

WSDOT Aviation Monthly Report September 2005

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1. WSDOT's Statewide Airport Land Use Compatibility Program Evaluation Now Online

In January 2005 the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) Aviation contracted with Mead & Hunt, Inc. to conduct an evaluation of the state's Airport Land Use Compatibility Program. This was done to determine if the program assisted local governments and met the following objectives:



- Meets the intent of Growth Management.
- Provides the necessary tools to assist in development of comprehensive plans.
- Provides user-friendly guidelines.
- Assists in the protection of airports as Essential Public Facilities.
- Assists in the protection of airports from incompatible development.
- Consistent with airport master plan development objectives.

Airport owners and managers, planners, regional planning organizations, and communities with public use general aviation airports and adjacent communities were surveyed throughout the state. Thirty-three percent of those surveyed responded, which included 103 airports or 74% of the public use airports in the state.

Overall Results – Washington State

- Airports designated as Essential Public Facilities
-61%
- Local jurisdictions with comprehensive plan policies that address incompatible development adjacent to airports.
-66% with 11% under development
- Local jurisdictions with development regulations that address incompatible development adjacent to airports.
-48% with 17% under development

WSDOT Land Use Compatibility Program Effectiveness

- Program meets Growth Management Act.
-70% medium to high level of effectiveness
- Local comprehensive plan policies/regulations are effective.
-72% medium to high level of effectiveness
- Airport compatible use guidelines are effective.
-68% medium to high level of effectiveness
- Other tools and technical assistance are effective.
-79% medium to high level of effectiveness

For additional information and to view the results of the Airport Compatibility Program Evaluation go to:

www.wsdot.wa.gov/aviation/planning/05APLandUseCompProgEvalAnaly.pdf.

2. How Can General Aviation Pilots Assist With Hurricane Relief Efforts?

The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) Aviation has received several inquiries from general aviation (GA) pilots about how they can help with relief efforts following the devastation of Hurricane Katrina. Currently relief workers are not asking for GA resources at this time. However, workers do know that many GA pilots are willing to assist should the need arise. It is crucial that volunteer groups wait for direction by an appropriate response agency before dispatching to affected areas. Volunteers who self-dispatch risk harming themselves and impeding with existing rescue and recovery operations. More information about how GA pilots can help is available on AOPA's Web site: www.aopa.org.



3. Northwest Regional Air Service Initiative Awarded Federal Grant to Improve Rural Air Service

On August 25 a consortium of Oregon and Washington communities was awarded a federal grant to help improve scheduled airline service. The consortium is led by the

Oregon and Washington Aviation Divisions and the Oregon and Washington Airport Management Associations. Through these groups, several individual communities have committed to work together to improve air service options.

In a series of conversations between airport managers and state aviation leaders, the group recognized that small communities in Oregon and Washington all shared the same challenges in struggling to improve their air service. Northwest communities are limited to only a handful of airlines providing service in the region, and all are tied in to the airline hubs in Seattle and Portland.

The group, self-titled the Northwest Regional Air Service Initiative, submitted a grant proposal to the U.S. Department of Transportation. It requested over \$180,000 to fund a three-phase action plan. Phase one is the development of an air service enhancement “toolkit” that any community can use to identify reasonable air service expectations and recommendations on developing community support that would attract airlines. Phase two provides a community-specific analysis of air service markets, aircraft, and routes for the communities that complete the “toolkit.” Phase three develops strategies, based on the Phase two evaluation, of how to improve air service to the participating communities in the region. It is anticipated that this three-phase approach will identify regional strategies that would be more effective than individual community proposals.

The goals of the initiative are to:

- Improve air service to smaller, underserved and overpriced communities in Oregon and Washington to reduce the driving distances to access commercial service.
- Provide better access from secondary markets in Oregon and Washington to the national air transportation system.
- Engage smaller communities in Oregon and Washington in finding solutions to regional air service issues.

The U.S. Department of Transportation Small Community Air Service Development Program was initiated in 2001 and provides up to \$20 million per year in grants. The Order Awarding Grants issued called the program “unique in that it encourages and affords communities the opportunity to develop their own solutions to their air service problems based on their particular needs and circumstances.”

4. Eastside Search and Rescue Volunteers Receive Training

“Lots of training” is the way Aviation Emergency Services Coordinator, Tom Peterson, sums up the past month’s air search and rescue (SAR) activities. On three separate weekends volunteers brushed up on their SAR skills during recurrency and training sessions in Ephrata and Spokane. The events also marked the first time the new



Incident Command Post (ICP) trailer had been deployed for a training mission. “Everyone who encounters the ICP is really excited to see the advances that WSDOT has made in the Emergency Air Operations program,” Peterson said. “The word has gotten out to other state agencies and they have contacted me about integrating the ICP into some joint operational plan as well.”

5. Airport Reconstruction Progressing at Brewster and Electric City

At the beginning of September on site engineer Karla Kendall, W&H Pacific, reports that pulverization and mixing of the old asphalt surface is complete at Anderson Field in Brewster. Construction crews have also completed 75 percent of the installation of new runway edge drains and excavation for the new aircraft apron. Next crews will begin excavation of the 80-foot runway extension and aircraft turn around on the west end.



Construction also began at Grand Coulee Dam Airport in Electric City on August 29, 2005. Just several days into construction, Kendall reported that two-thirds of the edge drainage work was completed. Crews will continue this month with edge drain and electrical work.