Health Sciences Building will generate positive economic activity in an area currently designated a Qualified Census Tract by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, which is reflected in Attachment 7.

### **3.7 Air Quality**

Under the Clean Air Act, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) establishes primary and secondary air quality standards. Primary air quality standards protect the health, including the health of “sensitive populations, such as people with asthma, children, and older adults.” Secondary air quality standards protect public welfare by promoting ecosystems health, preventing decreased visibility, and damage to crops and buildings. EPA has set national ambient air quality standards (NAAQS) for six of the following criteria pollutants; ozone, particulate matter, nitrogen dioxide, carbon monoxide, sulfur dioxide, and lead. According to information from the EPA and the Missouri Department of Natural Resources, the project is not located in a nonattainment area, meaning criteria air pollutants do not exceed the NAAQS.

#### **3.7.1 Impacts Air Quality**

*Alternative 1 – No Action Alternative:*

No impact.

*Alternative 2 – Construct the new Health Sciences Building (Proposed Action)*

Short-term impacts to air quality may occur during the construction period. Construction contractors would be required to maintain the construction area as necessary and fuel-burning equipment times would be kept to a minimum and engines would be properly maintained. There are no EPA Approved Missouri Source Specific Requirements affecting the project location. Chapter 3 of Missouri’s SIP, Air Quality Standards and Air Pollution Regulations for the Outstate Missouri Area, addresses only incinerators. The project does not involve the use of an incinerator. The project may include the use of fume hoods in some of the academic laboratories proposed for the new Health Sciences Building, however, all construction and installation will adhere to all city, state, or Federal air quality standards regarding exhausts from fume hoods. Pursuant to the EPA Approved Missouri Regulations, there are no listed local agency ordinances for Cape Girardeau or Cape Girardeau County, Missouri, which is where the project is located. The EPA has no Tribal Implementation Plans (TIPs) in Missouri. Further, the project is not located in a Class I Federal area, so the location is not covered by Missouri’s state implementation plan (SIP) as it relates to the state’s planning obligations under the federal Regional Haze Rule (RHR) and the Clean Air Act (CAA). No permits are required specific to air quality control and there will be no open burning at the project site.

### **3.8 Noise**

#### **3.8.1 Noise Current Conditions**

The proposed project site is an area that includes single family, multi-family, and university properties. A noise ordinance does exist for the City of Cape Girardeau, Code of Ordinances, Chapter 17, Article VII, Sections 17-196 to 17-198. The general language of the City of Cape Girardeau noise ordinance allows for “the operation of any tools or equipment used in a commercial enterprise, construction, drilling, or demolition” between the hours of 6:00 a.m. and 11:00 p.m., seven days a week. A copy of the City of Cape Girardeau Noise Ordinance is included as Attachment 8.

### **3.8.2 Impacts to Noise Conditions**

*Alternative 1 – No Action Alternative:*

No impact.

*Alternative 2 – Construct the new Health Sciences Building (Proposed Action)*

Short-term impacts to noise may occur at the proposed project site during the construction period. Construction would take place during normal business hours in compliance with the City of Cape Girardeau Noise Ordinance.

### **3.9 Public Services and Utilities**

The proposed project site and surrounding area has all normal public services and utility services available. The water, sanitary sewer, storm water drainage, fire and emergency medical services are provided by the City of Cape Girardeau. Police services are provided by the University's Department of Public Safety, a fully commissioned law enforcement agency, supported by the City of Cape Girardeau Policy Department, the Cape Girardeau County Sheriff's Department, and the Missouri Highway Patrol. The electric power service and natural gas is provided by Ameren Missouri.

#### **3.9.1 Impact to Public Services and Utilities**

*Alternative 1 – No Action Alternative:*

No impact.

*Alternative 2 – Construct the new Health Sciences Building (Proposed Action)*

Any impact to public services and utilities will be short-term during active site preparation and construction activities. Many services such as police, fire, and emergency medical services are not expected to be impacted at all during active site preparation and construction. All normal construction permits and best management practices will be undertaken to minimize and/or eliminate any disruption to public utility services in the area.

### **3.10 WATER RESOURCES/WATER QUALITY**

#### **3.10.1 Groundwater Existing Conditions**

The proposed project site does not lie within, and will not affect, a sole source aquifer recharge area as designated by the EPA. Public utilities currently exist at the project site.

##### **3.10.1.2 Impacts to Groundwater**

*Alternative 1 – No Action Alternative:*

No impact.

*Alternative 2 – Construct the new Health Sciences Building (Proposed Action)*

The proposed new Health Sciences Building will tie into public utilities, therefore it will not impact existing groundwater conditions, nor will it increase current loads. Therefore, the project will not overload existing waste treatment plants. The project will not allow seepage of contaminants into the water table. The project will not create shortages for or otherwise adversely affect the withdrawal capabilities of other present users, particularly in terms of possible human health, safety, or welfare problems.

### **3.10.2 Surface Water Existing Conditions**

The Clean Water Act (CWA), as amended in 1977, established the basic framework for regulating discharge of pollutants into the waters of the United States. Based on the local topography, stormwater will be discharged to a local collection system that ultimately drains to the Mississippi River. There are no on-site surface water features (e.g., ponds or lakes) present at the proposed project location.

#### **3.10.2.1 Impacts to Surface Water**

*Alternative 1 – No Action Alternative:*

No impact.

*Alternative 2 – Construct the new Health Sciences Building (Proposed Action)*

There are no anticipated impacts to surface water. Stormwater runoff volume will be controlled by use of an above ground or below ground detention system. Stormwater pollutant removal will be provided by landscape filtering and infiltration and/or a hydrodynamic system as required by local stormwater management practices.

## **3.11 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES**

### **3.11.1 Wetlands Existing Conditions**

A wetlands determination was performed for the project site utilizing the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) online Wetlands Mapper and is included as Attachment 9 of this report. The conclusion of the USFWS Wetlands Mapper is that the project site is not in wetland.

#### **3.11.1.2 Impacts to Wetlands**

*Alternative 1 – No Action Alternative:*

There were no wetlands identified by the USFWS Wetlands Mapper. No impact.

*Alternative 2 – Construct the new Health Sciences Building (Proposed Action)*

There were no wetlands identified by the USFWS Wetlands Mapper. No impact.

### **3.11.2 Coastal Zone Management Act**

The Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) of 1972 outlines three national programs, the National Coastal Zone Management program, the National Estuarine Research Reserve System, and the Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program. The CZMA requires that Federal

actions that are reasonably likely to affect any land or water use or natural resource of the coastal zone be consistent with enforceable policies of a State's federally-approved coastal management program. A CZMA determination was performed for the project site utilizing the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) online mapping tool. The conclusion of the NOAA mapping tool, as shown in Attachment 10 included with this report, is that the project site is not located in an area that is covered by the National Coastal Zone Management program, the National Estuarine Research Reserve System, or the Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program.

### **3.11.2.1 Coastal Zone Management Act Impact**

*Alternative 1 – No Action Alternative:*

The project site is not located in an area that is covered by the National Coastal Zone Management program, the National Estuarine Research Reserve System, or the Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program. No impact.

*Alternative 2 – Construct the new Health Sciences Building (Proposed Action)*

The project site is not located in an area that is covered by the National Coastal Zone Management program, the National Estuarine Research Reserve System, or the Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program. No impact.

### **3.11.3 Coastal Barrier Resources Act**

The Coastal Barrier Resources Act (CBRA) of 1982, and subsequent amendments established the John H. Chafee Coastal Barrier Resources System (CBRS). The CBRS includes areas located along the Atlantic, Gulf of Mexico, Great Lakes, U.S. Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico coasts. A CBRA/CBRS determination was performed for the project site utilizing the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) online CBRS Mapper and is included as Attachment 11 of this report. The conclusion of the USFWS CBRS Mapper is that the project site (Missouri) is not in an area protected by the Coastal Barrier Resources System wetland.

### **3.11.3.1 Coast Barrier Resources Act Impact**

*Alternative 1 – No Action Alternative:*

There were no coastal barrier resources identified by the USFWS Coastal Barrier Resources System Mapper. No impact.

*Alternative 2 – Construct the new Health Sciences Building (Proposed Action)*

There were no coastal barrier resources identified by the USFWS Coastal Barrier Resources System Mapper. No impact.

### **3.11.4 Wild and Scenic Rivers**

The project site is located in Cape Girardeau, Missouri. Per information from the Bureau of Land Management, the National Park Service, the NPS Partnerships Rivers, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife System, the U.S. Forest Service, and the River Management Society, the proposed new Health Sciences Building will not affect a river or portion thereof which is either included in the



National Wild and Scenic Rivers System or designated for potential addition to the system. This determination was made by consulting the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System and utilizing their designated rivers mapping tool, which is included in this report as Attachment 12.

#### **3.11.4.1 Impact on Wild and Scenic Rivers**

*Alternative 1 – No Action Alternative:*

There were no wild or scenic rivers identified by the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System mapping tool. No impact.

*Alternative 2 – Construct the new Health Sciences Building (Proposed Action)*

There were no wild or scenic rivers identified by the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System mapping tool. No impact.

#### **3.11.5 Farmland Protection**

Federal agencies, departments, and their contractors are to consider whether a project will either directly or indirectly convert important farmland identified in the Farmland Protection Policy Act and as further defined by the Department of Agriculture in 7 CFR Part 658. If a conversion may result, there must be a determination of whether there is a practicable alternative to avoiding it. In consultation with the local office of the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), U.S. Department of Agriculture, it has been determined that the project site is not covered by the Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA). Specifically, the NRCS determination, which is included as Attachment 13, states that the project site is in a “tint overprint area” on the USGS topographic and is land that is not covered by the FPPA. will not directly or indirectly convert important farmland identified in the Farmland Protection Policy Act and as further defined by the Department of Agriculture in 7 CFR Part 658. The NRCS determination is attached to this report as Attachment 13.

#### **3.11.5.1 Impact on Farmland Conversion**

*Alternative 1 – No Action Alternative:*

The project site is not covered by the Farmland Protection Policy Act. No impact.

*Alternative 2 – Construct the new Health Sciences Building (Proposed Action)*

The project site is not covered by the Farmland Protection Policy Act. No impact.

#### **3.11.6 Threatened or Endangered Species**

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service lists 6 threatened or endangered species for Cape Girardeau County, Missouri. These six species are listed below.

Cape Girardeau County (source: <https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/>)

E – Gray Bat

T – Rufa Red Knot

E – Northern Long-Eared Bat

E – Pallid Sturgeon

E – Indiana Bat

T – Decurrent False Aster

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) was contacted on April 24, 2024 to inquire about a threatened and endangered species report and survey on the proposed project location. USFWS concluded that they do not have any concerns about impacts to species listed under the Endangered Species Act. Correspondence from USFWS is included as Attachment 14.

In addition, a data request was made to the Missouri Natural Heritage Program (MNHP), Missouri Department of Conservation. The MNHP report looked at not only the proposed project site but a much wider radius surrounding the project location. In its recommendations, the MNHP report states that regarding new construction, including governmental buildings, “fish, forest, and wildlife impacts can be avoided by siting projects in locations that have already been disturbed or previously developed,” which is the case with the proposed new Health Sciences Building. Further, the MNHP report recommends Endangered Species Act coordination with USFWS, which was done. The MNHP report is included as Attachment 15.

### **3.11.6.1 Impacts to Threatened or Endangered Species**

*Alternative 1 – No Action Alternative:*

No impact.

*Alternative 2 – Construct the new Health Sciences Building (Proposed Action)*

The USFWS concluded that there are no concerns about impacts to species listed under the Endangered Species Act. The Missouri Natural Heritage Program, Missouri Department of Conservation, report stated that to mitigate the impact to species, construction projects should be completed in locations that have already been disturbed or previously developed. The proposed project site has housed a multi-story building for over 60 years, and thus, is already disturbed and developed. No impact.

## **3.12 Cultural Resources**

### **3.12.1 Cultural Resources, Historic Properties and Archaeological Resources Current Conditions**

The National Register of Historic Places, its publications and special publications have been reviewed. The project site is not listed on the National Register of Historic Places for Cape Girardeau County, Missouri, which is included as Attachment 16 in this report. The Missouri State Historic Preservation Office (MSHPO), through Missouri State Parks, a Division of the Missouri Department of Natural Resources has been consulted via its Historic Districts and Sites Map Viewer. The MSHPO research concluded the project site is not a designated National Register Site, and it is not located in a National Register District or a Certified Local District. The City of Cape Girardeau, Missouri maintains a separate inventory of historic landmarks. The City’s inventory has been reviewed and the project site is not included. The MSHPO map and the

City of Cape Girardeau's Historic Landmarks Register are included as Attachment 17 in this report.

On May 8, 2024, HRSA requested that SEMO provide the results of Section 106 consultation (SHPO's Determination of Effect) as they relate to the project. SEMO submitted information to the Missouri State Historic Preservation Office (MSHPO) on May 9, 2024 and again on June 6, 2024 in response to a request for additional information from the MSHPO. SEMO received a determination letter from the MSHPO on June 24 stating "we believe that Dearmont Complex may fulfill the eligibility criteria for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) under Criterion C." The letter further stated that SEMO's planned demolition of Dearmont Complex to make way for the planned new Health Sciences Building would have an adverse effect; however, the letter continued "We look forward to working with you to avoid, minimize, or mitigate this adverse effect." A copy of the MSHPO letter is included as Attachment 18 in this report.

On June 25, 2024, SEMO further consulted via phone with the MSPHO in follow-up to the determination letter and spoke to Mr. Aaron Schmidt. Mr. Schmidt advised that the MSHPO's determination was based on the fact that Dearmont Complex still maintains its original integrity and that the architect for designed the structure had won some awards for designing educational buildings. Mr. Schmidt further stated that the MSHPO's determination does not mean that SEMO cannot demolish Dearmont. In fact, Mr. Schmidt commented that the MSHPO understands that demolition is likely and that doing so would be okay. Given this statement, SEMO asked Mr. Schmidt to explain what the MSHPO meant by the sentence in the determination letter, "We look forward to working with you to avoid, minimize, or mitigate this adverse effect." Regarding "avoid," Mr. Schmidt stated that this would mean that SEMO would not demolish Dearmont. However, he commented that the MSPHO understands that maintaining the current structure is probably not an option and that demolishing it would be okay. Regarding, "minimize," Mr. Schmidt commented that this would mean preserving some of the elements or features of Dearmont and incorporating them into the new structure, which he implied may be difficult to do and may not work. In defining "mitigate," Mr. Schmidt stated that since demolition seems likely, SEMO could work with its historic preservation faculty and students to take exterior and interior photos of Dearmont, document other features or architectural elements of the building in writing and then preserve the images and writings in the University's archives at Kent Library. SEMO is willing to take this action, or others if necessary. For example, SEMO believes another appropriate mitigation effort may be to preserve the bronze dedication plaque currently in the lobby of Dearmont and create an exhibit or display around it in the planned Health Sciences Building to include photos, a copy of the original development site plan, and a brief write-up recounting the various uses of Dearmont over the years. In speaking with Mr. Schmidt from the MSHPO, he agreed that SEMO should submit a revised environmental assessment to HRSA including this information and pledged to work with SEMO and HRSA on appropriate mitigation efforts going forward.

SEMO, HRSA and SHPO drafted a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) to address SHPO's concerns regarding the demolition of Dearmont. The MOA includes agreed upon mitigation efforts, that include but are not limited to preserving the history of Dearmont through both pictures and written narrative, among other actions. SEMO signed and returned the MOA

signature page to HRSA on August 15, 2024. SHPO signed and returned the MOA signature on November 1, 2024.

HRSA's May 8 communication to SEMO also asked it to revise its environmental assessment to include a "Inadvertent Discovery Plan' to cover sub-grade cultural resources." An Inadvertent Discovery Plan is included as Attachment 19 in this report. Consistent with the plan, if cultural materials are encountered during construction, all work will immediately stop and the Project Director will be notified. The Project Director will then notify the Missouri State Historic Preservation Office (MSHPO). Once appropriate notifications are made, work will not resume until guidance and direction is received from the MSHPO or another appropriate agency.

### **3.12.2 Impacts to Cultural Resources, Historic Properties and Archaeological Resources**

*Alternative 1 – No Action Alternative:*

No impact.

*Alternative 2 – Construct the new Health Sciences Building (Proposed Action)*

The proposed project site has housed a multi-story building for over 60 years. A review by SEMO of reports from the National Register of Historic Places, the State Historic Preservation Office, and the City of Cape Girardeau found that the proposed project site is not listed on the National Register of Historic Places, it is not a designated National Register Site, it is not located in a National Register District or a Certified Local District, and it is not included in the City's Historic Landmarks Register. Despite these conclusions, the Missouri State Historic Preservation Office (MSHPO) concluded that demolishing the existing structure on the project site, Dearmont Complex, to make way for the planned Health Sciences Building may have an adverse effect. HRSA concurred with MSHPO's finding. HRSA, MSHPO and SEMO have drafted and negotiated a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) to address MSHPO's concerns.

### **3.13 Coordination and Permits**

The proposed method of construction for the proposed new Health Sciences Building is design/bid/build. The University will work with the Lawrence Group, its architecture and design consultant, to select a general contractor, who in turn may utilize subcontractors to assist in the project. The design/bid/build method will allow Southeast Missouri State University to work with its other partners as one team to complete the building. It is further anticipated that the design/bid/build method will aid in communication and collaboration, thereby allowing the building to be completed on time and within budget once all grant and regulatory conditions are met.

The proposed new Health Sciences Building will comply with all accessibility requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act and local building codes. In accordance with applicable local, state, and federal regulations, any necessary permits will be secured prior to commencing construction at the proposed project site. All construction and required permits will be maintained and posted at the construction, the university's Office of Facilities Management, or elsewhere as may be required.

#### **4.0 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

Southeast Missouri State University regularly receives input from community groups, including Chambers of Commerce, regional healthcare providers, and other employers regarding workforce needs. Consistently, these groups ask for additional help to grow and sustain the healthcare workforce. This is true not only locally, but throughout eastern and southeast Missouri. There is excitement and support for the updates in facilities and training equipment.

The University has not held a public hearing on the project; however, the project has been frequently discussed with state executive branch officials, state legislators, and local elected officials. Additionally, information about the proposed new Health Sciences Building was shared with the Cape Girardeau community in a university-hosted event on October 13, 2023. The project has also been reported on at the University's Board of Governors meetings, which are open and accessible to the public. These verbal reports took place on multiple occasions from about April 2021 to present and will continue through project completion in an effort to keep the University's governing board and other stakeholders apprised of the University's efforts regarding the proposed new Health Sciences Building.

In addition to the efforts described above, the proposed action will be publicized during a fifteen-day (15) public comment period and will be made available to the public on the public notice bulletin board in Academic Hall on the campus of Southeast Missouri State University. If no substantive comments are received, the EA will become final, and this initial Public Notice will also serve as the final Public Notice. Substantive comments will be addressed as appropriate in the final documents.

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**6.0 RECOMMENDATION AND SIGNATURE(S)**

It is SEMO’s determination that the proposed project will not have a significant impact on the quality of the human environment. The proposed project will take place on a property that has maintained a similar structure for over 60 years. Thus, the basic use of the site will be unchanged. The project site is not listed in an environmentally or historically sensitive area. Additionally, the site is not listed on the National Register of Historic Places; or located within a 100-year flood plain, a wetland, or a critical habitat for endangered species. Lastly, there is no research or technology anticipated by the project whose future application could be expected to affect the environment. SEMO has worked with HRSA and MSHPO to address concerns raised by MSHPO and a Memorandum of Agreement outlining agreed upon mitigation stipulations has been signed. Based on the above, Southeast Missouri State University respectfully requests that it be allowed to post the Draft Environmental Assessment for public comment, and that at the appropriate time a revised Notice of Award be issued giving the project authorization to proceed.

**SOUTHEAST MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY** (Preparer/Recipient)

**BY:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Christopher R. Martin  
Chief of Staff and General Counsel

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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**ATTACHMENTS**

**ATTACHMENT #**

Cape Girardeau County Assessor-Tax Parcel Information.....1  
Proposed Health Sciences Building Floor Plan and Site Plan .....2  
Filed Notice of Federal Interest .....3  
U.S. Department of Agriculture Web Soil Survey Map and Reports .....4  
City of Cape Girardeau Zoning Map .....5  
Federal Emergency Management Agency Floodplain Map .....6  
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Qualified Census Tract Map .....7  
City of Cape Girardeau Code of Ordinances .....8  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Wetland Map .....9  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Coastal Zone Management Map.....10  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Coastal Barrier Resources Map .....11  
National Wild and Scenic Rivers System Map .....12  
U.S. Department of Agriculture Farmland Findings.....13  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Species and Habitat Findings .....14  
Missouri Department of Conservation Natural Heritage Report .....15  
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Inadvertent Discovery Plan.....19