

WSDOT Aviation Monthly Report January 2010

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Seattle Class B Airspace redesign proceeds

WSDOT Aviation has chaired two of six planned meetings of an ad hoc committee to discuss the redesign of the Seattle Class B Airspace. The FAA's proposal will be revised to reflect recent changes in minimum vectoring altitudes (MVAs) used to turn aircraft into Class B airspace. Committee members representing airspace users strongly support changes that will accommodate next-generation RNP approaches as part of the Greener Skies Initiative. Members will be working closely with designers to address specific concerns in each airspace sector recognizing the overall goal for aircraft safety. The committee will conclude its work by presenting a final proposal to the FAA within the next six months.

Aviation gets U.S. Army Corps of Engineers input on airport lease renewal

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) has decided to issue a single five-year lease for all three Snake River Airports (Little Goose, Lower Granite, and Lower Monumental) combined. This step will result in significant cost savings for the five-year period since State Aviation won't have to pay renewal fees for two of the three airports.

USACE will also take responsibility for funding and conducting the NEPA Environmental Review associated with this lease renewal. Typically State Aviation would be financially responsible, but the Corps is taking a good-faith step since they were not able to re-issue the lease before it expired.

USACE has not made a decision on allowing the airports to remain open year-round, but indicated they are reviewing the request with their headquarters office.

Airport Manager Paul Wolf has asked the Corps for a schedule of completion and will schedule additional support from the HQ Property Management Office to support reviews and approvals to ensure consistency with State and Aviation property management practices.

Call for second round of airport aid applications delayed

Aviation has decided to postpone announcing its call for applications for the 09-11 biennium second round of Airport Aid grants due to pending legislation that would potentially add expenses to Aviation in administering the collection of a new excise tax on aircraft and the recent aviation fuel forecast that projects a further decline in revenue. Aviation will continue to monitor revenue projections and the pending legislation to determine what levels of funding may be available for the annual grant cycle. The message to airport sponsors inquiring about this round of funding is:

‘At this time the amount of funds available for the next round of grants is unclear, Aviation will release an announcement as soon as we have a better idea. In the meantime airports are welcome to submit completed Airport Aid Applications.’