

ALASKA

Aviation System Plan

Newsletter

September 2017 |



Tanis Mesa A69

Summer 2017

The Alaska Aviation System Plan (AASP) focused on completing the two work group efforts during the summer of 2017. The Backcountry Airstrip Work Group defined the mission, challenges, and importance of backcountry airstrips across Alaska, while the Weather Work Group concentrated on weather needs in Alaska by identifying weather

observation equipment locations throughout the state and developing an equation based prioritized list for future funding of airport weather stations.

AASP work groups are a collaborative effort between the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF), the FAA, the National Weather Service (NWS), and other user groups

including the Alaska Air Carriers Association, the Alaska Airmen Association, the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association, and the Recreational Airstrip Foundation (RAF).

Additional project information, including final deliverables and handouts, is available on the project's main website: www.AlaskaAsp.com.

AASP Backcountry Airstrip Work Group

Backcountry airstrips provide access to remote areas across Alaska, supporting a multitude of uses such as commercial, industrial, recreational and emergency search and rescue.

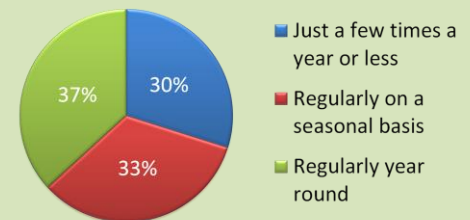
The Work Group examined Alaska's aviation system, defining these unique airports with criteria unique to this state. To guide future preservation decisions, multiple issues impacting the system were identified, such as maintenance, services, lack of available information and fear of impending airstrip closures. The work group collected a wide range of data illustrating the reasons why these airstrips are important to the users and how frequently they are used. A summary brochure with further specifics is available at <http://www.alaskaasp.com/documents.aspx>. To request paper copies, contact Statewide Aviation.



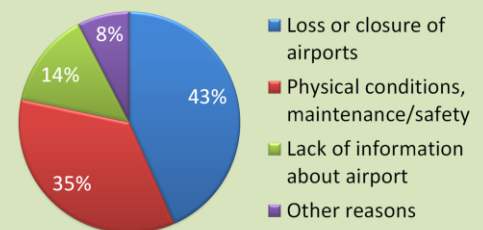
Farewell FWL

Survey results from nearly 250 respondents

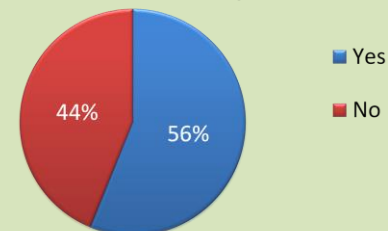
Approximately how often do you land at backcountry airstrips?



What issues concern you the most regarding backcountry airstrips in Alaska?



Are the back country airstrips you visit generally in need of vital repairs or maintenance?



What are the unique qualities of a backcountry landing area?

Backcountry airstrips are improved public use aircraft landing areas, generally located in remote areas, without onsite management. Some are available year-round and some seasonally. They usually support residential, recreational or industrial use activities in remote areas. These airstrips are located on both public and private lands and provide needed access for both public and private uses. Maintenance and on-field amenities on these airstrips range from virtually none to more developed.

The Alaska DOT&PF Needs Your Help!

Protecting and preserving these essential facilities is important. To learn more, request Airport Master Record information, or be contacted regarding future efforts aimed at backcountry airstrips, contact the Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities' Division of Statewide Aviation at 907-269-0730 or at statewideaviation@alaska.gov.

AASP Weather Work Group

The map to the right represents the approximate location of 21 airports that would benefit most from on-field weather reporting. FAA approach development includes a complex formula to determine approach minimums, and airports that don't have on-field weather reporting are penalized with higher minimums. Many private pilots and commercial carriers continue to fly into these locations, as there are no other options.



Weather Equipment Needs

Many who fly derive some comfort from the robotic voice of an automated weather reporting station sharing weather conditions at our destination, especially when flying long distances in marginal weather with no appealing alternates. Those that develop approaches for the FAA also like that automated voice as well. When an on-field automated weather station is utilized as part of an instrument approach procedure, the FAA can develop an approach with much lower minimums than one that does not have an on-field automated weather station. Terminal Instrument Approach Procedure design (also known as TERPS design) is a complex process that you can enjoy reading about in FAA Order 8260.3B, "Terminal Instrument Procedures." Enjoy!

The twenty-one airports that the AASP Weather Working Group determined would benefit most from on-field weather station development are listed below. Also included are the approximate distances from the closest FAA / NWS approved weather station:

Airport	Miles	Airport	Miles	Airport	Miles
Akiak	19	Eek	35	Nondalton	14
Allakaket	34	Kasigluk	21	Nulato	29
Beaver	54	Kobuk	25	Perryville	36
Central	61	Kokhanok	20	Tatilek	20
Chalkyitsik	36	Kotlik	30	Tok	36
Chuathbaluk	9	Koyukuk	22	Venetie	37
Coldfoot	37	Napaskiak	5	Willow	18

Read more about it! Weather reporting information can be found at the AASP web site:
<http://www.alaskaasp.com/Documents.aspx>

Now, if we could just get the AWOS to make a decent cup of coffee...



Central



Northern



Southcoast



Municipal

Capital Improvement and Maintenance Program (CIMP) Inspections

Since program implementation in 2013, over 160 airports in Alaska's system have received an initial Capital Improvement and Maintenance Program (CIMP) inspection. The graphic above notes the number each Alaska DOT region accomplished.

A CIMP identifies capital and maintenance needs at an airport through a rating process. Inspectors use digital checklists pertaining to different areas of a facility and rate needs based on current conditions. To facilitate consistency, inspectors can consult photographs showing different condition levels to assist in uniformly rating an issue. For instance, an inspector can reference pictures of culverts that are in good, fair, poor or failed condition, and compare those photos to the current inspection. Deficiencies identified during an inspection are fed directly into each airport's needs list through a tablet-based application, allowing multiple sections across the department to see the same list of needs.

More than 60% of Alaska DOT owned airports have been inspected to date!



Conducting a need assessment of Nome's runways



Northern Region Planning conducting a CIMP at Nome Airport in July 2017.

