



SPRING 2025

# NEWSLETTER

[www.AlaskaASP.com](http://www.AlaskaASP.com)

## AASP Project Manager Update

By Edgar Tinajero, RESPEC AASP Project Manager

The AASP team is excited for the Spring thaw, and we are preparing for 2025 aviation events across Alaska. In late February, the team attended the annual Alaska Air Carrier's Association Convention in Anchorage. One big topic discussed was the need for more accurate weather reporting, underscoring the importance of supporting continual safety improvements across the system. To learn more about weather reporting in Alaska, check out the AASP's Weather Reporting white paper [here](#)<sup>1</sup>. We are always impressed and energized by the vibrant and active Alaska aviation community when we attend conferences and other events. On that note, the AASP team is looking forward to spring community events including the Great Alaska Aviation Gathering, Fairbanks Aviation Day, the Valdez Fly-In and STOL Competition, and the Kenai Air Fair. Come see us at our booth to connect and learn about the resources available to you through AASP!

In other news, the team is busy behind the scenes continuing work on several fronts. The Western Alaska Airport Resiliency Study Final Report & Recommendations is now available on the AASP website, [here](#)<sup>2</sup>. Read on in this newsletter to learn more about the study and its findings. The AASP team is also gearing up to support another round of Capital Improvement and Maintenance Program (CIMP)



An aerobatic performance at the 2023 Valdez Air Show.



Edgar Tinajero, RESPEC AASP Project Manager, presented and the DOT&PF Statewide Aviation team staffed the AASP booth at the 2025 AACA conference in Anchorage.



inspections to occur this summer. Last year the team conducted a test run of the application and is now finalizing updates and implementing additional changes to streamline the CIMP process based on those findings. Additionally, the team is continuing work on developing air carrier route maps and a preliminary gravel surface rating system to be used alongside the CIMP process. Also stay tuned for Airport Layout Plan and Airport Master Plan fact sheets to be published soon. We wish you a happy Spring season and look forward to connecting with you at an aviation event this year!

### IN THIS ISSUE:

- |                             |                         |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| AASP Project Manager Update | Air Time Q&A            |
| AASP Spotlight              | Western Alaska Airports |
| Real ID Compliance Update   | Resiliency Study Update |





## Jeremy Thompson, Central Region M&O Specialist

By Megan Flory, Community & Sustainability Planner, RESPEC

Jeremy Thompson has served as the Alaska DOT&PF Central Region Maintenance and Operations Specialist for a few years now, but he lived many adventurous lives before landing the role. Jeremy loves learning new things and has pursued this passion through jobs including working as a Ground Agent at an airport, a bus driver in Denali National Park and Preserve, and a scuba diving instructor in South America. He was even a dog musher near Kotzebue before landing a gig with a snow removal company, where he learned to



Jeremy at his house in Knik with his husky Suka.

operate a grader (something he'd wanted to do since his days in Denali). Jeremy's newly developed winter maintenance skills led him to a job with DOT&PF as an Equipment Operator, a position he held for several years before he transitioned into his current role.

up aviation knowledge and has since built a strong relationship with his FAA partners. Recently, he's successfully developed some creative grant funding solutions for airport projects. For example, federally funded projects must meet a minimum life expectancy requirement, and the river erosion at Napakiak Airport (WNA) meant that the airport couldn't meet the requirement for a major rehabilitation project. Jeremy coordinated and secured funding for a minor surface maintenance project to improve surface condition until a larger project can be funded. Alaska-specific challenges and solutions like these are what keep Jeremy's role interesting every day.

Although Jeremy sometimes misses the on-the-ground action of the Equipment Operator role, he also enjoys the big picture view of overseeing maintenance programs as well as the constant variety that comes with working in both aviation and surface transportation. Kirk "Rabbit" Warren, the M&O Chief for Central Region, says that Jeremy "consistently and continuously proves his value to the Department through his innovative and proactive solutions to the many challenges that face a section such as M&O. Our section is in a better position to meet the Department's mission due to his ability to see the big picture while bringing to bear his expansive understanding of the fundamentals of our field personnel. We are extremely fortunate that Mr. Thompson has chosen to be a part of the M&O family." Thank you, Jeremy, for being a lifelong learner who helps keep Alaska moving!

## Real ID Compliance Update



On May 7, 2025, U.S. travelers must be REAL ID compliant to board domestic flights and access certain federal facilities. Passed by Congress in 2005, the REAL ID Act enacted the 9/11 Commission's recommendation that the federal government "set standards for the issuance of sources of identification, such as driver's licenses." The Act established requirements for state-issued driver's licenses and identification (ID) cards and prohibits federal agencies from accepting licenses and ID cards from states that do not meet the requirements.

Beginning May 7, 2025, the Department of Homeland Security requires your driver license (DL) or identification (ID) card to be REAL ID compliant if you wish to use it as identification to board a domestic flight or enter military bases and most federal facilities. After May 7, 2025, identification cards that do not meet federal standards cannot be used to enter federal buildings, military bases, or to board commercial flights.

However, if you do not require entry to these facilities, a REAL ID may not be necessary for you. You might already possess an alternative form of identification that complies with REAL ID requirements, such as a valid passport, military ID, or certain Tribal IDs. For air travel, while a REAL ID is not mandatory, you must present an ID that meets federal guidelines. For a detailed list of IDs accepted by the TSA, please refer to their comprehensive guide available [here](#)<sup>3</sup>.

To prepare customers, the Alaska Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) has created an interactive checklist to provide you with the documents you will need to apply for an Alaska REAL ID driver license or ID card. The online version of the checklist can be found [here](#)<sup>4</sup>.

The Alaska Real ID is not mandatory for Alaskans with a non-commercial license. Alaskans who hold a Commercial Driver's License are required to be federally compliant and will be required to upgrade to the REAL ID at the time of license expiration if not already compliant.





## AirTime

### Q Are there any new reports or updates?

A Our public-facing report catalog continues to expand.

We have added in the Staffed Airports Hours report which outlines winter operating hours at Alaska DOT&PF staffed rural airports, detailing times when on-site staff are available to support safety, security, and operations. It complements National Flight Data Center (NFDC) data but may vary and is intended to assist with after-hour carrier requests. Users should verify hours directly with the airport for updated hours or special circumstances.

Designed for aviation stakeholders like pilots and airline operators, this resource supports flight planning by providing clear, timely airport information and reflects our commitment to Alaska's aviation network (Reports > Airport Contacts > [Staffed Airports Hours](#))<sup>5</sup>.

## Western Alaska Airports Resiliency Study Update

By Megan Flory, Community and Sustainability Planner, RESPEC.

Airports in western Alaska are facing environmental threats that can cause costly repairs and even shut down operations.

Natural hazards such as thawing permafrost, more frequent flooding and erosion, material source limitations, and increasing precipitation, coupled with pressures including funding limitations, staffing challenges, and extensive federal regulations, make it challenging to maintain a resilient airport system.

To better understand these challenges and develop potential solutions, DOT&PF and RESPEC selected 29 airports, many in the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta, to evaluate. The team focused on

Western Alaska because anecdotal evidence indicated that the airports in the region experience a range of challenges (e.g.,

erosion, permafrost, construction logistics) that are common to many airports in Alaska. The study team reviewed plan and construction documents, funding data, performance reports, and academic and industry research, and conducted interviews with knowledgeable DOT&PF staff. A group of DOT&PF,

and RESPEC staff also visited several airports to assess their condition.

Based on the research conducted and the experience of the people interviewed, the

*continued page 4*



Planners and DOT&PF staff inspect the runway embankment at Tununak as part of the Western Alaska Airports Resiliency Study.



Longitudinal cracking seen in 2023 during a 5010 inspection at Kiana Airport, one of the airports considered in the AASP Western Alaska Airports Resiliency Study.



Rutting seen in 2023 during a 5010 inspection at Kongiganak Airport, one of the airports considered in the AASP Western Alaska Airports Resiliency Study.



continued from page 3

## Western Alaska Airports Resiliency Study Update

study team developed recommendations to improve the planning, design, construction, and operations of airport development. Top recommendations include:

1. Monitor and Repair Damage Early. Regularly inspect runways and address issues while they are still minor.
2. Prevent Embankment Settlement. Redefine standards for geotextile use and runway widening and lengthening; remove ice-rich soils and redirect drainages.
3. Evaluate Dust Palliatives. Explore the use of dust palliatives in the top several inches of soil rather than as a surface treatment.
4. Update Drainage Structure Standards and Guidance. Ensure culverts and drainage structures are appropriately sized for large storm events.

## In The Works ...

As we accomplish more enhancements across the AASP, we are working to expand our guidance and reference materials. Stay tuned and check [here](#)<sup>6</sup> for the latest project documents.

<sup>1</sup>[https://www.alaskaasp.com/media/4935/2024-12-10\\_weather\\_white\\_paper\\_final.pdf](https://www.alaskaasp.com/media/4935/2024-12-10_weather_white_paper_final.pdf)

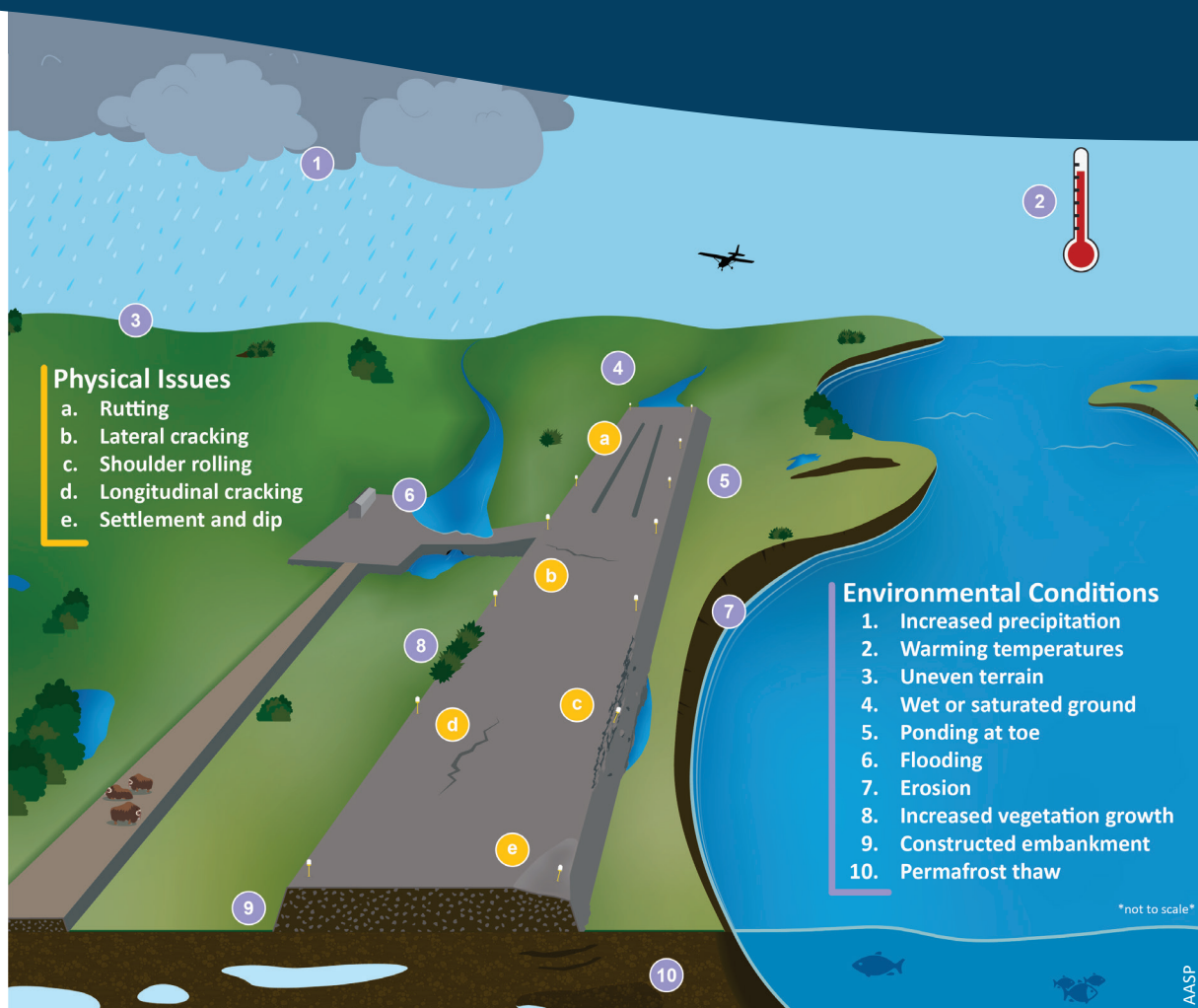
<sup>2</sup>[https://www.alaskaasp.com/media/5041/2024\\_resiliency-study\\_with-appendices\\_final.pdf](https://www.alaskaasp.com/media/5041/2024_resiliency-study_with-appendices_final.pdf)

<sup>3</sup><https://online.dmv.alaska.gov/REALIDChecklis>

<sup>4</sup><https://internal.alaskaasp.com/Reports/Reports.aspx?tab=contacts>

<sup>5</sup><https://www.alaskaasp.com/Documents.aspx>

<sup>6</sup>[https://www.alaskaasp.com/media/5041/2024\\_resiliency-study\\_with-appendices\\_final.pdf](https://www.alaskaasp.com/media/5041/2024_resiliency-study_with-appendices_final.pdf)



Physical issues and environmental conditions impacting Alaskan airports.

5. Plan for Field Conditions. Include contingency plans in design and construction documents.
6. Update Runway Expansion Standards and Guidance. Redefine standards for geotextile use and runway widening and lengthening.
7. Improve Project Closeout Procedures. Ensure lessons learned are documented and shared by developing a construction closeout questionnaire.

The Resiliency Study report is now available on the AASP website [here](#)<sup>6</sup>. The recommendations in the report will help guide all phases of Alaskan airport development toward a more resilient future.



### Project Contacts

**Becca Douglas, CM, Project Manager**  
Alaska Dept. of Transportation & Public Facilities  
907.269.0728 | [rebecca.douglas@alaska.gov](mailto:rebecca.douglas@alaska.gov)

**Edgar Tinajero, PE, RESPEC Project Manager**  
RESPEC Inc.  
907.931.6712 x1899 | [edgar.tinajero@respec.com](mailto:edgar.tinajero@respec.com)

**Annette Lapkowski, PE, PMP, B2Gnow Project Manager**  
907.556.0990 x1025 | [annette.lapkowski@b2gnow.com](mailto:annette.lapkowski@b2gnow.com)

**Natalie Lyon, AICP, Public Involvement Lead**  
RESPEC Inc.  
907.931.6820 | [Natalie.lyon@respec.com](mailto:Natalie.lyon@respec.com)