



## **WSDOT Aviation Monthly Report July 2008**

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## **WSDOT Clarifies Claims Concerning State's Enforcement of Airport Grant Provisions**

A recent article by the Aircraft Owners and Pilot Association (AOPA) took issue with the Washington State Department Transportation's decision to require public airport owners to repay airport grants when closing an airport. AOPA believes the state should pursue untested legal action against small communities with the hope to prevent airport closures. WSDOT's decision to pursue repayment of grants is consistent with the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) practices, as well as with most states. To our knowledge there are no legal precedents in the country where states have prevented airport closures through lawsuits.

While public use airports are owned and operated by local jurisdictions WSDOT Aviation has a strong history of advocating for the preservation of airports. WSDOT actively participates and expresses its opposition, while acknowledging its limitations, at public hearings regarding airport closures. We also provide and leverage millions of dollars in statewide airport infrastructure improvements, and assist local communities on proper zoning to prevent airport encroachment. Our land use education programs, through partnerships with AOPA and the Washington Pilot's Association, have provided guidance to hundreds of airport advocates to assist them in efforts to protect their local airports. WSDOT will continue to advocate for airports as part of the state's transportation system and work with aviation groups on an ongoing basis to identify opportunities to strengthen state policy to help preserve public use airports.

WSDOT has been engaged in ongoing discussions with AOPA regarding airport closures and the state's grant assurances. We look forward to their continued input as we work to revise our grant assurances during the upcoming year. For information on WSDOT's current grant agreements, please visit:

[www.wsdot.wa.gov/aviation/GrantAgreementTermsandConditions.htm](http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/aviation/GrantAgreementTermsandConditions.htm)

### **WSDOT Asks FAA to Support a New Effort to Look at Colville**

In mid 90s the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) went through an extensive process to site a new regional airport in Colville. A preferred site was identified after environmental review, but was rejected by the City because of the cost of the land. However, as part of LATS, the current airport at Colville has been identified as a capacity constraint in the system. WSDOT has issued a grant to the City of Colville to look at a new site if support can be gained again by the FAA. The FAA has been requested to define the conditions by which they would participate in discussions on a new siting effort.

### **WSDOT Inspects Projects at Colville and Sand Canyon**

Airport Construction Project Manager, Jeff Kvamme, inspected the finished fog seal project at the Colville Municipal Airport. Stripping was the last item to be completed. The runway, taxiway, ramp area, and hangar taxiways were all sealed. In addition to the fog seal project, Colville had applied for a security grant with which they installed security cameras and an electric access gate.



Kvamme also visited with the Airport Manager of Sand Canyon Airport and the City Administrator of Chewelah to discuss their upcoming fog seal project. This will include sealing their runway, taxiway and ramp areas and is scheduled to be completed by the end of August.

## **Taxiway Project Completed On Time and On Budget at Desert Aire**

WSDOT Airport Construction Project Managers Eric Johnson and Jeff Kvamme traveled to Desert Aire Airport to inspect its completed south taxiway rehabilitation project. Johnson and Kvamme met with Grant County Airport District No. 1 Commissioners David Strand and Ralph Herth, Wade Brooks of Reid Middleton and contractors from Granite Northwest, Inc. for the final walk-through. Desert Aire received a grant of \$250,000 from WSDOT Aviation for the construction phase of this taxiway rehabilitation project. The job was completed on time and on budget.



## **Federal Aviation Administration Summit Focuses on Runway Safety**

The two-day summit, hosted by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Northwest Region Runway Safety Office was held at the Holiday Inn at Sea-Tac on July 23 and 24. It was attended by airline and corporate pilots, air traffic control tower supervisors, safety experts and other FAA specialists. The summit's focus was on how to reduce runway incursions at airports. Speakers gave presentations on such issues as multi-tasking, memory failures and a perspective on human error, hearback / readback errors and runway incursion awareness. Mini workshops were held throughout the two day session, with participants dividing into small groups to discuss ways of improving runway safety at selected airports. These ideas were then presented to the entire group.

## **Airport Stormwater Meeting Held in Seattle**

WSDOT planners John Shambaugh and Carter Timmerman attended a task force meeting on the Aviation Stormwater Design Manual / Hazardous Wildlife Attractants. The event was held in Seattle at the WSDOT Urban Corridors Office. The meeting covered key project objectives, proposed changes and next steps. More information about the Airport Stormwater Guidance Manual is located at:

[www.wsdot.wa.gov/aviation/AirportStormwaterGuidanceManual.htm](http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/aviation/AirportStormwaterGuidanceManual.htm)

## **Public Open Houses Held to Solicit Comments on Draft Aviation Policies**

The Washington Aviation Planning Council hosted two public open houses to solicit public comments on the recently developed draft statewide aviation policies. The policies

were developed by the Council after identifying key statewide aviation issues and reviewing Long-Term Air Transportation Study Phases I and II data. They will help shape Council recommendations that are due to the Governor by July 2009. Open houses were held in Mukilteo on July 22 and in Wenatchee on July 24. The Mukilteo open house garnered particular interest from Save Our Communities, an interest group that is concerned about commercial passenger service at Paine Field. About 50 people attended the Mukilteo event, while only a handful attended in Wenatchee. The public still has until July 31 to submit comments on the draft policies. More information is located at: [www.wsdot.wa.gov/News/2008/07/DraftAviationPolicies.htm](http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/News/2008/07/DraftAviationPolicies.htm).