



WINTER 2026

NEWSLETTER

www.AlaskaASP.com

DOT&PF West Coast Alaska Storm Response

DOT&PF continues coordinating with local, state, and federal partners to help communities recover from the October 2025 storms that affected western Alaska. Just days after a storm caused flooding and erosion in the region, ex-Typhoon Halong brought hurricane-force winds and additional flooding to dozens of coastal communities. The infrastructure damage was significant, but DOT&PF mobilized quickly to restore access to impacted communities—in a single week, twelve drone teams were active in the field to assess damage in 37 communities.

Updates, photos, and videos are available on the [response website¹](#).



DOT&PF

Drone photo of Ralph Wien Memorial Airport (OTZ), October 8, 2025.

AASP Project Manager Update

Edgar Tinajero, RESPEC AASP Project Manager

Alas, this is the final newsletter of Phase III. In the past five years, the AASP team developed 20 newsletters, over a dozen fact sheets, and six white papers (and counting). We also rebuilt and field tested the Capital Improvement and Maintenance Program (CIMP) mobile application and methodology and made significant upgrades to the AASP website, including GIS-supported comment map and search features, restructured Airport Construction Improvement Program (ACIP) data, and added many new reports for internal and public users. Even as Phase III winds down, we're still checking items off the to do list; we're especially excited to be implementing the "Close the Loop" process for documenting project closeouts. The AASP will now capture the grant process in one place, allowing planners to track planned enhancements and project needs through construction, and update information to capture accomplishments. This new functionality, accompanied by new reports, enables us to see more clearly what each project delivered to Alaskans.

Keep an eye out for the final Phase III chapter reports, which summarize past work and make recommendations for the next phase. As we reflect on the last five years and look to the future of

the AASP, we are excited to hear from you—if you haven't taken [our survey²](#) yet, we encourage you to do so. The AASP is here to serve you, and we do that best when you make your voice heard.

On behalf of the AASP project team, I want to send a sincere thank you to DOT&PF and other stakeholders in the Alaska's aviation industry who have worked and collaborated with us on this phase. I'm proud of what the team has accomplished over the past 5 years and feel confident we are leaving the AASP in better condition than we started with. It's been great flying with you!

IN THIS ISSUE:

DOT&PF West Coast Alaska
Storm Response
Project Manager Update
AASP Spotlight
FAA News & Update
In the Works

Air Time Q&A
Coach Class
FFY25 Grant Summary
Alaska Aviation Weather
Infrastructure: Outage Patterns & Strategic Prioritization



AASP Spotlight

Melany Wilson GIS Transportation Planner

By Megan Flory, Community & Sustainability Planner,
RESPEC

Melany Wilson is a skier, pilot, and GIS genius. In just three years with DOT&PF, she has transformed how Statewide Aviation manages its geospatial data, tracking down all the aviation-related data in DOT&PF (much of which was stored on individual hard drives) to create a centralized enterprise geographic information system (GIS). The task was daunting at first—going from a siloed, disconnected “system” to a user-friendly, intuitive tool is no easy feat—but Melany could see the potential and understood she was facing a marathon, not a sprint. This new system, the Airport GIS Program, supports FAA 5010 and Part 139 inspections, airport inventory data, and imagery integration. The data will soon be connected to the AASP website and made available to DOT&PF staff, with a public-facing version to come later. The website integration will provide users with maps and dashboards that will assist with system planning, airport design, and more.

Her work on the Airport GIS Program is sometimes interrupted by more urgent tasks, like disaster response efforts for Typhoon Merbok, the annual Mendenhall Glacier outbursts, and the recent coastal



Melany in the Front Range of the Chugach Mountains, near Flattop.

storms in western Alaska. When a natural disaster occurs, the Remote Sensing Lab uses drones to collect imagery and video to assess damage and track recovery. Melany works with the Lab and other state and federal partners to manage the data that is collected and support reporting to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Melany also manages video and image servers for day-to-day use, which inform aviation safety and real-world decision-making.

Rebecca Douglas, Aviation Planning Chief for DOT&PF, had high praise for Melany, saying she "consistently brings an exceptional work ethic to everything she touches, showing initiative, focus, and follow-through while managing and expanding complex, technical systems with confidence and care. She takes ownership, thinks strategically, and delivers reliable results that strengthen airport information for everyone." Thank you, Melany, for all your hard work to keep Alaska moving!



FAA NEWS & UPDATES

Beginning February 1, 2026, air travelers without a REAL ID or other acceptable form of ID will be directed to use TSA Confirm.ID, a form of identity verification that is valid for a 10-day travel period. Travelers using TSA Confirm.ID must pay a \$45 fee, either online or in person at the airport.

In the world of unmanned aerial systems (UAS), new federal procurement and information control restrictions took effect on December 22, 2025. Federal agencies and entities that receive federal funding must apply safeguards for the protection of federal information, including but not limited to considerations for the country of origin of UAS. For more information, refer to the [Office of Management and Budget Memorandum M-26-02³](#).

Additionally, the FAA released a Program Guidance Letter (PGL) on January 6, 2026, to clarify the eligibility of hazardous chemical mitigation projects for Airport Improvement Program (AIP) funding. Under this change, contamination mitigation as part of a larger AIP-eligible project may be eligible as an included cost. For more information, refer to the [PGL⁴](#).

In The Works...

This phase of the system plan concludes in 2026, and we would like to thank all our readers for their excellent ideas over the last five years. Because of your insights, we have established:

- new publicly available reports,
- an informational video series,
- helpful links to find out more about Alaska aviation and national resources,

- revised airport classifications
- new CIMP checklists to facilitate need identification and project development,
- improved methodology for inventorying airport facility elements,
- an aviation environmental data hub,
- enhanced air carrier data,
- airport resiliency recommendations,

- linkages to Alaska's community information and to FAA datasets, and
- countless other planning and website enhancements.

This phase may be ending, but our work isn't done! Please continue to send your ideas to the AASP team at Rebecca.Douglas@alaska.gov and keep an eye out for future updates.



AirTime

Q How does the AASP serve everyone?

A The State of Alaska is committed to serving all Alaskans and the AASP team continues improving the website to make it more accessible to all users. Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 requires electronic and information technology developed, procured, maintained, or used by the federal government to be accessible to people with disabilities. Agencies must ensure that this technology is accessible to employees and members of the public with disabilities to the extent it does not pose an “undue burden.”

Following these guidelines makes content more accessible to a wider range of people with disabilities, including blindness and low vision, deafness and hearing loss, limited movement, speech disabilities, and photosensitivity and some accommodation for learning disabilities and cognitive limitations.

To learn more about the work the State of Alaska is doing to increase the accessibility and usability of its online content, please visit:

- [State of Alaska ADA Coordinator's Office and Policy Statement⁵](#)
- [State of Alaska Administrative Order No. 129⁶](#)
- [State of Alaska Administrative Order No. 262⁷](#)

If you have trouble using our website, please contact the DOT&PF Webmaster for help. We may be able to offer an alternate format or update our content to make it more accessible.



Coach Class Home Page Tools

By Annette Lapkowski, PE, B2Gnow/BlackCat Project Manager

As a reminder, the AASP has great available content on the Home Page. On the right menu, you can find some of the most popular items as well as the newest information, such as:

1. [Alaska DOT&PF Airport Public Comment Map⁸](#) – A public map forum to share information about Alaska airports
2. [Photo Contest Entry/Release Form⁹](#) – The AASP Photo Contest is open to everyone!
3. [Willy Widgeon Coloring Book¹⁰](#) – Runways are for Airplanes
4. [DOT&PF Website \(DOT&PF Aviation and Airports\)¹¹](#) – Keep Alaska Moving through service and infrastructure
5. [LRTP 2055¹²](#) – Tell DOT&PF your story to inform the Long-Range Transportation Plan

3.



4.



5.

ADA Section 508 Compliance Checklist

- Provide text alternatives for images
- Ensure keyboard accessibility
- Use descriptive headings and labels
- Confirm accessible forms
- Ensure color contrast is sufficient
- Make multimedia accessible with captions

- Ensure resize text functionality
- Provide clear navigation
- Accessibility statement
- User testing and validation
- Regular updates

¹dot.alaska.gov/storms/2025storms/

²<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/AASP-Survey>

³<https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/M-26-02-Ensuring-Government-Use-of-Secure-Unmanned-Aircraft-Systems-and-Supporting-United-States-Producers.pdf>

⁴www.faa.gov/airports/aip/guidance_letters/aip_pgl_26_03

⁵<https://doa.alaska.gov/ada/>

⁶<https://gov.alaska.gov/admin-orders/administrative-order-no-129/>

⁷<https://gov.alaska.gov/admin-orders/administrative-order-no-262/> ⁸<https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/a614eca7713467a899c6ccb346ba2e7>

⁹https://www.alaskaasp.com/media/3673/aasp_photo_release_form.pdf

¹⁰https://www.alaskaasp.com/media/4200/willy_widgeon_printable_coloring_book.pdf

¹¹<https://dot.alaska.gov/airport-portal.shtml>

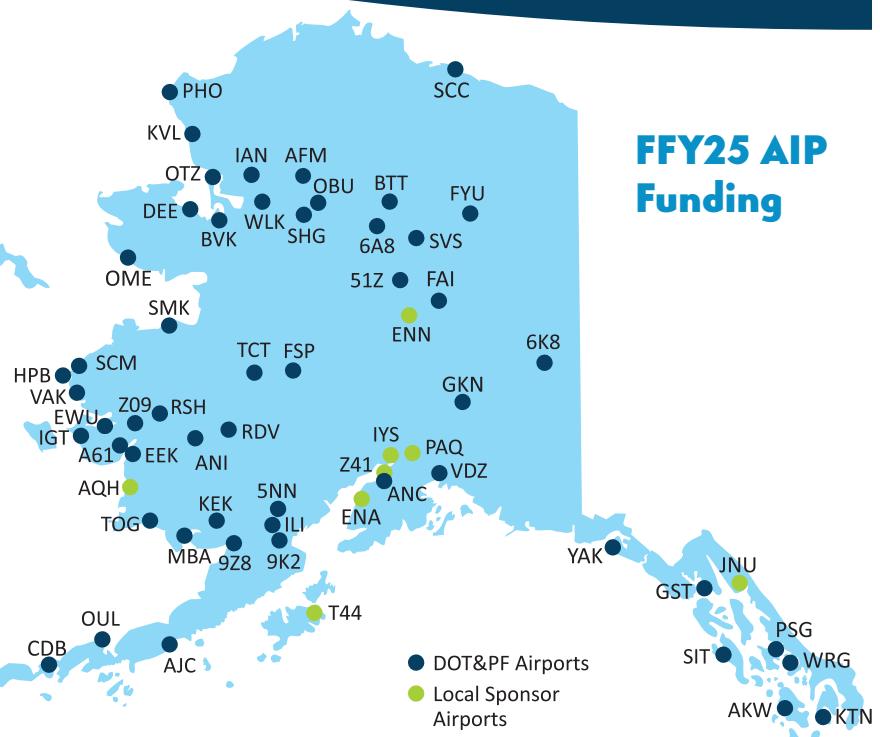
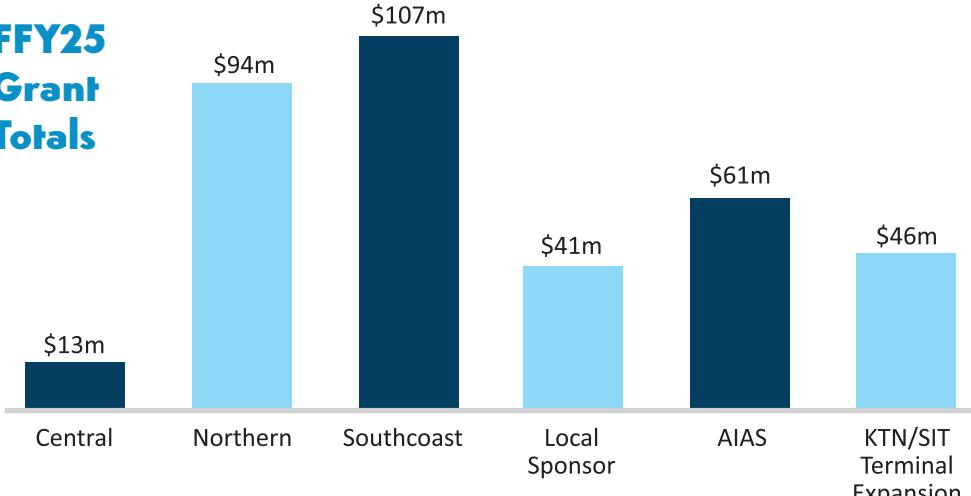
¹²<https://publicinput.com/alaskaLRTP2055>

¹³<https://scholarworks.alaska.edu/handle/11122/16273>

FFY25 Grant Summary

During federal fiscal year 2025 (FFY25), Alaskan airports (including DOT&PF and local sponsors) received 95 federal grants through the Airport Improvement Program (AIP). The AIP grants comprised a total investment of about \$363 million in Alaska's airport system, with individual awards ranging from \$49,678 reconstructing the rotating beacon at Nenana Municipal Airport to \$68,776,759 for rehabilitating the runway and taxiway at Kodiak Airport. The distribution of AIP funds across DOT&PF regions, local sponsors, and the Alaska International Airport System (AIAS) is summarized in the bar chart and displayed geographically in the map. The most common awards were for projects to replace snow removal equipment (42), rehabilitate runways (11), reseal/resurface runways (10), reseal/resurface aprons (9), reconstruct runway lighting (8), and rehabilitate taxiways (8).

FFY25 Grant Totals



FFY25 AIP Funding

Alaska Aviation Weather Infrastructure: Outage Patterns & Strategic Prioritization

A recent report published by the University of Alaska – Anchorage Institute of Social and Economic Research, in collaboration with Woolpert, analyzed historical data about aviation weather station outages in the state. A safe aviation network is dependent on weather reporting, and Alaska is dependent

on its aviation network. Funding to build out and maintain a resilient, widespread weather reporting network is essential. Read the full report [here](#)¹³. Contact Dr. Michael Jones at msjones6@alaska.edu for more information.

The AASP project is managed by the State of Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF), Division of Statewide Aviation. Additional assistance is provided by the Aviation Advisory Board, private aviation organizations, local airport sponsors, air carriers, aviation-related businesses, and pilots.

The preparation of this document was supported in part with financial assistance through the Airport Improvement Program from the Federal Aviation Administration (AIP Grant 3-02-000-033-2024) as provided under Title 49 USC § 47104. The contents do not necessarily reflect the official views or policy of the FAA. Acceptance of this report by the FAA does not in any way constitute a commitment on the part of the United States to participate in any development depicted therein, nor does it indicate that the proposed development is environmentally acceptable in accordance with appropriate public laws.