NOTICE OF PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD REGARDING MODIFICATION OF A SYNTHETIC MINOR OPERATING PERMIT FOR A SILICON CARBIDE FIBER AND SILICON CARBIDE MATRIX COMPOSITE TAPE MANUFACTURING FACILITY IN HUNTSVILLE, ALABAMA

General Electric Company – GE Aviation has applied to the Natural Resources Division for modification of a Synthetic Minor Operating Permit authorizing construction and operation of a Silicon Carbide Fiber and Silicon Carbide Matrix Composite Tow & Tape manufacturing plant located at 25235 Chase Boulevard in Huntsville, Alabama.

As previously permitted, manufacturing operations at the GE Aviation facility consist of synthesis of polycarbosilane, high temperature treatment of green silicon carbide fiber and winding of silicon carbide matrix ceramic fiber in the Silicon Carbide Fiber Plant. Operations in the companion Silicon Carbide Matrix Composite Tow and Tape facility include coating of silicon carbide fiber tow using chemical vapor deposition and carbon coating and production of silicon carbide matrix composite tape in coating dip tanks. Ancillary operations include raw materials storage and handling and operation of emergency generator and fire pump engines. The principal emissions resulting from the manufacturing process will consist of Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC) and smaller quantities of HAP (Hazardous Air Pollutant). HAP emissions will be controlled by condensation. In addition to the manufacturing process emissions, there will also be small amounts of emissions from combustion of natural gas and diesel fuel.

Proposed modifications to the current Synthetic Minor Operating Permit consist of the addition of a diesel-fueled engine to support the supplied air cascade breathing air system, a natural gas-fueled emergency generator, and the modification of certain provisos to account for recent testing to determine emission factors for the Silicon Carbide Matrix Composite Tow and Tape process. The engines are subject to National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants (NESHAP) for Reciprocating Internal Combustion Engines (RICE), as well as New Source Performance Standards (NSPS) for Stationary Compression Ignition (CI) Internal Combustion Engines and NSPS for Stationary Spark Ignition (SI) Internal Combustion Engines, as appropriate.

Natural Resources is proposing to issue a modified Synthetic Minor Operating Permit to GE Aviation and has prepared a Draft Permit. As drafted, the Permit contains unmodified VOC and HAP emission limitations; provisions for non-emergency engines; restrictions on emergency engine use, monitoring, record-keeping and reporting provisions; and provisions for the use of recently determined emission factors as mentioned above. A public comment period, which begins upon publication of this Public Notice, has been established in order to give interested individuals an opportunity to provide additional information or comments. If significant comments are received, a hearing may be scheduled.

A copy of the Draft Permit may be accessed at https://bit.ly/3gMj6FH.

The Draft Permit is also available, along with information regarding emissions, applicable air pollution control regulations, and emission controls, at the Huntsville Natural Resources office or by contacting Natural Resources at (256) 427-5750. Any person wishing to provide written comments may do so by writing S. Cardno, Natural Resources Division, City of Huntsville, P.O. Box 308, Huntsville, Alabama, 35804. All comments must be received by 5:00 P.M, July 27, 2020, or fifteen (15) days from publication of this Notice, whichever is later.

The scope of this public comment period is limited to air pollution and its effects. Comments relative to site selection or economic and social impacts are not within the scope of this public comment period.