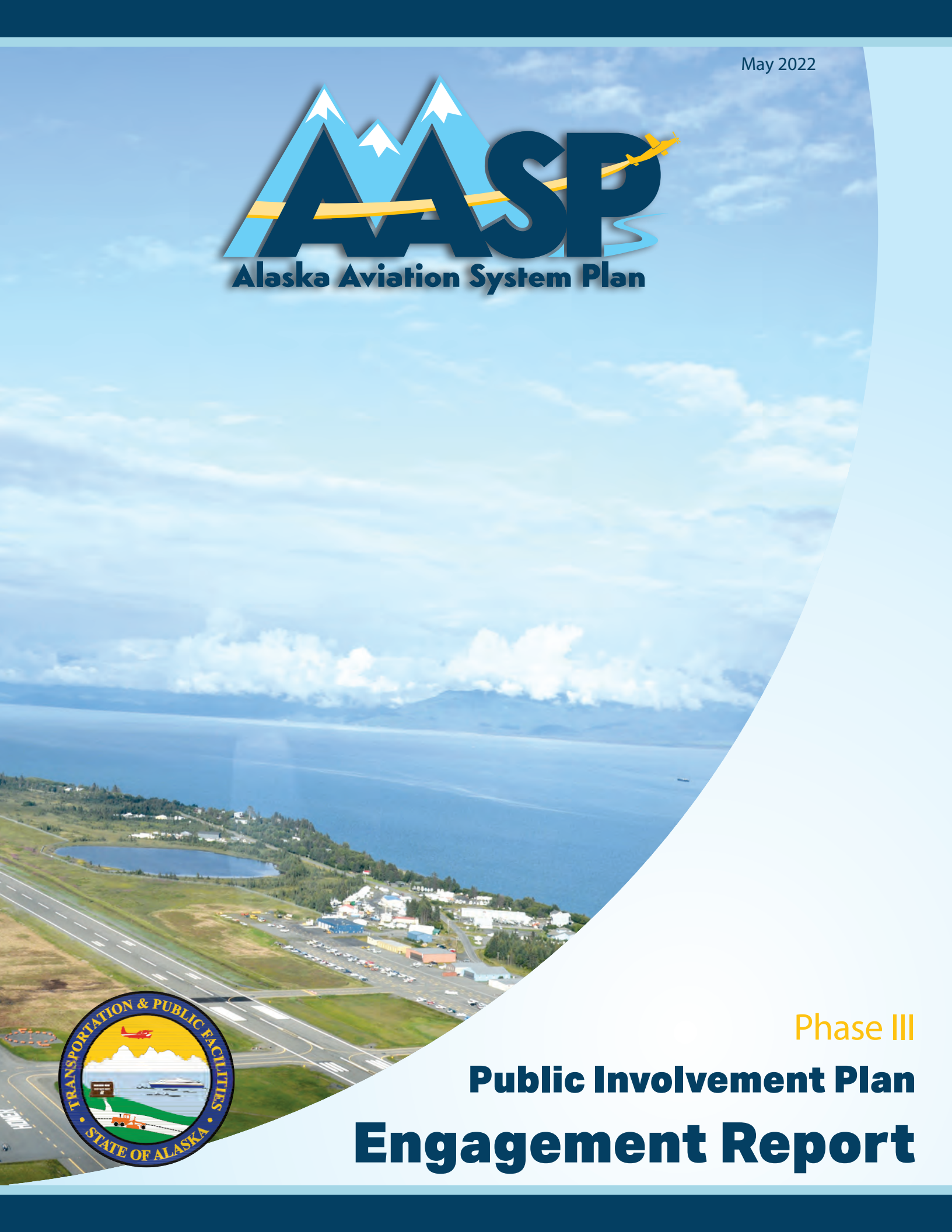


May 2022



Phase III

# **Public Involvement Plan Engagement Report**

# PIP Engagement Report

AASP Public Involvement Plan – Phase III

## Contents

I.	Introduction.....	2
II.	Engagement Activities.....	2
A.	Community Events .....	2
B.	AASP Newsletters.....	2
C.	Stakeholder Email Updates .....	3
D.	Photo Contest.....	4
E.	Fact Sheets .....	4
F.	AASP Website .....	4
G.	Surveys.....	4
III.	Looking Ahead .....	5
A.	Public Involvement & Newsletter Coordination.....	5
B.	Tribal Outreach Mailers.....	5
C.	Increased Social Media Presence.....	5
D.	Additional Activities & Events .....	6
IV.	Appendices.....	7

## Appendices

Appendix A: AASP Business Card

Appendix B: AASP Spring 2021 Newsletter

Appendix C: AASP Summer 2021 Newsletter

Appendix D: AASP Fall 2021 Newsletter

Appendix E: AASP Winter 2022 Newsletter

Appendix F: AASP Spring 2022 Newsletter

Appendix G: What is a System Plan Fact Sheet

Appendix H: CIMP Inspection Program Fact Sheet

Appendix I: APEB Project Prioritization Process Fact Sheet

Appendix J: AIP Project Process Fact Sheet

## I. Introduction

This report summarizes public involvement and outreach activities completed for the AASP effort in Phase III through early 2022. The following public engagement activities were completed following the guidelines laid out in the AASP Phase III Public Involvement Plan (PIP) updated January 11, 2021.

Due to restrictions on in-person gatherings because of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, in-person public involvement for the AASP was more limited in 2021 than anticipated. However, significant effort was invested in AASP newsletter and fact sheet development, website updates, and a community survey to inform improvements to the CIMP inspection process.

## II. Engagement Activities

### A. Community Events

The AASP sponsored a table at the 2022 DOT&PF M&O Conference at the Anchorage Marriott Downtown, May 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup>, 2022. AASP team members provided attendees with information about the AASP and distributed informational materials including fact sheets, newsletters, stickers, and AASP “business cards” (see **Appendix A**). Team members also worked hard to promote the AASP photo contest, and a drone was raffled off to a lucky M&O staff member.

During 2021 and 2022, RESPEC AASP staff attended the Great Alaskan Aviation Gathering held at the Alaska State Fairgrounds and Palmer Municipal Airport from May 8-9<sup>th</sup>, 2021 and May 6-8<sup>th</sup>, 2022. Team members provided coverage for a table shared with representatives from DOT&PF Statewide Aviation, the international airports (ANC and FAI), and the UAF Alaska Center for UAS Integration (ACUASI) program. AASP fact sheets, newsletters, stickers, and business cards were shared with attendees and the photo contest was promoted.

### B. AASP Newsletters

To date, five AASP newsletters have been published, including for spring 2021, summer 2021, fall 2021, winter 2022, and spring 2022 (See **Appendices B-F**).

The spring 2021 newsletter AASP Project Manager’s update focused on gathering feedback from aviation stakeholders about the most pressing issues facing Alaskan aviation and reported on three recently completed CIMP inspections. This edition also announced the AASP Photo Contest and established the core newsletter sections that would appear in following editions, including FAA News & Updates, AASP Spotlight, Airtime, Coach Class, In the Works, and Tech Shop.



The summer 2021 newsletter featured a story on coordination between the Sitka and Skagway airports to salvage and transport airfield light fixtures and components from Sitka to Skagway for reuse after Sitka upgraded to an LED system. The summer Project Update reported on the ongoing airport inventory and facility needs update, development of a rural airport project process fact sheet, and COVID-19 impacts on Alaska air traffic elements including flights, seats, passengers, freight, and mail. Skagway Airport Manager Shaun McKnight was the focus of summer's AASP Spotlight. A back page feature article focused on the rollout and testing of the FAA's new Weather Camera Program in Alaska.

The fall 2021 newsletter provided updates on summer CIMP inspections, automated weather observation system (AWOS) station implementation at eight Alaskan airports, and upcoming work on updating performance measures, classifications, and airport needs. The AASP Spotlight featured Bethel Airport Manager Joe Laroux. A back page feature story included a map of CIMP inspection status for DOT&PF and local sponsor airports across the state.

The winter 2022 newsletter kicked off the new year with a slightly longer format of 6 pages to accommodate a special historical article exploring the relationship between the development of Alaska's aviation system and roads. An update was provided about ongoing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on passenger enplanements from 2019-2020 and anticipated new funding streams from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). The project update covered AASP website updates and the kickoff of an airport resiliency study and associated technical advisory group (TAG) meetings. The AASP Spotlight focused on St. Mary's Airport Manager Erik Weingarth and a back page article shared 2021 CIMP Survey preliminary results to inform improvements to the process.

The spring 2022 newsletter revisited pandemic impacts on aviation with a deep dive into recent cargo trends in Alaska and nationally. The project manager's update covered the imminent release of the Classifications and Performance Measures report and ongoing updates to the CIMP process. FAI Equipment Maintenance Foreman John Erickson was featured in spring's AASP Spotlight on M&O. AirTime, Coach Class, and In the Works sections covered updates to ACIP reports, the facilities tab, a new saved search feature, and ongoing CIMP checklist improvements. A historical feature article focused on the stories behind the names of four of Alaska's airports—Sitka, Unalaska, Kotzebue, and Cordova. A back page feature included a map and article about the airport construction projects happening during 2022.

### C. Stakeholder Email Updates

Periodic updates were provided to the AASP stakeholders email list by the DOT&PF Project Manager for each newsletter, fact sheet, and various project milestones.



#### D. Photo Contest

A photo contest was held during 2021 and announced with the spring 2021 newsletter. A reminder to submit photos was also included in the fall 2021 newsletter. While entries were low for the photo contest in 2021, the AASP team was able to solicit great photos for the newsletter, fact sheets, and other plan applications from key contacts throughout the Alaska aviation system. Additional strategies are being considered to increase engagement with the photo contest if it is held again in 2022 including utilizing the official DOT&PF social media channels and sharing an announcement with air carriers to increase participation.

#### E. Fact Sheets

Four fact sheets were developed during Phase III, What is a System Plan?, CIMP Inspection Program, APEB Project Prioritization Process, and AIP Project Process (See **Appendices G-J**). Additionally, work is ongoing on the Classifications & Performance Measures fact sheet, planned for completion in spring 2022.

#### F. AASP Website

Continuous improvements to the AASP website were made during 2021 to improve usability and user experience. Significant updates were made to the external Documents page so that users can easily navigate between documents from various phases and view new chapters in Phase III as they are produced. Improvements were made to the Facilities tab to increase usability, new grant history reports were added, CIMP media uploads were streamlined, and login steps were simplified for DOT&PF users.

#### G. Surveys

In November 2021, a survey was conducted to gather Capital Improvement and Maintenance Program (CIMP) user feedback on potential improvements to the process and tablet application. The survey was distributed electronically to CIMP users including DOT&PF and other inspectors. The survey included eight questions asking respondents about perceived challenges and opportunities for improvements in every step of the CIMP survey including to the app, pre-inspection, inspection frequency, checklists, upload and processing, needs input, and review stages. The survey received sixteen responses that provided valuable insights to the AASP project team and Technical Advisory Group (TAG) on process improvements.

### III. Looking Ahead

The following sections outline proposed public involvement events and activities for 2022 and beyond. PIP elements including the AASP newsletter, fact sheet development, website, and stakeholder email updates are expected to continue similarly in 2022. Additional proposed activities include improved coordination with DOT&PF Statewide Aviation Public Involvement Officers (PIOs) for social media engagement, coordination with the Plane Talk editor for newsletter schedule, targeted tribal outreach via mailings and informational packets, increased online promotion of the photo contest, and attendance at several in-person community events, if feasible within COVID-19 mitigation measures. Additional outreach may also be conducted to support the Airport Resiliency Study in fall 2022.

#### A. Public Involvement & Newsletter Coordination

For 2022 and onward, the AASP project team would like to increase coordination with existing DOT&PF Statewide Aviation resources to streamline schedules and strengthen the social media and online presence of the AASP. The AASP newsletter editor plans to coordinate with the DOT&PF Plane Talk editor to stagger newsletter publishing dates and see if there are other areas where collaboration can occur. Additionally, the AASP hopes to explore greater coordination and engagement with the DOT&PF PIOs to facilitate improved information sharing via existing DOT&PF social media channels of AASP materials such as newsletters and fact sheets. Inclusion of AASP materials on the Gov Delivery platform could also be explored to boost outreach.

#### B. Tribal Outreach Mailers

During 2022, work will begin on developing AASP informational packets for outreach via mail to tribal and remote communities. The packets will include a cover letter from the DOT&PF Deputy Commissioner, selected fact sheets of interest, and printed copies of one or more AASP newsletters. The AASP public involvement team will work with in-house RESPEC tribal engagement experts and coordinate closely with the DOT&PF Tribal Outreach Coordinator to ensure that the information included is relevant and useful to Alaska's tribal and remote community members.

#### C. Increased Social Media Presence

As discussed above, increasing the AASP's social media presence could improve the overall breadth of AASP outreach. Greater coordination with DOT&PF Statewide Aviation to utilize existing social media channels on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and/or TikTok would work towards this objective.

#### D. Additional Activities & Events

Additional in-person engagement events can be added for 2022 and following years based on Public Involvement Plan Technical Advisory Team feedback and current COVID-19 mitigation measures. Potential events that AASP staff may conduct outreach at include the 2022 Talkeetna Fly-In (June), 2022 Elmendorf Air Show (July 30-31), the 2023 Valdez Fly-In (typically in early May) and the Eielson Air Force Base Air Show (TBD in 2023).

The RESPEC AASP project team looks forward to additional public involvement recommendations from the PIP Technical Advisory Team for 2022-2023.



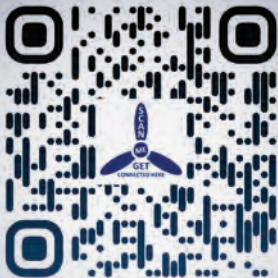
## IV. Appendices



## Alaska Aviation System Plan

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

*“All the airports, all the connections, all landing in one place”*



Alaska Aviation System Plan Phase III  
Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities - Division of Statewide Aviation  
Becca Douglas, C.M. – *Project Manager*  
[StatewideAviation@alaska.gov](mailto:StatewideAviation@alaska.gov)



# AASP

Alaska Aviation System Plan

SPRING 2021

## NEWSLETTER

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

### AASP PHOTO CONTEST

A new element of the Alaska Aviation System Plan (AASP) project is a photo contest. The photo contest is part of the Public Involvement Plan and aims to promote interest in the project and highlight aviation across the State of Alaska.

The contest is open to everyone. Judging is done by volunteers selected from the community. The Contest Entry & Release form is available on the AASP website [www.AlaskaASP.com](http://www.AlaskaASP.com). A separate form is required for each photo submitted.

The winning photo will be recognized in the quarterly newsletter and on the AASP website. All submitted photos are eligible for inclusion in future reports, fact sheets and on the website. Please fill in the space on the form that indicates how you want your photo credit to read, the photo title, location, or any additional information to be included when the photo is published.

The contest entry form also serves as a release to publish your photo, with appropriate photo credit, in the newsletter and other AASP reports and documents. Submitted photos will be uploaded to the AASP photo library and available to the public.

We look forward to your entry and expanding our library of great aviation related photos.



Mike Brown/Kodiak Airport

### AASP PROJECT UPDATE

By Angela Smith, PE, CM, RESPEC Aviation Group Manager

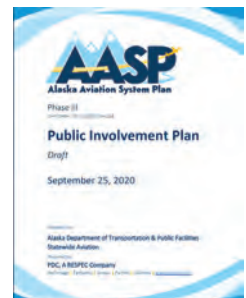
Phase III of the Alaska Aviation System Plan is off to a fresh start with a new team, a new logo and a newly revitalized energy to serve the needs of aviation in the State of Alaska.

The latest Public Involvement Plan is posted on the AASP website. [www.AlaskaASP.com](http://www.AlaskaASP.com)

The team completed the initial survey of stakeholders and the preliminary results were presented at the Fall DOT&PF Planner Meeting.

The survey asked what are the most pressing issues facing the Alaska aviation system today? Of 234 responses; 40.2% listed funding as the primary or causal issue.

In addition to conducting surveys, the AASP team is reaching out to planners and aviation professionals across Alaska to determine the most pressing issues and what the system plan can do to best aid those responsible for preserving the system.



#### IN THIS ISSUE:

Photo Contest Rules & Entry

AASP Project Update

Website News & Features

Upcoming Meetings & Events

Team Member Profile

FAA New & Updates

Drone Update

*continued on page 2*

### Project Update continued

The impacts of COVID-19 and limited travel are impacting not only the Alaska aviation system but the ability for the planning team to reach out personally and attend public events. We have pivoted to online meetings and calls as we continue to set the outline for Phase III.

The team was able to conduct Capital Improvement and Maintenance Program (CIMP) inspections at three on-road or road accessible airports in September and October. The intent of the inspections was to not only inspect the airports but to test the iPad application and assess the download and review process.

Several possible improvements were identified and will be discussed at an upcoming CIMP work group meeting. The CIMP work group will be established later on this summer.

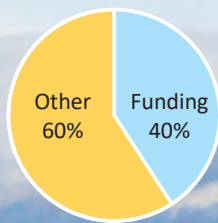


During the Girdwood inspection Ryan Marlow demonstrated the capabilities of utilizing drone technology to aid airport inspections. While the practical application of this exciting technology is still in the future, the AASP planning team and DOT&PF continue to explore this and other new technology to assist in airport planning and development.

## Most pressing issues facing Alaska aviation

### Top 7 issues

- Fleet analysis, forecasting and airport classifications
- Weather reporting and lack of remote weather information
- Qualified staff/training
- Climate impacts to aviation infrastructure
- Regulations
- COVID-19 impacts for rural air service and the Alaska aviation system
- Potential loss of bypass mail and essential air service subsidies



## FAA NEWS & UPDATES

The latest in a series of the FAA Podcast program, **The Air Up There**

is titled [Flora, Fauna, and Flight](#) and features industry professionals and the latest work being done to help prevent bird strikes.

The FAA has an entire series of podcasts “for people who are curious about the wide world of aviation.”

Join the FAA as we nerd out about the future of flight, drones, and ways to make the National Airspace System safer, smarter, and more efficient.” Follow the link above or go to [www.FAA.gov/podcasts/](http://www.FAA.gov/podcasts/) to view archived programs and subscribe to the newsletter.

On March 22, 2021 the FAA Airports Division released an updated list of Current FAA Advisory Circulars Required for Use in AIP Funded and PFC Approved Projects.

The latest Draft AC 150/5390-2D, Heliport Design is available for comment until April 5, 2021 and an updated Engineering Brief No. 102, Asphalt Treated Permeable Base Course was released on March 25, 2021.

Visit the FAA Airports Home Page <https://www.faa.gov/airports/> any time for all the latest information, news and updates.



## AASP Team Member Spotlight



Each quarter the newsletter takes the opportunity to introduce a member of the team working on the system plan project.

This first month we are pleased to introduce you to Jill Marshall. Jill is the creative genius behind the new logo and design aspects of our templates, reports and fact sheets.

Jill Marshall came to Alaska in 1975 for a three month stay that never ended. Jill started her Fairbanks-based graphic design firm Marshall Arts Design in 1988.

An organized artist may sound like an oxymoron but it's an apt description of Jill. She prides herself on her ability to take complex information and make it understandable.







## AirTime

AASP App

**Q** Sometimes data the AASP gets old, what are you doing to help?

**A** It's easy to ask for data to be provided but the maintenance of the data over time is the part that requires ongoing effort. We recently added in new information on Pavement Condition Index (PCI) Data including the ability to store archive data in the system when new data is added (Facilities > PCI Data). A process is now in place to provide monthly updates to Facilities data for Enplaned/Deplaned - Passengers, Freight, and Mail which is sourced from the USDOT Bureau of Transportation Statistics (Facilities > Statistics).

There are certainly more data connections to come and we can all do our part by updating data in small increments over time - that way we are all keeping the data fresh - which is the basis for good decision making.

**Q** I recently completed an Airport Layout Plan (ALP), is there anything for me to do in the AASP?

**A** Yes, please! Within the Facility, please update the approval date for the ALP on the General tab in the System Planning Data section. Since the link to the document shouldn't change, everyone can view the new ALP on the Facilities tab under Documents/Links (Facilities > General & Documents/Links).

**Q** Can you explain the new CIMP Inspection notifications?

**A** Sure. You will get a notification that a CIMP inspection has been completed if the inspected airport is part of your user profile/permissions. In mid-January, a CIMP was completed for BREVIG MISSION, so everyone with the airport or Northern Region received an email along with the link to the inspection. Completed CIMP inspections are also available under Facilities > CIMP inspection, CIMP inspection or through the Reports tab (Reports > CIMP)!

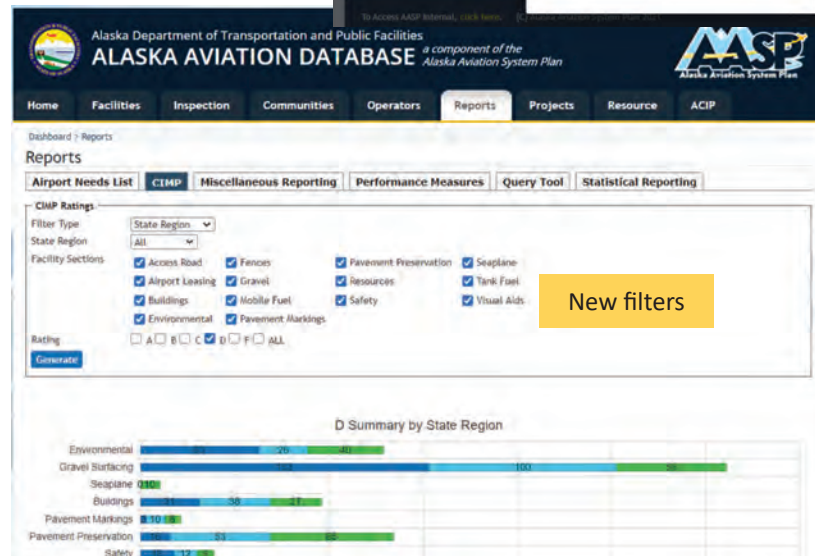
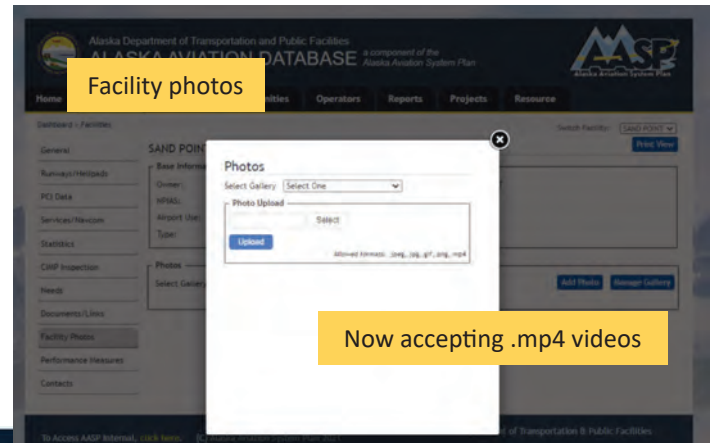


By Annette Lapkowski, P.E., Panther International Project Manager

## Coach Class

AASP Website How-To

Facility photos are more than just photos; you now have the capability to save mp4 video into the gallery. We know this is important when photos only tell part of the story. The user must have permissions set to allow them to add photos prior to uploading video.



The CIMP reports have new filters; you can now filter on all ratings, not just D&F and you can summarize all the results in graph format.

## In The Works ...

The AASP team is working with the DOT&PF Information Technology to enable Alaska.gov users to log in with their DOT&PF email address and password. This means one less password to remember – and for most of us – that's terrific news.

Airports, Consultants, and other users without an Alaska.gov email address will still access the system (username and password are not changing).

For those using the CIMP iPad application for Airport Inspections, you will be able to manage your own iPad login information from the AASP My Account page.





## TechShop

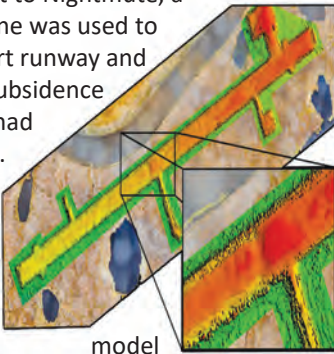
### AASP Website Information

## Is that a drone flying at the airport?

By Ryan Marlow, UAS Drone Coordinator,  
Statewide Aviation

Why yes it is! Starting in 2019 DOT&PF evaluated the potential benefits and significant cost savings of deploying unmanned aircraft, commonly referred to as drones, to assist in airport inspections. For the first time ever drones are enabling DOT&PF to not only collect high resolution imagery, but assist in the creation of a growing list of geospatial deliverables from just a single flight. Through airborne collection methods like SFM (Structure From Motion) and LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging), drone data is used to create 3D surface models, detect and document changes over time or even flag areas of interest that require further review by an inspector.

In a recent visit to Nightmute, a fixed wing drone was used to scan the airport runway and investigate a subsidence anomaly that had been reported. The drone was able to collect imagery and create a 3D surface model to visualize what exactly was going on.



In order to operate in the airport environment DOT&PF was issued a Certificate of Authorization (COA) from FAA for operating as a Public Unmanned Aircraft. Under the COA, DOT&PF is authorized to develop photogrammetry and LiDAR standards for UAS and respond to subsidence in the Western and Arctic regions of the State.

Seward Airport has started evaluating the use of AI to assist with FAA compliance and anomaly detection in a process called "Deep



DOT&PF is utilizing drone technology combined with advanced computer analysis to pinpoint FAA compliance issues at the Seward airport.

Learning." By training artificial intelligence to automatically analyze high resolution drone imagery and detect pavement cracking, security issues or even vegetation encroachment into Part 77 surfaces, we are able to highlight areas of interest that

require further investigation while inspectors are onsite. The use of drones is showing great promise for assisting DOT&PF in future airport inspections.

For more information visit [dot.alaska.gov/uas](http://dot.alaska.gov/uas)



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## From Sitka to Skagway: Runway Lighting Recycle

In 2019 and 2020 the Sitka Airport replaced their older quartz runway and taxiway lights with energy efficient LED systems. Toward the end of the project, airport manager Kelly Boddy sent an email to managers across the region with specifics of the components salvaged from the lighting replacement project. Skagway Airport Manager Shaun McKnight and Southeast District Superintendent Scott Gray recognized the opportunity to upgrade and extend the life of the forty plus year old lights at the Skagway Airport.

Transporting the light fixtures and associated components from Sitka to Skagway required a team effort; getting a transport truck to Sitka via ferry, pack and load the lights, back on a ferry to Juneau, transfer to a Skagway bound ferry and then Shaun and his crew still had to disassemble and retro fit the lights to the Skagway system.

The end result was nothing short of “brilliant.”

The new lights and globes are much brighter, replacement parts are available and the glass globes and clamps are more resistant to the constant curiosity of the local raven population.



Skagway runway.



Old taxiway light with burn hole.

Deputy Commissioner John Binder expressed his appreciation for the Skagway crew and all DOT&PF employees in the following quote. “As Alaska faces resource challenges, responsible stewardship is essential to Keeping Alaska Moving. Though oftentimes not the easiest path, our Maintenance and Operations team continues to overcome many funding challenges by maximizing non-traditional resources and re-purposing equipment to improve the safety and operations at our airports.”

If you have a great story to share about any airport employees or projects, contact an AASP project consultant listed on page 4. We look forward to highlighting other innovative employees and stories of creative solutions in future newsletters.



Skagway's old and “new” runway lights.

## AASP PROJECT UPDATE

*By Angela Smith, PE, CM, RESPEC Aviation Group Manager*

The airport inventory and facility needs update is underway. Much of the last several months were spent planning how to efficiently and effectively (1) validate all information within the aviation facility database, (2) revamp the airport inventory needs book, and (3) establish direct data connections to FAA's NOTAM and AIP grant history. In addition to holding several technical advisory work group meetings, the project team will complete 9 Capital Improvement and Maintenance Program (CIMP) inspections this summer. We hope to see you out in your community!

*continued on page 2*

### IN THIS ISSUE:

- |                         |                        |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| Runway Lighting Recycle | Team Member Profile    |
| AASP Project Update     | FAA New & Updates      |
| Website News & Features | Weather Camera Program |
| AASP App                |                        |

### AASP Project Update continued

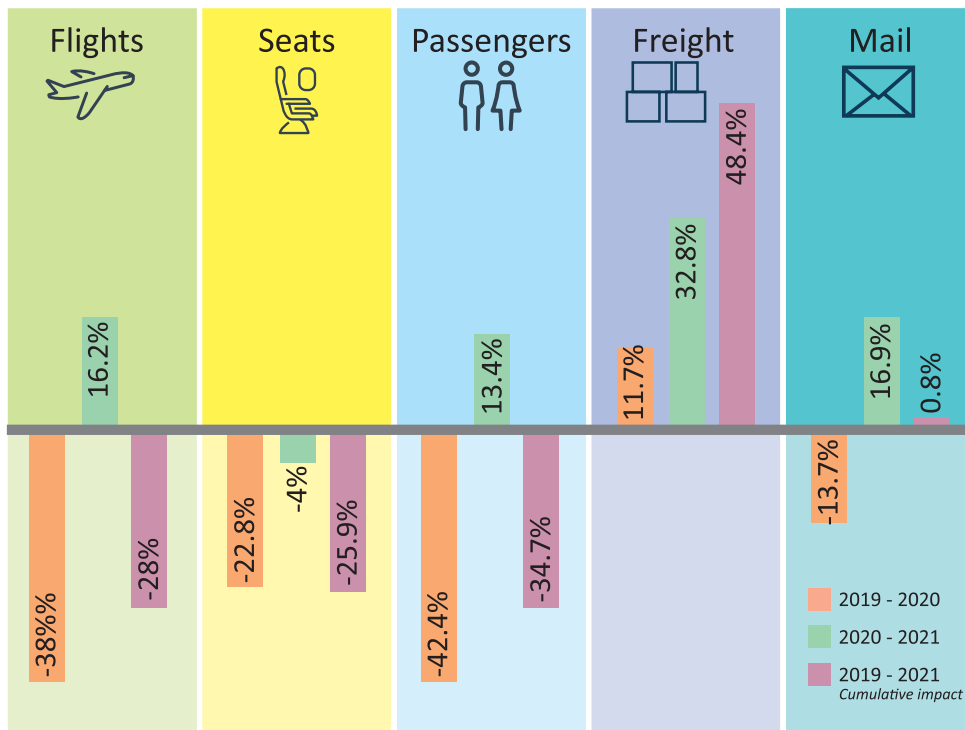
We have a new fact sheet in the hopper that many of you may appreciate. It will line out the process DOT&PF uses for rural airport project development, funding, and construction. I am looking forward to sharing the information with you.

Influence of the COVID19 Pandemic on air traffic became apparent in March of 2020. The following graph shows percentage changes air traffic elements in Alaska (minus

pass-through cargo flights) between March of 2019, 2020, and 2021. Flight availability and passenger volumes rebounded some by March of 2021, and freight volume was much higher than pre-COVID19 times. The number of seats available has lagged most likely because the carriers are transitioning aircraft away from freight capacity and back to passenger capacity.

### Change in Alaska Air Traffic Elements

Source: U.S. Bureau of Transportation Statistics, Transtats Data, Form 41, T-100 Data, Alaska Domestic Segment and Market by U.S. Carriers.



### AASP Spotlight on M&O

Skagway airport manager Shaun McKnight was one of the prime players in the Skagway airport lighting project highlighted on page 1. Shaun and his four-person crew care for the Skagway airport, three bridges, 10.5 miles of unpaved roads, and 14.5 miles of mountain pass highway that transitions through 12 active avalanche paths.

It is impossible to interview Shaun without recognizing the immense pride he takes in the Skagway Airport, his crew and fellow airport managers in Southeast Alaska. Shaun is just one of the many DOT&PF employees around the state finding ways to keep our airports open for their communities, despite budget reductions and challenging conditions.



Shaun McKnight, Skagway Airport Foreman.



## FAA NEWS & UPDATES

**FAA Alaska Aviation  
Safety Initiative (FAASI)  
Virtual Briefing**

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) held a virtual briefing on the FAA Alaska Aviation Safety Initiative (FAASI) on May 6, 2021, from 9:00–10:30 a.m. Alaska Daylight Time (AKDT) to discuss the findings in the FAASI Interim Report.

The FAA evaluated current and planned efforts to address aviation safety challenges in Alaska. During this briefing, the FAA shared key highlights and opportunities and answered questions.

The FAASI Interim Report (PDF) is available at [https://www.faa.gov/news/conferences\\_events/faasi/media/FAASI\\_Interim\\_Report.pdf](https://www.faa.gov/news/conferences_events/faasi/media/FAASI_Interim_Report.pdf)

The FAA will offer individual stakeholder meeting opportunities via Zoom or teleconference between May and July 2021 to receive stakeholder feedback vital to our fact-finding efforts. The information collected during these outreach events will be incorporated into the FAASI Final Report.

Beginning May 18, 2021, two follow-on webinars will be scheduled each week until July 29, 2021. These webinars will be for smaller more focused audiences and topics. They are scheduled for Tuesdays (1300-1430 Alaska, 1400-1530 Pacific, 1600-1730 Central, 1700-1830 Eastern) and Thursdays (1000-1130 Alaska, 1100-1230 Pacific, 1300-1430 Central, 1400-1530 Eastern). For those webinars we will receive "requested" discussion topics in advance.

Use FAA Sign-Up Genius to schedule an individual outreach meeting on the interim report.

For individual outreach meeting-related questions, contact [9-AAL-FAASI@faa.gov](mailto:9-AAL-FAASI@faa.gov)







## AirTime

### Q What's new with CIMP inspections?

**A** You can now download all the photos from a CIMP Inspection as a zip file and as a plus, the photos retain their GPS coordinates. Within any inspection, select the Show All Photos button and you will see an option on the top right to Download All (Facilities > CIMP Inspection > Select the Inspection > Show All Photos > Download All).

### Q I see some new NPIAS Airport Categories; can you explain that?

**A** The FAA National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems (NPIAS) identifies airports, the roles they serve, and eligibility for federal funding under the Airport Improvement Program (AIP). Phase III of the project updated terminology in the system to better correlate with the FAA. Check out the ? icon to learn more. (Facilities > General > NPIAS Level of Service).

### Q Are there any new reports?

**A** New reports are planned for later this year; the team is currently focused on updating several current ones, including all Statistical reports to show the graphical and tabular data more clearly. These are available to download into PDF or Excel (Reports > Statistical Reporting).

### Q I don't have a lot of time; how can I find out the latest on AASP?

**A** We get it. So, we added special section on our public website (alaskaasp.com) where we post the newest information. Look for our AASP flyer to guide you to the fresh links.



By Annette Lapkowski, P.E., Panther International Project Manager

## Coach Class

Need your CIMP password?

**Update iPad password**

**Use these for iPad access**

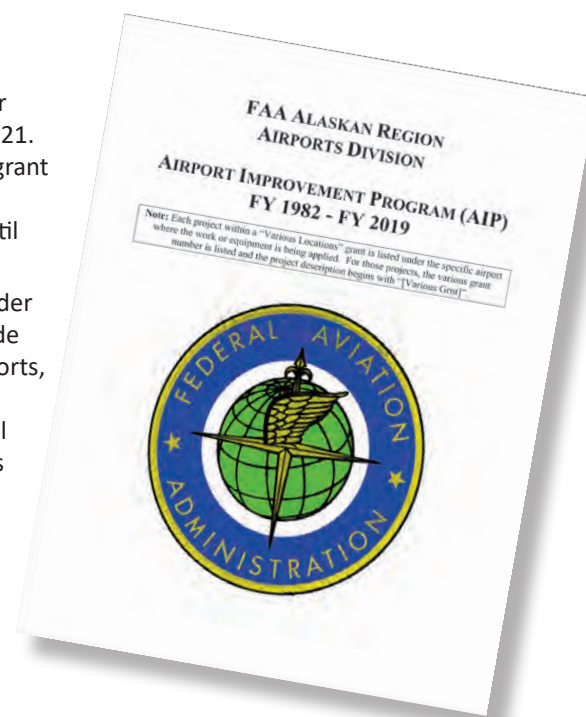
Here you'll find your username on the left side along with your password which you can update.

For @alaska.gov users, keep in mind that this password is only for the iPad, DOT&PF staff use their state email address and regular LDAP password to login into the AASP.

## In The Works ...

A new AIP grant tool is currently under design, with rollout planned for fall 2021. The tool will produce a report on AIP grant history, similar to the FAA's AIP Grant History booklet published annually until 2019.

The information will be searchable under a new, internal Facilities tab and include grant closeout dates for all NPIAS airports, including those managed by local sponsors. This means that all users will be able to see prior and current grants awarded, identify upcoming closeout deadlines, and produce reports. The addition of this information can help determine the age of existing infrastructure and prioritize improvements in the future.



## TechShop

### AASP Website Information

## Weather Camera Program

The FAA Alaska Weather Camera Program is testing a new technology, based on the FAA's existing weather camera network in Alaska, aimed at making it safer to fly into remote airports and landing areas. This technology is called the Visual Weather Observation System (VWOS) and it is an advanced camera system that incorporates surface weather sensors into the camera platform to provide pilots with both visual and textual weather observations. The system is comprised of a suite of weather sensors and camera images that collectively observe and report important data fields including wind speed and direction, cloud height, visibility, present weather, temperature, dew point, and pressure. The VWOS is a low cost, advanced non-certified advisory weather system that uses automated processes to self-check and validate its operations and data outputs. Weather information is provided to users through a test website, and in the near future will be provided to pilots in the cockpit via radio transmission.

The VWOS is currently being evaluated, through early 2022, with a limited number of air carriers at four Alaska airports - Palmer, Eek, Healy River, and Tatitlek. Technical performance of the VWOS system is being assessed to demonstrate that it sufficiently meets the operational need for advisory weather. This involves assessment of meteorological accuracy against other established weather observation sources, system reliability and availability, ability to successfully "self-certify," utility and potential benefit to operators and other system users, and system security. A formal process is being followed for collecting feedback from pilots and the companies they fly for. The feedback received to date has been very positive with pilots indicating strong usefulness of both camera images and surface weather observations.

Evaluation of test data will begin in Fall 2021 with the goal of demonstrating successful

system performance and operational benefits. In the future, the VWOS system could be affordably installed and operated to improve aviation access and safety at as

many as 120 Alaska locations where there currently is no weather information. For more information contact: [9-AJO-WCAM-ProgramOffice@faa.gov](mailto:9-AJO-WCAM-ProgramOffice@faa.gov)



Above: Four Alaska airports are evaluating VWOS through early 2022.

Right: Photo taken during installation at the Tatitlek site taken from the VWOS platform depicting the Vaisala HMP55 temperature and humidity sensor and Vaisala PWD22 present weather sensor.



Left: Visual Weather Observation System (VWOS) platform after being installed at the Palmer airport site in early 2020.



### Project Contacts

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FALL 2021

# NEWSLETTER

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

## AASP PROJECT UPDATE

By Angela Smith, PE, CM, RESPEC Aviation Group Manager

The team conducted several Capital Improvement and Maintenance Program (CIMP) inspections this summer with the goal to not only inspect the airports but to (1) meet with stakeholders, (2) identify aviation needs, and (3) assess the inspection checklists. A CIMP survey is currently under development to gather information to improve the process over the next 2 years.

DOT&PF personnel continue to complete CIMP inspections across the state. A work group will initiate later this winter, comprising AASP project team members, Maintenance and Operations (M&O), and Program Development to discuss ways to improve the inspection checklist and the functionality of the iPad application. The AASP project continues to implement changes to the website database and data gathering to better serve the airport project development process.

Installation is nearly complete for eight new Automated Weather Observation System (AWOS) stations at the following airports: Akiachak, Crooked Creek, Perryville, Tununak, Nulato, Coldfoot, Tok, *continued on page 2*



Kyler Hylton, MatSu District Superintendent, conducting CIMP inspection training at the Willow Airport.

## We Need Your Photos!



Tatitlek runway.

SIWA Staff

The AASP is always looking for new photographs to share with our aviation community. A photograph release form is posted on our website and will automatically enter your submittal in our photo contest. It just takes a few minutes to fill in the form with your name and the title of your photo. Email your photo and release form to [Rebecca.Cronkhite@respec.com](mailto:Rebecca.Cronkhite@respec.com) or [Rebecca.Douglas@alaska.gov](mailto:Rebecca.Douglas@alaska.gov).

We look forward to sharing great photos of airports, aircraft, and all the hardworking people involved in aviation across Alaska.

### IN THIS ISSUE:

AASP Project Update  
We Need Your Photos!  
FAA News & Updates  
Team Member Spotlight

Website News & Updates  
Q&A  
In the Works  
CIMP Inspection Status Map





NR CIMP inspection at Tok Junction Airport with Planning, Design, M&O, and contractors working together to gather information on the Upper Tanana Valley airports.

#### AASP Project Update continued

and Kotlik. An AWOS is a certified weather station that collects and broadcasts weather on a minute-by-minute basis. These systems are largely automated but may include human-observer monitoring when visibilities are reduced. AWOS systems meet various standards; however, most systems include altimeter setting, winds, temperature and dewpoint, density altitude, visibilities, and ceilings.

Financial challenges across the state continue with budget cuts, labor shortages, and aging aviation infrastructure requiring attention. Assisting with effective policies and guidance for management, planning, design, maintenance, and operation of aviation facilities is one goal of the Alaska Aviation System Plan. This fall, the team is working on performance measures, classifications, and reviewing how airport needs are tracked and displayed. A full report on AASP airport classifications and performance measures is scheduled for publication later this winter.

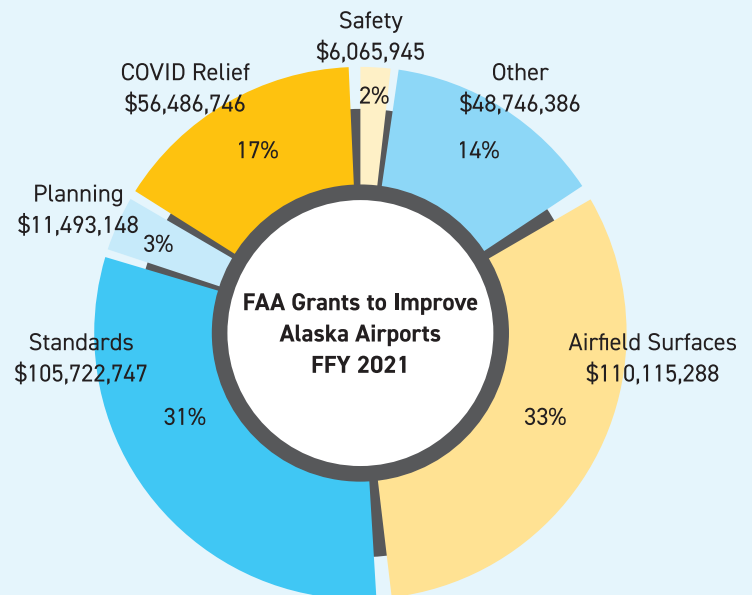


## FAA NEWS & UPDATES

### FAA Invests \$338 Million in Airports Across Alaska

A complete listing of grants, including estimated grant totals and project summaries, is available on the FAA Airport Improvement Program (AIP) website at [www.faa.gov/airports/aip/](http://www.faa.gov/airports/aip/).

Since the creation of the FAA AIP program, the U.S. federal government has distributed more than \$90 billion in approximately 65,000 grants. The total investment in Alaska airports since 2005 will exceed \$4 billion by the end of 2021.



Totals are FAA published preliminary appropriations amounts, include local sponsor airports, and are subject to change before award. A final report will be provided by the FAA and published on its website, [www.faa.gov/airports/aip/2021\\_aip\\_grants/](http://www.faa.gov/airports/aip/2021_aip_grants/), after the end of the federal fiscal year.

## AASP Spotlight on M&O



Joe Laraux, CM ACE, Bethel Airport Manager and Operations Specialist.

This month's employee spotlight highlights Bethel Airport Manager Joe Laraux. The Bethel Airport was the third busiest airport in Alaska based on 2019 passenger enplanements (before COVID-related shutdowns) and serves as the primary mail and cargo hub for the Y-K Delta. Joe, along with his crew of five, operates and manages the Bethel Airport, maintains more than 10 road miles in and around the community, and oversees an additional 25 airports in the Y-K Delta.

Central Region Regional Director Wolfgang Junge states, "I don't know a crew that covers the size area and variety of duties our Bethel crew handles with daily assurance and tenacity summer or winter. I am really proud and grateful for the work and dedication shown by our Bethel team. They keep Alaska moving—through all kinds of challenges and adversity."



Map of airports managed by Bethel Airport Manager Joe Laraux.



## AirTime

**Q** I use the Query Tool in Reports – it looks a little different now?

**A** You are right! The Query Tool got an upgrade recently and now has the capability to include all 5010 airports in the search. Look under Facility Information in the Query Tool search, then check the box to include 5010 Facilities (Reports > Query Tool).

**Q** Are there any new features in Facility Reporting?

**A** Pavement Condition Index (PCI) reports now contain the ability to include historical data in the Excel exports. Navigate to the Reports tab (Reports > Miscellaneous > PCI Reporting). Under PCI Reporting, choose the checkbox to Include Archived Data.

**Q** The CIMP inspection export to Excel gives you an extra tab with all the airports that have never been inspected. How cool is that?

**A** We would say pretty cool! You can run that export with a number of different filters, too. Head over to the Reports tab and select CIMP > CIMP Inspections by Date Query. Then choose filters (optional) and a date range (required). Selecting the Generate button creates the Inspection Queue and Export to Excel feature. The Inspection Queue also has interesting information including the inspector and last inspection date along with a link to the webpage. Inspections currently under review do not show in this report until they are finalized. The Excel's No CIMPs tab notes which airports were not inspected within the chosen time period. For a comprehensive dataset of all conducted inspections, start with January 1, 2014 (Reports > CIMP > CIMP Inspections by Date Query).



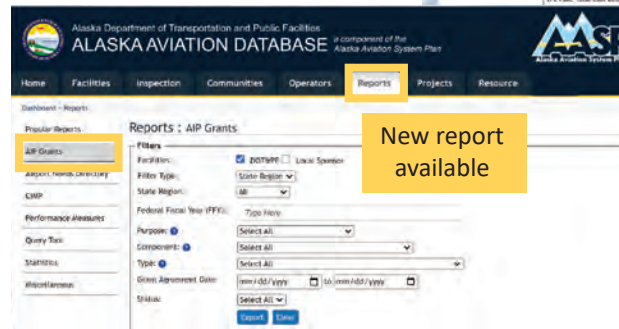
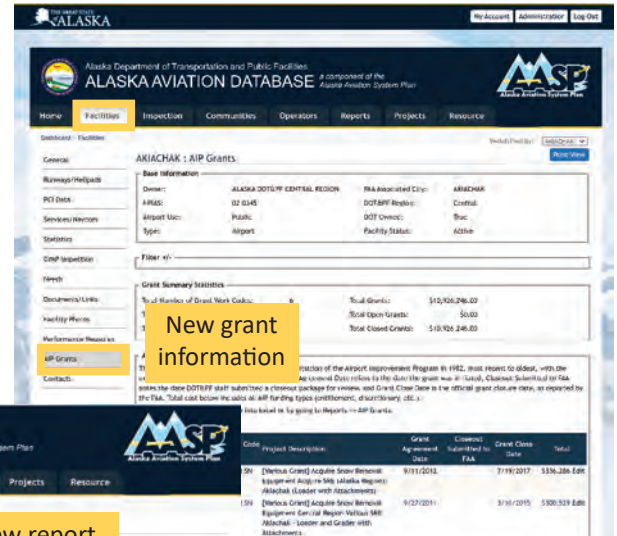
## Coach Class

AIP grant module is now live!

By Annette Lapkowski, PE, Panther International Project Manager

Grant listings from 1982 to 2020, for all public airports in Alaska, are viewable under the Facilities tab.

Internal users can visit the Reports tab to produce a comprehensive AIP grant history spreadsheet, similar to the FAA's AIP Grant History booklet, that was published annually until 2019. FFY 2021 information will be available later this fall.

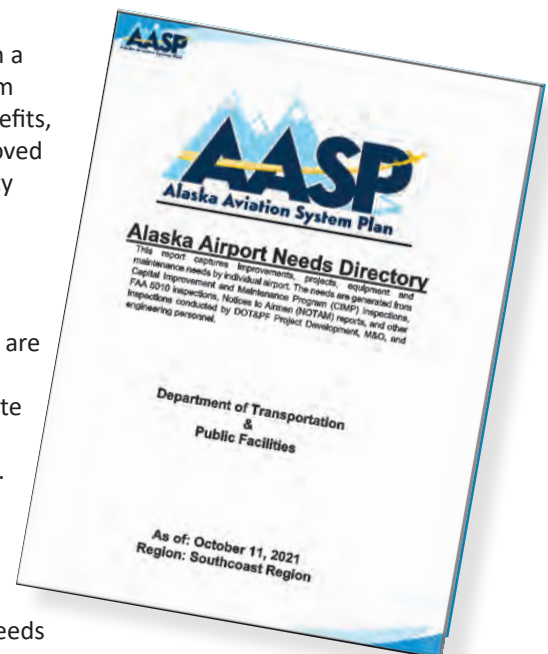


Other data include grant closeout dates for all NPIAS airports and funding information listed by FAA work code, including by purpose, component, and type. Users can see prior and current grants

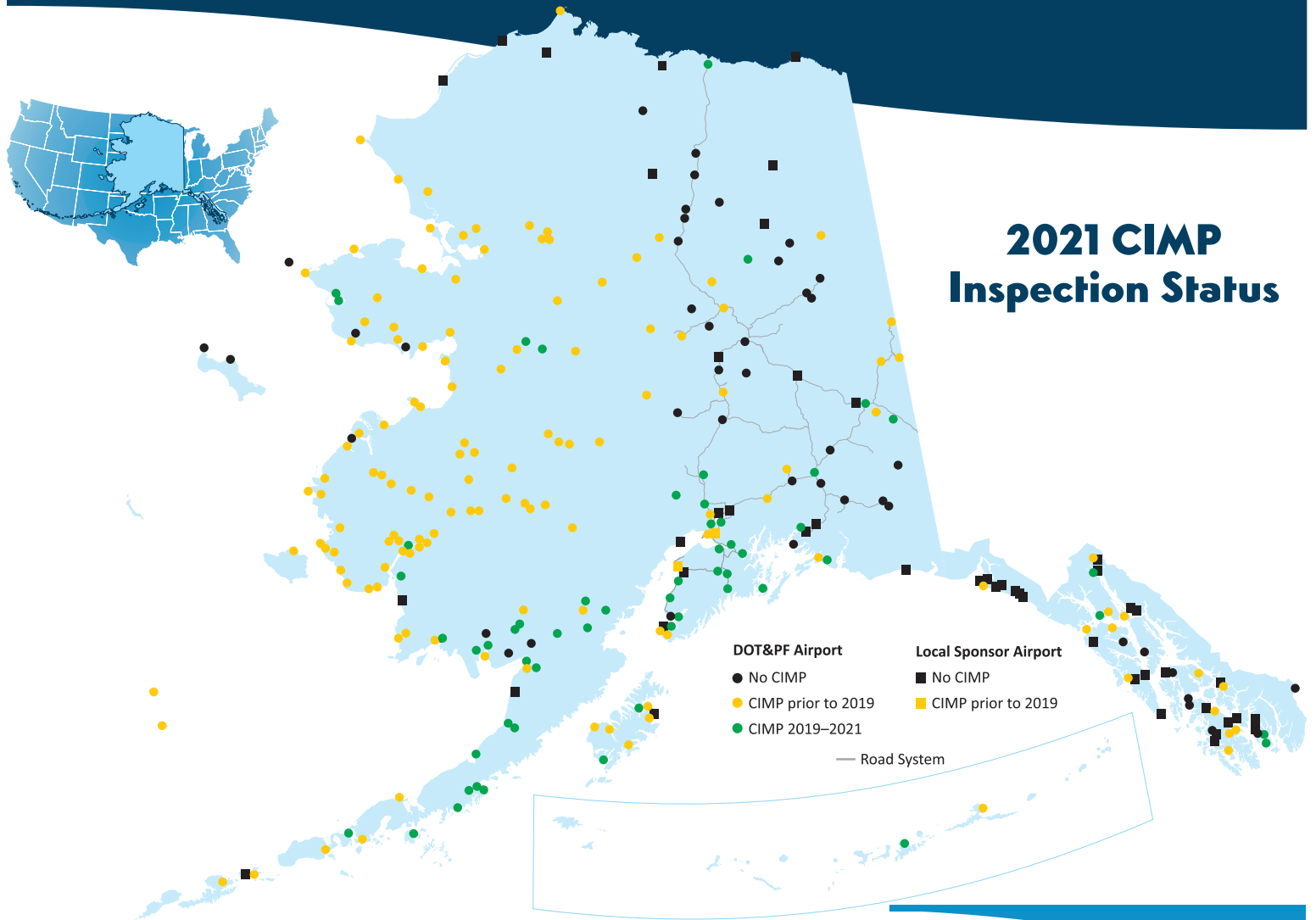
awarded, identify upcoming closeout deadlines, and produce reports accordingly. Stage 2 of this module may include assessment of grant assurances and federal obligations to assist in future airport planning and grant management.

## In The Works ...

Performance-based planning has long been a part of the AASP. Information gathered from performance measures provides many benefits, including improved decision-making, improved return on investments, better accountability and transparency, and a better-functioning transportation system. As such, the AASP team is reaching out to key stakeholders and reevaluating/updating the current performance measures to ensure that they are relevant and logical for the Alaska Aviation System of tomorrow. This means the website will be getting some fresh performance measure data and scorecards in early 2022. In addition to updating both the data and the look of the reports, the team is also conducting an overhaul of the Needs Book to reflect the revised performance measures and better present the project needs of airports across the state.







Capital Improvement and Maintenance Program (CIMP) inspections were developed during Phase I of the AASP as a systematic way to identify airport needs, both capital- and maintenance-related, and document current conditions across the Alaska airport system. The State of Alaska DOT&PF is responsible for the maintenance and operation of 237 airports spanning an area one-fifth the size of the lower 48 states. With limited personnel, extreme weather events, and declining budgets, CIMP inspection data are crucial to the planning, project development, and maintenance of Alaska's airports.

The AASP team continues to work with users on the inspection application to improve and streamline the process.



*NR CIMP inspection at Northway Airport with Planning, Design, M&O, and contractors working together to gather information on the Upper Tanana Valley airports.*



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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 3-02-0000-024-2018) 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.

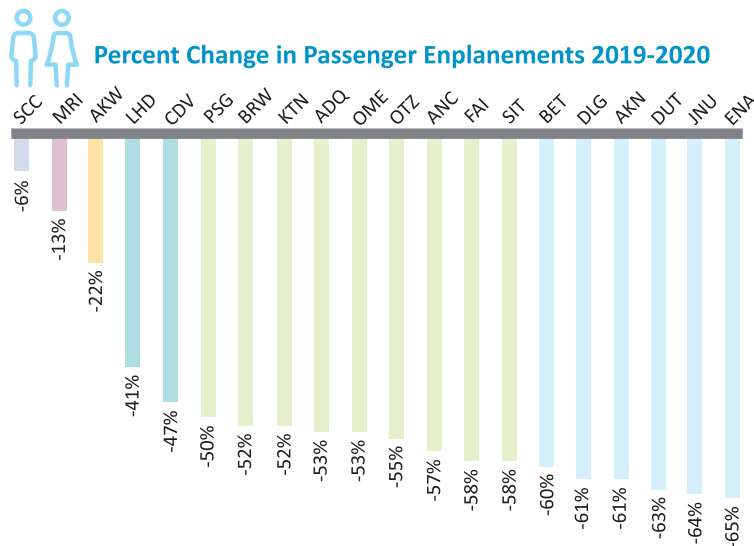
## BY THE NUMBERS

### Passenger Enplanements, 2019-2020

The COVID-19 pandemic has undoubtedly had severe impacts on the aviation industry, including both operations and airport planning projects. According to Forbes, the pandemic caused the most dramatic decrease in passenger travel on record, falling 95% from April 2019 to April 2020. Experts project that a full recovery of the aviation industry will not occur until 2023 or 2024 at the earliest. Throughout the pandemic, T-100 data automatically pulled from the FAA's dataset into the AASP has served as an important tool to monitor pandemic impacts on Alaska's aviation industry and individual airports across the state. The bar graph below shows the percentage change in passenger enplanements from select Alaskan airports from CY 2019 to CY 2020.

While the pandemic caused airport improvement project cancellations and postponements, it also opened up new opportunities for some airports to upgrade their facilities while passenger traffic remains at historic lows. With the average U.S. airport aged at 40 years, these upgrades are becoming increasingly necessary for continued operations. With the newly passed bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), \$25 billion dollars will be invested nationally into improving America's airports. This means:

- \$15 billion in formula funding for the FAA Airport Improvement Program which supports projects such as planning, installing and expanding runways, gates, and taxiways and improving runway lighting and navigation.



- \$5 billion for FAA's Facilities and Equipment Program, which includes funding for FAA-owned Air Traffic Control facilities and contract towers.
- \$5 billion in grants for a new Airport Terminal Improvement Program, which includes set asides for small hub airports, non-hub, and nonprimary airports, ensuring airports in communities of all sizes benefit.

## AASP PROJECT UPDATE

The Aviation System Plan team continues to move forward on several fronts. Check out the Airtime and Coach Class articles on page 3 for more details on improvements to the internal AASP website. The team completed a review of the Capital Improvement and Maintenance (CIMP) inspection process and are collaborating with DOT&PF to improve the inspection questions, website, and iPad application. Work continues for the inventory and needs list updates and additional changes to the website are in the works. Classifications and Performance Measures website updates are complete and posted.

The pilot study project that is part of the Alaska Aviation System Plan Phase 3 was originally requested by the Aviation Advisory Board (AAB) to address air carrier complaints across a number of airports and other factors plaguing our airfields, such as coastal erosion, tundra settlement, extreme weather or rainforest conditions; all contributing reasons for deterioration of runways, taxiways, aprons, buildings, visual aids, and other infrastructure required to operate a safe airport system. After further direction from the AAB, the

*continued on page 2*

### IN THIS ISSUE:

By the Numbers  
AASP Project Update  
FAA News & Updates  
Team Member Spotlight  
Website News & Updates

Q&A  
In the Works  
A Look Back  
Tech Shop

## AASP Project Update continued

study has taken on a resiliency focus for western (rather than just coastal) Alaskan airports. The airport resiliency study began by holding Technical Advisory Group (TAG) meetings to discuss the study plan and scope that include research on the contributing factors impacting rural airport infrastructure. The team is focusing resources to research the latest innovations, track project successes, compare construction material, and research new technologies to improve airport resiliency. The results will provide important tools for project design and construction. This special study is in the development stage, and we are excited to move forward with input from various public and private sectors. In other news, check out improvements

to the Documents page on the website for access to recently posted fact sheets, new maps, current newsletters, documents from AASP Phases I and II, and regional transportation plans. The reorganized page highlights a new format for the Phase III report. As a five-year planning study, the AASP traditionally produces a final report document at the end of the process. For Phase III, the elements or special studies are published as chapters so the public can view

each step as it is completed. The new document page layout allows the user to quickly click to documents from any phase and then move to other phases with one click.



## AASP Spotlight on M&O

Our Winter Newsletter Spotlight is on St. Mary's Airport Manager Erik Weingarth. Erik started with DOT&PF as an equipment operator in 1993. He was promoted to St. Mary's Airport Manager in 2011 and has shown superb leadership ever since. Erik's substantial responsibilities include

managing the St. Mary's hub, overseeing nine other Western District airports along the Yukon River from Grayling to Mountain Village, and maintaining 30 miles of gravel roads connecting three of the region's communities. On top of this, Erik regularly goes above and beyond what is expected, creatively overcoming challenges such as arctic weather conditions and remote logistics to ensure that runways stay open and life-sustaining medivac and supply flights get where they need to go.

Erik's caring personality and generous nature means that he is always lending a hand to whomever needs it, including working closely with state and FAA mechanics and electricians and collaborating with project design teams. In his own time, Erik is very active with local search and rescue and civic affairs in the region.

Alaska DOT&PF Commissioner Ryan Anderson stated that Erik has built a great team and "does an awesome job keeping St. Mary's and the surrounding airports open and

safe for all the communities. He's shown time and time again an ability to tackle challenges in difficult circumstances." If travel is necessary at -30F to fix broken runway lights, or when severe weather impacts that 3am medivac flight out—no matter what, Erik keeps Alaska moving for communities along the Yukon.



## FAA NEWS & UPDATES

### FAA and Airports Get Ready for Winter Weather

With winter weather here, the FAA is working with airports to make sure airport operations remain safe. These winter preparations are the subject of the Preparing for Airport Winter Operations video and CertAlert No. 21-06, both of which help airports and aviation stakeholders get ready for winter weather.

Snow and ice control are often a complex, dynamic, and demanding endeavor. It requires vigilance and a heightened sense of awareness by all stakeholders. The video and the CertAlert highlight the importance of communication and operational best practices. They also provide airport operators and stakeholders key points of awareness during winter operations. This includes essential training to deal with deteriorating or changing conditions, reduced visibility and overall situational awareness, such as receiving runway clearance before removing snow and ice.

Airport operators should share the CertAlert and video to help airport employees and others better prepare for winter operations and its associated challenges.

In addition to safety resources, the FAA provides funding to support winter operations at the nation's airports through the Airport Improvement Program. These grants pay for snow removal vehicles, plows, snow blowers, deicing equipment and snow melters. Grant funding also may be used to construct, modify, or expand snow removal buildings to house the equipment. In 2021, 100 airports received a total of \$64.8 million for snow removal equipment. In fiscal year 2021, Alaska received \$13,549,604 in snow equipment removal funds through

the AIP program, a significant portion of the national total.



An operator moves snow with a loader at the Valdez Airport.





## AirTime

**Q** Do we ever close needs? And how is it done?

**A** Yes! Needs can be closed in the system and should be closed eventually to show project accomplishments.

Needs which have a status of "In Project" can only be closed after the project is completed. Once the project is completed, the need can be closed on the Needs tab with the "Close Need" button.

Needs which have a status of "Need Created" can be closed in the event work was completed or purchased outside of the APEB or CIP processes (Facilities > Needs).

**Q** Is there anything new in Reports that I should know about?

**A** The Query Tool now contains the ability to search several new data elements from a recent General Tab update. Some new items which can now be queried include expanded Utilities types and the Certified Weather Station type (Reports > Query Tool).

**Q** I see this new tab in Reports called Popular Reports, but it is under construction. Is something coming soon?

**A** Great question. We are considering what reports we can place on this page. These reports will be queried in advance, so they are simplified for one-click operation. If you have a suggestion on a report to list here, contact Rebecca Douglas at rebecca.douglas@alaska.gov.



By Annette Lapkowski, PE, Panther International Project Manager

## Coach Class

### Updated Facilities Tab

The Facilities tab was updated to streamline some elements and to clarify data terminology. Updates are viewable within each airport General tab.

These changes include updates to AASP Classification. To see detailed information on the classifications, hover over the question mark icon next to the data element.

Along with updates found in the General Information section, the System Planning Data and Services sections were also amended. Standard airport characteristics as well as information on the Last Grants (Airfield, Building, Equipment, and Planning) are now available.

For information on prior grants and more details on current grants, please select the AIP Grant tab.

Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities  
ALASKA AVIATION DATABASE a component of the Alaska Aviation System Plan

Home Facilities Inspection Communities Operators Reports Projects Resource

Dashboard - Facilities

General Information

Owner: ALASKA DOT&PF CENTRAL REGION RAA Associated City: BIRCHWOOD  
NPAID: 02-0034 DOT&PF Region: Central  
Airport User: Public DOT Owned: True  
Type: Airport Facility Status: Active

General Information

Name: BIRCHWOOD RAA Associated City: BIRCHWOOD  
DOT Owned: Yes No Alternative Name:  
State Region: Central Location ID: BCV  
RAA District: Anchorage Borough/Census Area:  
RAA Site ID: 50049\_14 Facility User: Public  
NPAID Number: 02-0034 Facility Type: Airport  
AASP Classification: Local (high activity) Facility Status: Active  
EAS Facility: Yes No

System Planning Data

Last issued APEB: None Current ARC: 0-0 Utility:  
General Closures: 6/14/2013 Ultimate ARC: 0-0 Utility:  
AIP Approved: 1/1/2007 Current Design Aircraft: Unknown  
Master Plan Approved: 8/3/2013 Wind Coverage: 95%  
Property Map Date: 8/3/2013 Crossed Runway: Yes No  
Federal Grant Obligation: Yes No Non-Standard Conditions: Yes No  
Federal Grant Expiration: 2031  
Seaplane Hookup Ramp: 1-0-0  
Full Airport Sponsor: Yes No  
Property Ownership: Documented Need For:  
Leased Lots: Yes No  
Theobson: Yes No  
Floatplane Parking: Yes No  
Auto Parking: Yes No

Last Airfield Grant: 3-02-0200-122-2018 (Work Grant) Last Equipment Grant: 3-02-0200-055-2006 (Purchase Grant)  
Rehabilitate Runway 02L/20R Normal SPA - Birchwood (Apply Markings and Crack Seal to Runway 2L/20R, and, incidentally, RWY 20L, TWY's, and apron) Acquire Snow Removal Equipment (Hydraulic loader-mounted snow blower) 7/1/2013  
Last Building Grant: 3-02-0234-001-1987 Improve Snow Removal Equipment Building (2/9/1992) Last Planning Grant: 3-02-0234-008-2018 Update Airport Master Plan Study AIP Update and aeronautical survey  
Last Major Improvement: Reconstruct TW 0, C, D, E, G, & Apron, Rehab RW 02R/08L 3-02-0234-007-2018



Operator Mel Matthews conducting snow blowing at Gulkana Airport.

## In The Works ...

Work continued through the fall on reevaluating and updating the current performance measures to ensure that they are relevant and logical for the Alaska Aviation System of tomorrow. The website updates are live, and a report is coming soon. With outreach and feedback efforts now complete, the team is transitioning to implementing the new and revised measures on the website. We look forward to sharing the fresh performance measure data and scorecards in early 2022. We are even incorporating a mechanism to baseline the statewide data so that comparisons can be made year over year. Stay tuned – more to come!



Runway 2L snow removal operations at Fairbanks International Airport.



## A Look Back

### Alaska Airfields & Roads: Two Histories Intertwined

Many Alaskans may be familiar with the Alaska Road Commission's central role in developing the state's highway system, but did you know that the Road Commission was also a driving force that built the foundation upon which Alaskan aviation sits today? In other words, the Road Commission played an integral role in funding and constructing the state's first airfields and establishing air travel as "the ideal mode of transportation for the huge and rugged territory."

The first airplane to fly in Alaska took off from Fairbanks on July 4, 1914, as a part of a planned "aviation circus" to celebrate Independence Day.

Piloted by one of America's aviation pioneers and the inventor of the first successful tractor biplane, James Martin, the flight began above the Fairbanks ballpark where event promoters were charging \$5 admission to see the show. To nobody's surprise, except clearly the organizers, Martin

flew above an empty ball field, but likely noticed that excited spectators crowded onto every rooftop and woodpile across the town, watching the show for free. After this exciting event, Alaskans took notice as "the Aviation," as it was commonly called, had reached the vast territory where it would innovate travel indefinitely.

Following several more high-profile test flights by aviators in the 1920s including the Army Air Service's Black Wolf Squadron, Carl Ben Eielson, and Noel Wien, Alaskans were hooked on the idea of aviation and now needed only the infrastructure to support it: aviation fields. In 1925, Noel Wien was chartered by Norman Stines of the Fairbanks Exploration Company to fly a Fokker F. III

aircraft from Fairbanks to Nome. However, one major issue stood in the way of this iconic flight: where to land? To solve this problem, the Alaska Road Commission stepped in. Granville R. Jackson and an employee of the Road Commission familiar with aviation field requirements started scouting locations in Nome for the new

field. The team settled on a location on the parade grounds of the old Fort Davis for

the new airfield. The Alaska Road Commission was tasked with completing clearing and construction of the new Nome airfield with \$5,000 appropriated by the territorial legislature.

Noel Wien took off in the Fokker F. III from Fairbanks in the first week

of June 1925 and headed to the newly constructed Nome airfield. This iconic flight was ultimately successful but not without its harrowing moments. Wien had to make an

emergency landing outside of Ruby due to harsh weather and a lack of suitable sandbars to land on the Yukon due to a high-flowing breakup season. Repairs were necessary in Ruby after the plane flipped during its emergency landing, but all passengers eventually made it safely to Nome.

From 1925 onward, the Alaska Road Commission was tasked with overseeing the development of airfields across the Alaskan territory. Robert J. Sommers, Alaska's Territorial Highway Engineer and former Superintendent of the Alaska Road Commission, developed standard procedures for aviation field construction projects. Airfields should be 1,400 by 600 feet and be oriented such that aircraft take off into the prevailing winds. These fields were to be smooth and firm with good drainage and free of soft spots.

In summer 1925, the territorial Board of Road Commissioners authorized the Alaska

*continued on page 5*



*An example of a later aircraft operated by Wien Airlines around Nome and in the Seward Peninsula region.*

UAF Archives, ID# UAF-1969-95-536



*Noel Wien in the Fokker F. III that made the first commercial flight in Alaska from Fairbanks to Nome in 1925.*

UAF Archives, ID# UAF-1969-95-536



*Nome airport today.*



### *A Look Back continued*




Road Commission to construct airfields at Takotna, Flat, Fort Yukon, Wiseman, Livengood, Lake Minchumina, Ruby, Circle, and Chena Hot Springs. By 1928, fifteen airfields had been completed for a total of \$13,963. Airfield construction continued to accelerate and by 1932, over seventy airfields had been built for \$173,243, with the Alaska Road Commission at the center of this huge effort.

While airfield and road development were intertwined during the emergence of Alaskan aviation, today, airports off the state's road system have taken on a great importance for Alaska's rural and remote communities. Additionally, due to expansions in e-commerce and global shipping of consumer goods in recent years, ANC and FAI have developed into key cargo hubs

both in-state and internationally. Scan the map below to see how the Alaska aviation system has changed since 1931. Can you spot which airfields have survived and gained regional or statewide importance

as hubs, and which of today's airports had yet to exist in 1931? Check out the table below for some stats on how the system has grown from 1931 to 2019.

## Alaska System Growth

	1931	2019
 Planes in service	31	8,762
 Passengers carried	6,637	5,350,463
 Mail & express carried	496,680 lbs	1,811,044,091 lbs



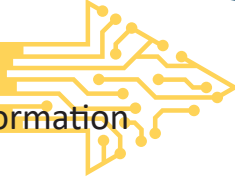
Article adapted from source: Naske, C. (1986). Paving Alaska's Trails: The Work of the Alaska Road Commission. ALASKA HISTORICAL COMMISSION STUDIES IN HISTORY; (N152).

**Acknowledgment:** Thank you to Tom George for bringing this interesting historical source to the attention of the AASP team.



## TechShop

AASP Website Information



# 2021 CIMP Survey Preliminary Results

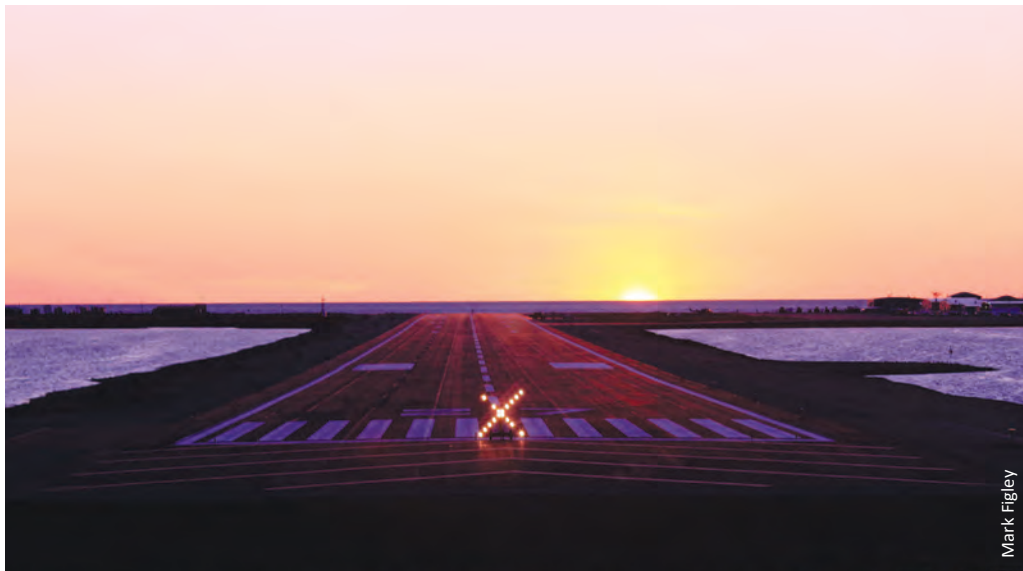
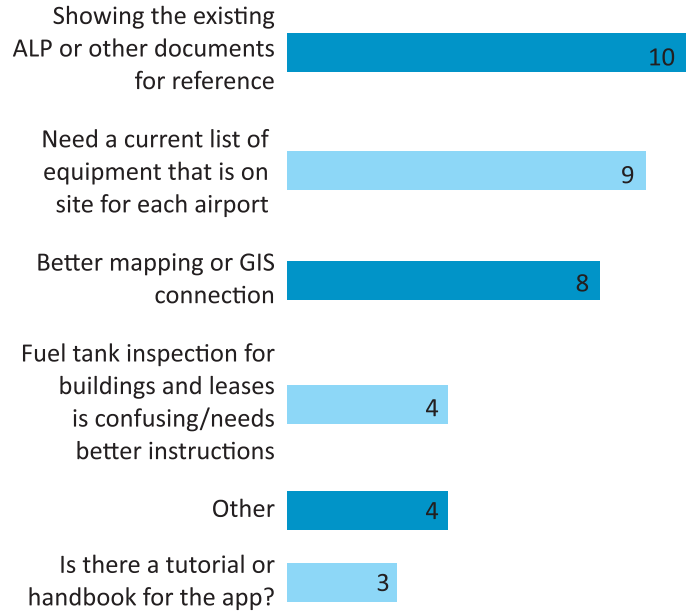
From November 3rd-12th 2021, the AASP project team conducted a preliminary Capital Improvement and Maintenance Program (CIMP) survey to learn about user experiences with the process and app and to explore potential improvements. The survey was distributed electronically to CIMP users, including Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF) and other inspectors. The survey included eight questions asking respondents about perceived challenges and opportunities for improvements in every step of the CIMP survey, including to the app, pre-inspection, inspection frequency, checklists, upload and processing, needs input, and review.

Sixteen respondents completed the survey, providing the AASP team with valuable insights on existing challenges and opportunities to improve. Respondents identified their top issues as “Photos not properly associated to deficiencies” (7 responses), “Why can’t I process all D&F deficiencies together, instead of once on each checklist?” (7 responses), and “Too many steps to complete” (5 responses). Top suggested improvements to the app are shown in the graph to the right. Respondents noted that the largest roadblock to completing regular CIMP inspections is “Funding for travel” (10 responses), followed by “Not enough trained inspectors” (5 responses).

Data gathered through the CIMP survey will be very useful to the CIMP Technical Advisory Group (TAG), which has already met several times to start addressing future improvements.

### Survey responses to:

#### What section or feature would you like added to the app?



Mark Figley

Sunset over the runway at Ralph Wien Memorial Airport (OTZ) in Kotzebue.

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



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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 3-02-0000-024-2018 and 3-02-000-028-2021) 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.



## BY THE NUMBERS

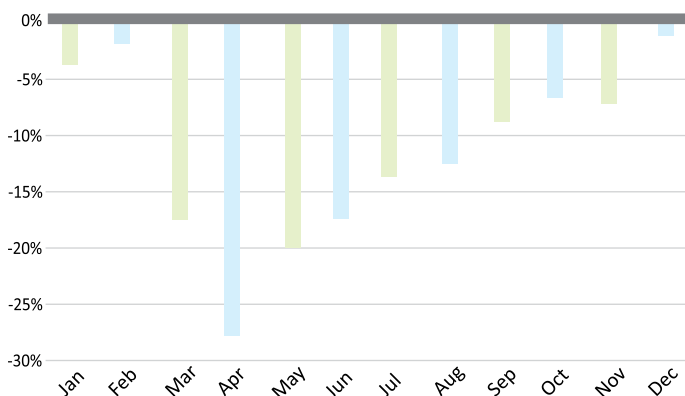
### Pandemic Impacts on Cargo

In our last newsletter edition, we looked at the COVID-19 pandemic's impact on passenger enplanement numbers from 2019-2020 at 20 Alaska airports. Now, we take a deeper dive into pandemic impacts on cargo in Alaska and the Lower 48. As we all know, the pandemic dramatically affected aviation, with 2020 even dubbed as the "worst year ever for airlines" by the International Air Transport Association (IATA). According to IATA, by years end passenger traffic was down 60.2% and overall industry air travel demand decreased by 65.9%.

While passenger air demand was at its lowest, a more complex trend was emerging with air cargo. The narrative goes, as Americans were stuck at home, they began turning to e-commerce as a dual solution for both their essential needs (think: groceries, pet food, medicine, etc.) and their boredom/non-essential needs (think: new sourdough bread cookbook and starter, anyone?).

This caused demand for air cargo transport to go up. However, this isn't the full story. The extensive cancellations of passenger flights also took a toll on cargo capacity across the globe due to "belly cargo," or cargo that is transported in the holds of passenger planes. For a portion of 2020, cargo capacity was at a steep decline while cargo demand was rising for things like PPE and home office equipment, among other consumer goods. This in turn had an effect on air freight rates, causing them to spike and remain volatile compared to previous years. According to USITC, Asia-North America cargo routes were most affected by these trends, which has implications for Alaska's AIAS airports, which sit midway between Asia and North America on the Great Circle Route. The graph below illustrates how global air cargo tonne-kilometers (CTKs) compared in 2020 to 2019 levels.

**2020 global cargo tonne-kilometers (CTKs) year-on-year percent change compared with 2019**



Source: ICAO, "Air Transport Monthly Monitor," Feb. 2021.

Impacts to air cargo due to limited belly cargo capacity, increasing demand, and volatile freight rates affected different routes and regions in different ways. Globally, CTKs fell about 11%, making it the greatest decline since 1990 (USITC), while U.S. airlines' cargo traffic eventually recovered to 2019 levels and continued to increase in 2021 (Airlines for America). According to the Bureau of Transportation Statistics, "for the full year 2020, U.S. airlines carried 1.28M more tons of cargo than in 2019 for a 7% increase...that included an increase of 10% in domestic cargo and less than 1% in international cargo."

*continued on page 5*

## AASP PROJECT UPDATE

As warmer weather approaches, progress continues on many tasks within the AASP project scope. Recent website advancements, new content, and updates are covered in detail on page 3 in AirTime Q&A, and Coach Class.

The team published two Fact Sheets in March; AIP Project Process, which provided a high altitude overview of how DOT&PF develops rural airport projects, and the Aviation Project Evaluation Board, which describes the process of identifying and prioritizing federally funded projects at rural airports. Both fact sheets are available on the Documents page at [www.alaskaasp.com](http://www.alaskaasp.com).

The project team welcomes suggestions for new and updated fact sheet topics. Team contact information is available on the back page of this newsletter and on the website Contacts page.

*continued on page 2*

### IN THIS ISSUE:

By the Numbers  
AASP Project Update  
FAA News & Updates  
M&O Team Member  
Spotlight

Coach Class: Website News  
& Updates  
Air Time Q&A  
In the Works  
A Look Back: Airport Names  
Construction Season

### AASP Project Update continued

Don't forget to submit your aviation-related photos to the AASP Photo Contest, for a chance to be featured in a future newsletter! Submission form and instructions are at [https://www.alaskaasp.com/media/3673/aasp\\_photo\\_release\\_form.pdf](https://www.alaskaasp.com/media/3673/aasp_photo_release_form.pdf).

The Classifications and Performance Measures report is in final production and scheduled to post on the website later this month. The project consultant and Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) review airport classifications and performance measures approximately every five years to assess relevancy and validity of the data. In the report and appendices are new maps, charts, and graphics to assist the reader in understanding the importance of airport classifications and performance measures. The report details updates to measures and classifications categories and definitions. A new classification of airports was added—Landing Strips—to account for the 450 plus strips that are registered with the FAA but are not part of the National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems (NPIAS) and are thus ineligible to receive federal funding. The AASP recognizes the importance of these landing strips to the Alaska Aviation System. Future phases of the project may take steps to better inventory and classify these airports.

The Capital Improvement and Maintenance Program (CIMP) Technical Advisory Group continues to re-write and reorganize the inspection questions and groupings in preparation for updating the iPad application to streamline the process.



A float plane and a Boeing 737 at FAI.



## FAA NEWS & UPDATES

### FAA Updates Airport Design Guidance

The U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Aviation Administration updated its advisory circular on Airport Design that provides guidance to airport sponsors and airport consultants designing and developing airports around the country.

"The advisory circular provides a critical roadmap for the aviation industry when planning, designing and developing the nation's airports," said FAA Associate Administrator of Airports Shannetta R. Griffin. "This update contains the latest information the industry needs as we work collaboratively to build safe, sustainable and accessible airport infrastructure to safely transport passengers, goods and services."

This advisory circular outlines the FAA's recommended standards for an acceptable level of safety, efficiency and capacity when designing and implementing projects at airports to meet the requirements of Federal Aviation Regulation, Part 139 Certification of Airports. Airport sponsors that receive federal funding from the Airport Improvement Program and the Passenger Facility Charge Program are required to fully comply with the advisory circular.

The updates include restructuring the document, explaining the meaning of terms used, expanding information in certain chapters and adding graphics to support information in the circular. Some specific updates to the standards include expanded departure surface guidance (Chapter 3), and reduced dimensions for the taxilane object free area (TOFA) and taxiway separation (Chapter 4).

This advisory circular takes effect immediately and cancels the prior version, dated Sept. 28, 2012. See [faa.gov/airports/resources/advisory\\_circulars/](https://www.faa.gov/airports/resources/advisory_circulars/) for more information.



Our spring newsletter spotlights someone essential to the operations of Alaska's second largest airport, Fairbanks International: Equipment Maintenance Foreman John Erickson. John joined DOT&PF in 2018 as a Mechanic before moving into his current role as Foreman 3 years ago. He became interested in aviation early on and says that being immersed in the industry remains one of his favorite parts of the job. John manages a team that is always busy because when something breaks- they're the crew that fixes it. His group maintains everything from small landscape equipment and light duty vehicles up to large highway equipment such as road graders and tractors.

John's team supports FAI's Airport Police & Fire and Operations sections as well as the other Maintenance groups. According to FAI Chief of Maintenance, Jason Jacobs,



John Erickson poses in front of a tractor in the Equipment Maintenance Shop at FAI.

"John has a keen awareness of each component's role and makes decisions to best support their individual missions while furthering the overall mission of FAI. He does this while balancing varying priorities, cost reductions, and the sustainability of the entire FAI fleet. His ability to analyze issues that face his section, apply analytical thinking to solve problems, and incorporate measures to protect the FAI mission in the future are key parts of our continued success." Thank you, John, for rising to the challenge every day to keep FAI moving through service and infrastructure. Keep up the great work!





# AirTime

## Q What are these new ACIP reports?

**A** Airport Capital Improvement Program (ACIP) reports are now available for use under the internal website's Reports tab. There are two reports: "ACIP" and "ACIP Project Details." The "ACIP" provides summary financials for expected and contingency projects as well as high level project information. "ACIP Project Details" provides greater detail on all the projects.

Each report can be filtered by a variety of geographic parameters including facility, state region, M&O District, and House and Senate areas. Other filters include funding type, project category, project status, system and facility type (Reports > ACIP).

## Q Can I get more information on performance measures?

**A** Absolutely. With the outreach and feedback efforts completed in late 2021, the team has implemented the new and revised measures on the internal website. The fresh performance measure data and scorecards are available, and incorporated into annual statewide baseline data so comparisons can be made year over year (Facilities > Performance Measures and Reports > Performance Measures).

## In The Works ...

The CIMP Technical Advisory Group continues to coordinate how inspections will occur in the future and strives to streamline the process while ensuring useful information is collected. The team is reviewing all checklist questions to improve consistency across the application and save valuable time on the ground. The team is reviewing all checklist questions to improve inspection consistency and save valuable time on the ground. Special thanks to all the CIMP team members who eagerly shared their expertise to improve the process. We have only just begun – stay tuned – more to come!



## Coach Class

### Updated Facilities Tab

By Annette Lapkowski, PE, Panther International Project Manager

The Facilities tab is updated to include more search parameters and now users can save a custom search. You can view the updates on the Facilities > Search tab.

These changes include the addition of "DOT&PF M&O District" and "Owner" in the Basic Search and Advanced Search functions.

For the Basic and Advanced Search, the resulting set can be saved for future use. Enter any search criteria and select Search. Then enter a Search Name and choose Save Search.

The search will be added to the listing under Saved Search and retained until the search is deleted. Each user sets their unique Saved Searches which will be available whenever they login.

Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities  
ALASKA AVIATION DATABASE a component of the Alaska Aviation System Plan

Home Facilities Inspection Communities Reports Projects Resource

Dashboard: Facilities

Search

Basic Search

Facility Name:

Facility Type:

Landing Area Surface:

Associated City:

Location ID:

DOT&PF Region:

DOT&PF M&O District:

Owner:

Search Cancel

Search Name:  Save Search

To save a custom search, type name and select Save Search. See saved searches in tab below.

Advanced Search

Saved Search

Facilities

Facility Name	Location ID	Type	Region	FAA Site ID
ADAK	ADK	AIRPORT	Southwest	50009.1A
ADAK	ADK	AIRPORT	Southwest	50016.1A
AKIAK	AKI	AIRPORT	Central	50017.1A
AKIAK	AKI	AIRPORT	Central	50020.1A
AKIAK	AKI	AIRPORT	Southwest	50022.1A
AKIAK	AKI	SEAPLANE BASE	Southwest	50022.1C
AKIAK	AKI	AIRPORT	Northern	50024.1A
AKIAK	AKI	AIRPORT	Central	50027.53A
AKIAK	AKI	AIRPORT	Northern	50029.1A
AKIAK	AKI	AIRPORT	Northern	50029.61A
AKIAK	AKI	AIRPORT	Northern	50032.1A
AKIAK	AKI	SEAPLANE BASE	Southwest	50037.6C
AKIAK	AKI	AIRPORT	Central	50038.1A
AKIAK	AKI	AIRPORT	Northern	50039.1A

New search parameters

Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities  
ALASKA AVIATION DATABASE a component of the Alaska Aviation System Plan

Home Facilities Inspection Communities Reports Projects Resource

Dashboard: Facilities

Search

Basic Search

Facility Name:

Facility Type:

Landing Area Surface:

Associated City:

Location ID:

DOT&PF Region:

DOT&PF M&O District:

Owner:

Search Cancel

Search Name:  Save Search

To save a custom search, type name and select Save Search. See saved searches in tab below.

Advanced Search

Saved Search

Selection Results: 56 Facilities Found

Facility Name	Location ID	Type	Region	FAA Site ID
ALASKA HELIPORT	AA35	HELIPORT		50096.02H
ALASKA HELIPORT	AA36	HELIPORT		50096.01H
ALASKA HELIPORT	AA37	HELIPORT		50096.03H
ALASKA HELIPORT	AA38	HELIPORT		50096.04H
ALASKA HELIPORT	AA39	HELIPORT		50096.05H
ALASKA HELIPORT	AA40	HELIPORT		50096.06H
ALASKA HELIPORT	AA41	HELIPORT		50096.07H
ALASKA HELIPORT	AA42	HELIPORT		50096.08H
ALASKA HELIPORT	AA43	HELIPORT		50096.09H
ALASKA HELIPORT	AA44	HELIPORT		50096.10H
ALASKA HELIPORT	AA45	HELIPORT		50096.11H
ALASKA HELIPORT	AA46	HELIPORT		50096.12H
ALASKA HELIPORT	AA47	HELIPORT		50096.13H
ALASKA HELIPORT	AA48	HELIPORT		50096.14H
ALASKA HELIPORT	AA49	HELIPORT		50096.15H
ALASKA HELIPORT	AA50	HELIPORT		50096.16H
ALASKA HELIPORT	AA51	HELIPORT		50096.17H
ALASKA HELIPORT	AA52	HELIPORT		50096.18H
ALASKA HELIPORT	AA53	HELIPORT		50096.19H
ALASKA HELIPORT	AA54	HELIPORT		50096.20H
ALASKA HELIPORT	AA55	HELIPORT		50096.21H
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ALASKA HELIPORT	AA64	HELIPORT		50096.30H
ALASKA HELIPORT	AA65	HELIPORT		50096.31H
ALASKA HELIPORT	AA66	HELIPORT		50096.32H
ALASKA HELIPORT	AA67	HELIPORT		50096.33H
ALASKA HELIPORT	AA68	HELIPORT		50096.34H
ALASKA HELIPORT	AA69	HELIPORT		50096.35H
ALASKA HELIPORT	AA70	HELIPORT		50096.36H
ALASKA HELIPORT	AA71	HELIPORT		50096.37H
ALASKA HELIPORT	AA72	HELIPORT		50096.38H
ALASKA HELIPORT	AA73	HELIPORT		50096.39H
ALASKA HELIPORT	AA74	HELIPORT		50096.40H
ALASKA HELIPORT	AA75	HELIPORT		50096.41H
ALASKA HELIPORT	AA76	HELIPORT		50096.42H
ALASKA HELIPORT	AA77	HELIPORT		50096.43H
ALASKA HELIPORT	AA78	HELIPORT		50096.44H
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ALASKA HELIPORT	AA80	HELIPORT		50096.46H
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ALASKA HELIPORT	AA88	HELIPORT		50096.54H
ALASKA HELIPORT	AA89	HELIPORT		50096.55H
ALASKA HELIPORT	AA90	HELIPORT		50096.56H
ALASKA HELIPORT	AA91	HELIPORT		50096.57H
ALASKA HELIPORT	AA92	HELIPORT		50096.58H
ALASKA HELIPORT	AA93	HELIPORT		50096.59H
ALASKA HELIPORT	AA94	HELIPORT		50096.60H
ALASKA HELIPORT	AA95	HELIPORT		50096.61H
ALASKA HELIPORT	AA96	HELIPORT		50096.62H
ALASKA HELIPORT	AA97	HELIPORT		50096.63H
ALASKA HELIPORT	AA98	HELIPORT		50096.64H
ALASKA HELIPORT	AA99	HELIPORT		50096.65H
ALASKA HELIPORT	AA00	HELIPORT		50096.66H

Choose search parameters

Enter a Search Name and select Save Search

Saved searches will be listed here for future use



## A Look Back

### What's in a Name?

By: Patrick Cotter, AICP, Planning Manager, RESPEC

Have you ever wondered who the person was behind the name of the airport you just passed through? Some of them are easily recognizable, like Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport, which was named after the late Alaska Senator Ted Stevens. But who was Merle 'Mudhole' Smith? Or Rocky Gutierrez? This article is the first in a series of four that will highlight the individuals behind the names of Alaska's airports.

#### Sitka's Rocky Gutierrez

Rocky Gutierrez moved to Sitka in fall 1949 after his military service ended in 1948 at the urging of a friend. He never had intentions of staying, but after spending five days on a boat from Seattle and seeing the beauty of southeast Alaska, he ended up getting a job and settling down. That first job was at a logging camp. Six months later Rocky was hired by the City of Sitka.

Rocky eventually became Sitka's Mayor and served during a time of considerable change in the city. He was mayor when the logging industry began to wane and mills were closing throughout the region.

In 1986, Rocky was appointed the DOT&PF commissioner by Governor Steve Cowper.

#### Unalaska's Tom Madsen

Charles Thomas Madsen operated Aleutian Air out of Dutch Harbor from 1981 until 1999. Flying a 1959 Beechcraft E18S twin-engine taildragger, he regularly flew cargo and passengers between communities

along the Aleutians and Alaska Peninsula. After retiring from his business in 1999, he moved to Juneau where he continued to fly his Aleutian Spirit until 2002 when he died tragically in a plane crash. Later that year, the Alaska State Legislature changed the name of Unalaska Airport to Tom Madsen Unalaska Airport in his honor. Representative Moses said this about Tom during hearings for the renaming: "Tom Madsen was a bush aviator for nearly twenty years throughout the Aleutians and is well known for willingly jeopardizing his own life in order to save the lives of others. He was instrumental in many medical emergencies and search and rescues. He knowingly flew in extremely hazardous weather in order to transport persons with medical crises. If he had not acted selflessly, lives most certainly would have been lost. In one particular incident, he flew in one hundred mph winds with heavy snow and sleet in order to save the life of a toddler who had ingested a fatal amount of iron pills. Thomas Madsen epitomized the term 'bush pilot' in selflessly putting others' needs above his own to meet the needs of humanity."



*Unalaska on final approach.*

Statewide Aviation Archives

included a Stinson Detroiter and a Hamilton Metalplane.

Ralph was killed on October 12, 1930, while flying a diesel-powered Bellanca Bush plane out of Kotzebue.

#### Cordova's Merle K. 'Mudhole' Smith

Before moving to Cordova in 1937 to fly for Cordova Airlines, Merle Smith was a pilot in the Midwest and flew in traveling stunt shows. He became the president of Cordova Airlines in 1939 when the previous owner died in a plane crash. Merle flew throughout Prince William Sound and southcentral Alaska supporting mines in the Wrangell Mountains, hunters and fisherman, and passenger flights. Cordova Airlines eventually merged with Alaska Airlines in 1968 and Merle served as a director at Alaska Airlines until 1973, and continued to fly a charter service until 1979.

Smith got his unique nickname when he flew from Cordova to Bremner Mine just outside of McCarthy. A trip typically made in winter, Smith landed in summer and touched down on an airfield comprised of swampy tundra and a few large rocks. Upon landing, his bi-plane knocked one of the rocks loose, creating a big muddy hole in the runway, and sending the spinning propeller into the mud at 1,800 RPMs. Smith cleaned out the engine with an old rag, a screwdriver, and a putty knife. While reporting the incident to his boss, another aviator by the name of Bob Reeve overheard the story and dubbed him "Mudhole." Unfortunately, (or fortunately?) for Smith, the name stuck and even lived on to grace the Cordova Airport.



*Ralph Wien 1927. Alaska Digital Archives, UAF-2010-50-354*

#### Kotzebue's Ralph Wien Memorial Airport

Ralph Wien came to Alaska in 1925 with his older brother Noel Wien and in 1927 the two brothers started an airline business in Nome. Their company eventually became Wien Alaska Airways with Ralph serving as the vice president. Their early fleet

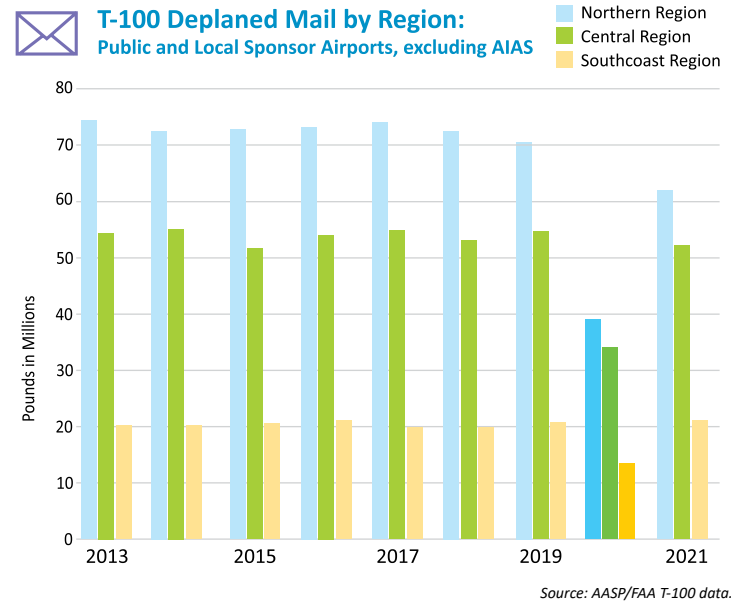
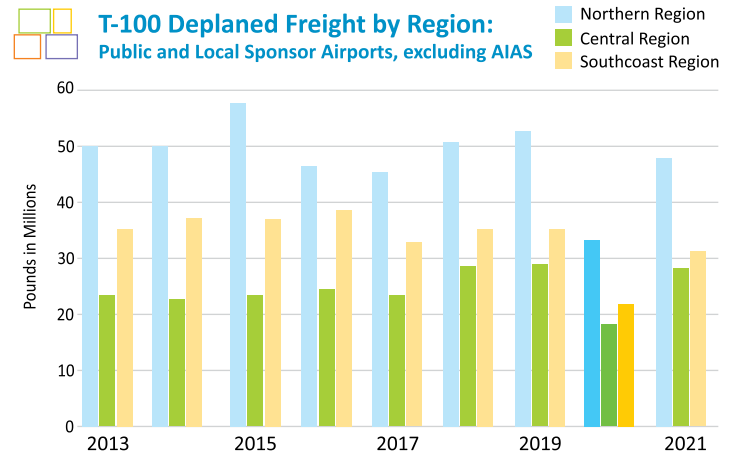
## By the Numbers continued

U.S. airlines were even fulfilling requests to carry new types of cargo, some on converted passenger planes, including, but not limited to, 6 tons of black soap, five charters of dog food from Germany to Denver, a charter full of mayonnaise and a request to transport 800 tons of Bacardi rum (Airlines for America/FreightWaves, Jan. 19, 2022). By November 2020, carriers such as Alaska Airlines Air Cargo had developed a new system for strapping cargo into passenger seats and stacking Amazon packages into the overhead bins. By December 2020, Alaska Airlines was transporting the new COVID-19 vaccine to the state's rural communities. While 2020 still holds the title of "worst year ever" for aviation, unprecedented increases in cargo may have served to counteract some of the negative impacts wrought by the pandemic. With e-commerce still booming in 2022, many expect that the pandemic has permanently altered global buying habits toward online purchases and increased cargo demand. This trend, while carrying with it some troubling environmental consequences, may serve as an important stop-gap for the aviation industry until passenger traffic fully rebounds, expected no earlier than 2023 or 2024.

With all this chaos on the national aviation scene, how did air cargo in Alaska compare? Did the pandemic's effects on global cargo impact the Alaska aviation system in similar or different ways? To start to answer these questions, it is important to understand how the Alaska aviation system is unique compared to that of the country as a whole. One major difference is that 176 of Alaska's 235 DOT&PF-managed rural airports have no road access. These off-road airports serve as lifelines for the state's remote communities for essentials like mail, groceries, and transportation. Another defining factor is the By-pass Mail Program, which is unique to Alaska and has implications for cargo. One other significant difference pertains to the state's international airport system (ANC/FAI). Due to legislation passed in 2004, the Alaska International Airport System (AIAS) has "the most liberalized air cargo transfer rights in the country," allowing international cargo carriers to make interline transfers at Ted Stevens International that would not be possible or financially feasible elsewhere.

The *FAA: Cargo* data for FAI and ANC *do* reflect broader pandemic trends with a 25% increase in total pounds of cargo from 2019-2020 (for comparison, average annual percent change in cargo for 2013-2019 was about 2%). However, breaking out the FAA T-100 data for Deplaned Mail and Freight tells a slightly different story for the rest of Alaska. While the *FAA: Cargo* data encompasses only AIAS airports (ANC and FAI), the T-100 data also includes the Alaska rural airport system. This data shows a pronounced *decrease* in enplaned and deplaned mail and freight in 2020, when cargo was booming elsewhere. When the AIAS airports ANC and FAI are removed, as shown in the graphs at right, the pattern still holds. Additionally, Northern Region becomes the highest amount in pounds over Central Region for both deplaned mail and freight.

So why is this? The number of off-road rural Alaska communities north and west of Fairbanks that depend heavily on aviation for cargo bumps Northern Region into the lead for total pounds of mail and freight deplaned when the AIAS airports are removed. As for the decrease in mail and freight during 2020, several factors are likely at play. At the peak of COVID impacts in 2020, many rural communities served by the aviation system placed strict restrictions on travel to protect their local populations from the virus. Additionally, as many Americans experienced, USPS operations



struggled to keep up with demand amidst increases in mail volume, backlogs, and staff shortages due to sickness. The cancellation of passenger flights within Alaska also decreased carriers' capacity to transport mail and freight to remote communities, as most flights carry both people and packages. While the *FAA: Cargo* dataset is helpful to understanding trends in international interline cargo traveling *through* Alaska's international airport system, the T-100 data allows us to focus on the local effects that the pandemic had on cargo delivery to Alaska's communities.



# Construction Season: This Summer's Airport Projects

- 16A: Nunapitchuk Airport Improvements
- 4A2: Atmautluak Airport Improvements
- 4KA: Tununak Airport AWOS
- ADQ: Kodiak Airport Perimeter Fencing Upgrade
- ANC: Anchorage Airport Miscellaneous Improvement Projects
- BET: Bethel Airport Main Runway Reconstruction
- BRW: Barrow Airport Pavement Overlay
- BTT: Bettles Airport Improvements
- CDB: Cold Bay Airport Chemical SRE Building
- CDV: Cordova Airport ARFF Building Replacement
- CFK: Chefnorak Airport Rehabilitation
- CJX: Crooked Creek Airport Improvements and AWOS
- D76: Noorvik Airport Rehabilitation
- DUY: Kongiganak Airport Improvements
- EAA: Eagle Airport Electrical Enclosure Building Replacement
- EWU: Newtok Airport Relocation
- GST: Gustavus Airport Gate Improvements
- IIK: Kipnuk Airport Rehabilitation
- KAL: Kaltag Airport Improvements
- KEK: Ekwok Airport Resurfacing
- KNW: New Stuyahok Airport Resurfacing
- KSM: St. Mary's Airport Improvements
- LHD: Lake Hood Seaplane Base Runway Rehabilitation
- MCG: McGrath Airport Reconstruction and Erosion Protection
- MTM: Metlakatla Seaplane Facility Replacement
- OME: Nome Airport Paving
- OTZ: Kotzebue Runway Settlement
- PEV: Perryville Airport AWOS
- PHO: Point Hope Runway Realignment
- PKA: Napaskiak Snow Removal Equipment Building
- SLQ: Sleetmute Airport Resurfacing
- SNP: Saint Paul Airport Visual Aid Replacement
- TOG: Togiak Airport Resurfacing
- YAK: Yakutat Airport Visual Aid Beacon
- Z13: Akiachak Airport AWOS



## 2022 DOT&PF Airport Construction Projects



Galena airport 2018 reconstruction.

Summer is coming, and you know what that means – it's time for construction to begin at many airports near you (and across the state)! But don't fret, these projects shouldn't slow you down. While runway closures will occur on some projects, construction safety and phasing plans (CSPPs) work to minimize impacts to carriers and the public as much as possible while the work is completed. This year's DOT&PF airport construction projects range from pavement and runway improvements to

building upgrades and weather observation system installations. Some highlights include runway repaving at Nome (OME), seaplane facility replacement at Metlakatla (MTM), and budget-saving coordinated airport resurfacing projects at Ekwok (KEK) and New Stuyahok (KNW). About 35 projects will occur this season to keep Alaskans moving year-round across the aviation system.



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## FACT SHEET

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# What is the Alaska Aviation System Plan?

The Alaska Aviation System Plan (AASP) is a long-term, strategic planning process that provides detailed information on the current state of the system, evaluates aviation issues, analyzes trends, assesses challenges, and provides tools so that planners, policy makers, and decision makers can prioritize limited funding. The system plan feeds aviation specific information to the Alaska Statewide Long-Range Transportation Plan and meets the state and federal requirements for system planning.

The first AASP was completed in 1986 and updated in 1996. In 2008, the State of Alaska adopted a continuous system planning model, and subsequent updates are referred to as phases; this reflects the ongoing, dynamic nature of the process.

All aviation system planning processes incorporate several common steps including inventory, forecasts, classification of airport roles, defining performance measures, and prioritizing needs.

## Each phase builds on prior phase work to continually improve and update tools and information

### Phase I 2008 - 2013

- Developed mission & goals
- Public involvement plan
- Performance measures
- Classifications
- Inventory
- Forecasts
- Built website platform
- Economic impacts
- Special studies

### Phase II 2013 - 2019

- Revised performance measures
- Updated public involvement plan
- Digitized CIMP program
- Automated airport needs book
- Website expansion
- Expanded data
- New data connections
- New reports
- CIMP inspections on iPad platform

### Phase III 2020 - 2025

- Ongoing**
  - Prior phase evaluation
  - Identify issues
  - Update public involvement plan
  - Implement Adopt-an-Airport
- Planned Phase III Tasks**
  - Update inventory
  - Review performance measures
  - Conduct fleet analysis
  - Review runway length standards
  - Special studies

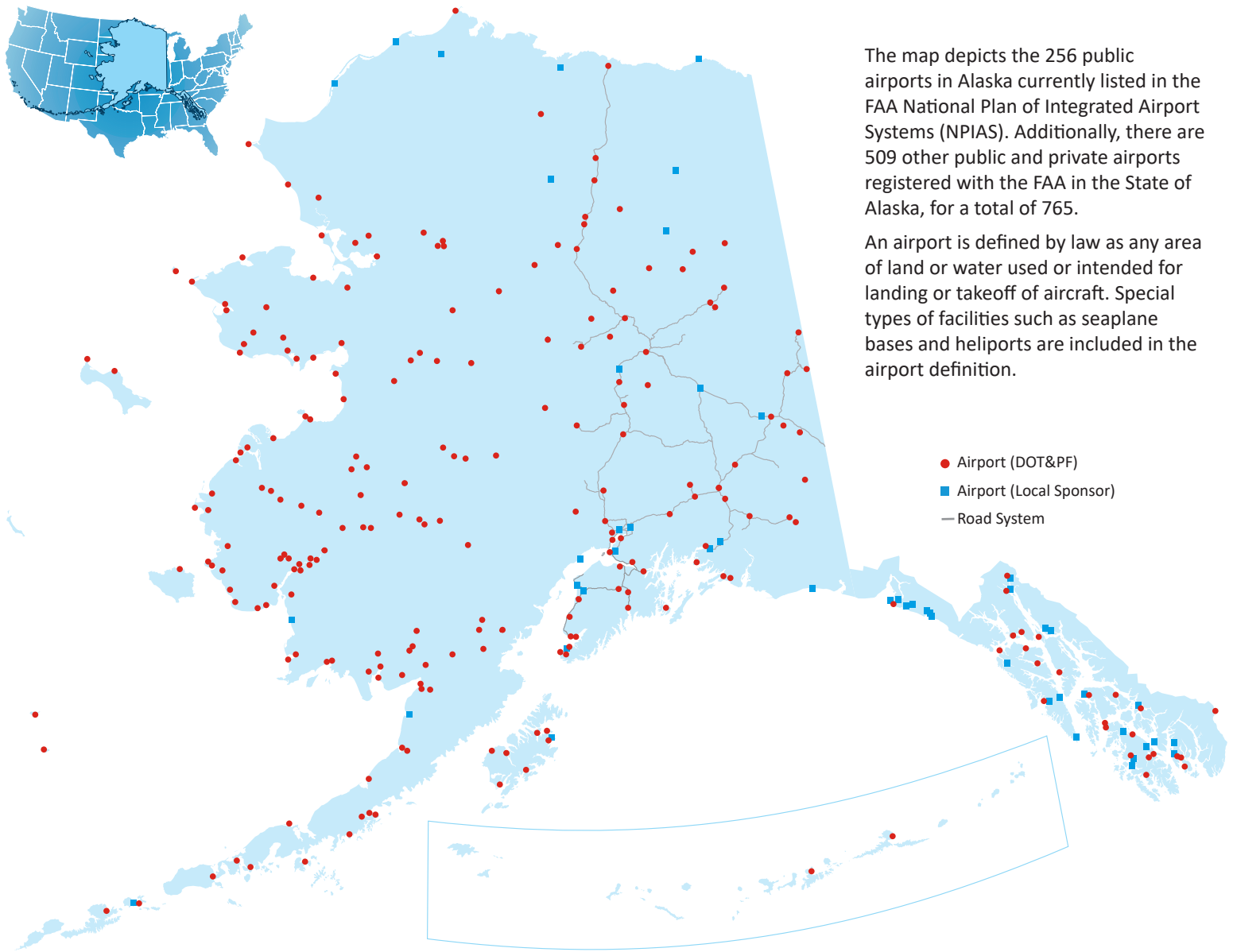
## How does the system plan help me?

- ✓ **Pilots:** Provides extensive information on airports, seaplane bases, and airstrips across the state. Links to weather cameras, photos, contacts, and airport project status.
- ✓ **Airport Sponsors:** Detailed information and planning tools for future development, PCI reports, forecasts, and special studies.
- ✓ **Elected Officials:** Inventory, needs list, performance measures, economic impact studies, and maps.
- ✓ **General Public:** Information on airports, air carriers, links to communities, and state airport maps.
- ✓ **Consultants, Planners, and Engineers:** The most up-to-date repository of airport information from ALPs to inventory, runway data, photos, and CIMP inspections.

System planning also performs special studies individualized to address the unique nature of the system. The information defines the system and prioritizes needs to ensure Alaska has a system of airports to meet the needs of the people today and in the future.

Phase III kicked off in the fall of 2020 with an updated Public Involvement Plan, a survey of stakeholder priorities, and a review and evaluation of prior work products. The process of reviewing previous reports allows for an assessment of relevance and a determination of the most effective use of limited funding in the next phase. The evaluation is supplemented by a survey of all stakeholders to prioritize issues and confirm the need for new studies or updates to existing information.





The map depicts the 256 public airports in Alaska currently listed in the FAA National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems (NPIAS). Additionally, there are 509 other public and private airports registered with the FAA in the State of Alaska, for a total of 765.

An airport is defined by law as any area of land or water used or intended for landing or takeoff of aircraft. Special types of facilities such as seaplane bases and heliports are included in the airport definition.

- Airport (DOT&PF)
- Airport (Local Sponsor)
- Road System

The AASP conforms to the standards set by FAA for Airport System Planning (AC 150/5070-7) and the FAA Airport Improvement Program (AIP) Handbook (FAA Order 5300-38D, Change 1).

A system plan documents how the individual airports fit within the transportation system and imparts vital aviation information to inform long-range state transportation plans, regional plans, and airport master plans.

A sensible and adaptable statewide aviation system plan that recognizes Alaska's dependence on aviation, unique operating environment, lack of basic infrastructure, fiscal constraints, and regional diversity is a fundamental part of statewide planning.

Through public involvement and outreach, the AASP team seeks to partner with local sponsors, tribal governments, pilots, and other stakeholders to provide a plan, data repository, and tools that increase productivity.

The AASP relies heavily on input from, and the participation of, our stakeholders. The [Public Involvement Plan \(PIP\)](#) outlines a variety of opportunities for public participation in the process. Requests for specific maps, targeted studies, or other documentation are welcome. Visit the AASP web site at: [www.alaskaasp.com](http://www.alaskaasp.com) and click on the contacts tab or contact our planning team directly.



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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 # 3-02-0000-024-2018) 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.





## FACT SHEET

December 2021

# Capital Improvement and Maintenance Program (CIMP)

The Capital Improvement and Maintenance Program, more commonly referred to as the CIMP, is part of the overarching Alaska Aviation System Plan (AASP) and continues to develop and expand throughout each project phase. This innovative tool began with pen-and-paper checklists and advanced into a comprehensive, digitized assessment and customized web application.

- **AASP Phase I:** Conceptualized and created a statewide airport needs list and digital checklists.
- **AASP Phase II:** Expanded program to the Apple platform and added new checklists. Conducted over 200 inspections across the airport network.
- **AASP Phase III:** Currently underway to implement improvements and create more efficiencies throughout the process.

The State of Alaska DOT&PF is responsible for the planning, maintenance, and operation of 237 airports, spanning an area one-fifth the size of the Lower 48 states. With limited personnel, extreme weather events, and declining budgets, CIMP inspections are a crucial tool in the planning and development of Alaska's airports. Inspections identify, prioritize, and support the planning of capital airport needs across the system.

## What is a CIMP inspection?

CIMP inspections are critical components for planning and development of Alaska's airports. Inspections are conducted by a variety of DOT&PF employees and contractors across the state and can take anywhere from a few hours at a small, rural airport to several days at a major hub. The process begins with a systematic review of documents, interviews with key stakeholders, and communication with staff in Program Development, Aviation Design, Maintenance and Statewide Leasing.

Field inspections involve rating checklist items along with photographing standard elements and deficiencies. Checklists cover all facets of an airport, including building components, environmental considerations, fencing, gravel surfaces, pavement markings and preservation, access roads, miscellaneous resources, safety and equipment, seaplane infrastructure, visual aids, lease lots, and tank and mobile fuel. Using a customized iPad application, inspectors rate conditions on an "A" through "F" scale, taking notes and photos, and use this information to create needs for future project consideration. Any "D" or "F" rating is considered a deficiency that needs further development to repair or reconstruct during the next project.

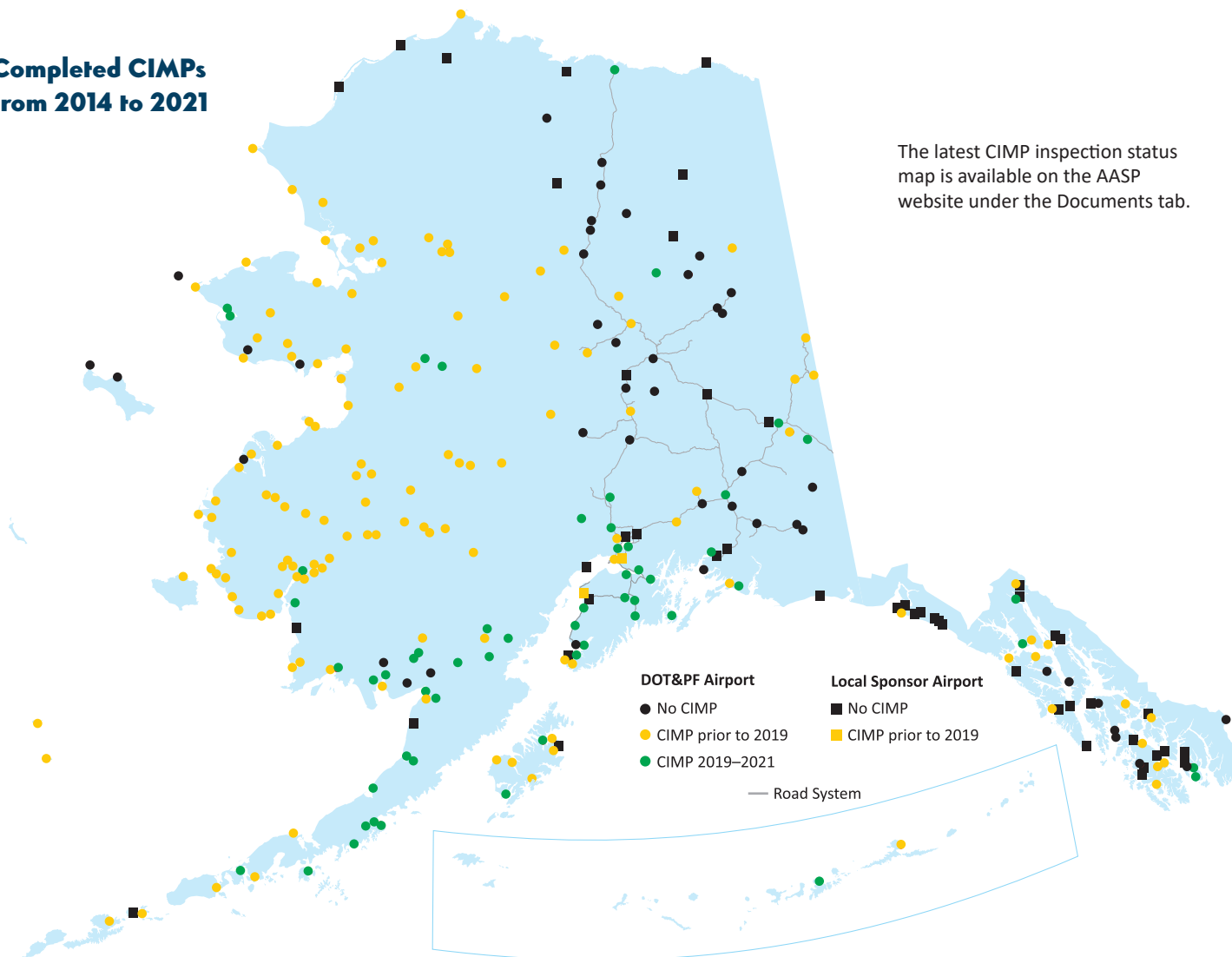
## D & F Ratings by Region

	Central	Northern	Southcoast
Environmental	272	202	197
Gravel Surfacing	302	150	143
Buildings	213	232	247
Pavement Markings	5	33	77
Pavement Preservation	26	90	111
Safety	103	55	70
Visual Aids	272	210	189
Resources	73	30	81

*Over 270 CIMP inspections are listed since 2014! The latest deficiency summary is available on the AASP website.*

The inspector loads the results into the AASP website and reviews their findings. Then the regional M&O Specialist performs a secondary review—consulting with functional groups as needed—and approves the CIMP.

## Completed CIMP from 2014 to 2021



Approved inspections and deficiency reports are viewable under the Facilities tab on the AASP's internal website. The Reports tab includes other data filters such as individual ratings, by checklist, or by specific subset (statewide, DOT&PF region, or maintenance district). Across the system, "F" ratings are commonly seen on Building, Gravel Surfacing, and Visual Aid checklists, indicating needs for future reconstruction and repair projects to keep infrastructure from deteriorating.

### How the AASP can help you!

At the click of a button, the AASP internal website can assist with future planning of airport improvements, from collecting as-builts to tracking grant history. Don't have a login? Fill out a request form at <https://internal.alaskaasp.com/>.

### What's next?

The CIMP inspection is a dynamic process, continually improving through constant interaction with users of the system. A Technical Advisory Group (TAG) is currently working to explore application updates and streamline the process for the future.

The AASP team continues to hold work group meetings, engage stakeholders, and work with the DOT&PF functional groups to improve the CIMP process. If you have questions or suggestions on process improvements, reach out to your regional maintenance personnel, airport planner, or directly to the AASP Team.



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# Aviation Project Evaluation Board (APEB)

The development of airport capital projects is a lengthy process that includes project identification, evaluation, prioritization, planning, environmental analysis, design, Right of Way (ROW) and acquisition, funding, construction, and financial close out. Airport projects across Alaska are typically planned, designed, and constructed based upon expected cost reimbursement through the [Federal Aviation Administration \(FAA\) Airport Improvement Program \(AIP\)](#).

## AIP history

The FAA AIP grant program was established in 1982 under the federal Airport and Airway Improvement Act. Funds obligated for the AIP are drawn from the federal Airport and Airway Trust Fund, which is supported by user fees, fuel taxes, and other similar revenue sources. The amount of available funding is determined by public law.

## AIP funding use requirements

AIP program funding is eligible for use in meeting a wide range of airport funding needs, such as constructing new and rehabilitating existing airport surfaces and buildings, as well as purchasing equipment necessary for safe airport operations. Access to these federal AIP grant funds requires compliance with specific federal regulations and airport safety standards.

The federal AIP grant program has specific requirements, processes, and stipulations that public airport sponsors must follow to obtain grant funding for airport projects. Infrastructure needs far outweigh available funding each year, and project awards are prioritized based on eligibility and justification.

## DOT&PF project priorities for use of AIP funding

The Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) process for establishing airport project development priorities is the Aviation Project Evaluation Board (APEB). The

Needed Airport  
Improvement  
Identified

Division of  
Program  
Development  
Creates Project  
Nomination

Project Scored  
by APEB

High Scoring  
Projects Added  
to the Airport  
Capital Project  
Funding Plan

APEB process began in 1996 to prioritize projects that meet the qualifications for AIP grant funding. DOT&PF adheres to FAA guidelines and eligibility requirements while considering the unique circumstances that 82% of Alaska communities are not connected to the contiguous road system. Many of these communities rely exclusively on the airport to meet their access needs.

## How does the APEB process work?

The APEB process begins with the identification of project needs at an airport. Documentation of project needs and justification as well as the project's cost estimate is needed. Two types of projects are nominated through this process – airfield improvements and airport building improvements. Other project types, such as master plans, capital maintenance work, and equipment, as well as some federally required security and safety projects are not routed through this process and are programmed separately.

Project nominations are created by the DOT&PF Division of Program Development and Statewide Planning in collaboration with maintenance staff, regional aviation design, and other sections as needed. Projects are then scored by the APEB, which is comprised of the following six members: three Planning Chiefs (Central, Northern, and Southcoast), Statewide Aviation Division Operations Manager, Development Manager, and the Deputy Commissioner.



Legislative  
Authority  
Requested

Project Pre-  
Construction  
Activity is  
Completed and  
Approved

Project is Bid

Grant  
Application  
Submitted to  
FAA

FAA Issues  
Grant Offer

Construction  
Contract is  
Awarded

Project  
Construction is  
Initiated

Board members score the projects based on specific criteria for each category (airfield and building). Board meetings occur twice a year, with board members and aviation experts collaborating and discussing each project's scope and impacts to

the safety and successful operation of the airport in question. Each project receives a score that guides its placement in the DOT&PF AIP Spending Plan. To date, there are over \$1.7 billion in project needs that are scored and awaiting funding.

### Frequently Asked Questions:

**Q** What can my community do to increase likelihood of improvements to our airport?

**A** The APEB process is intended to help prioritize future development of AIP-eligible projects. Project scores can significantly increase with documented community support (local government resolution of support), inclusion in approved planning documents, a financial contribution, or by committing to provide materials, right-of-way, or assuming M&O responsibility at project completion.

**Q** How do I find out my project's APEB score?

**A** There are a number of ways to find out the project's score:

- Talk to your area planner or a Statewide Aviation planner
- The current spending plan with project scores is posted on the DOT&PF Aviation and Airports website on the News and Resources page. <https://dot.alaska.gov/airport-portal-newsres.shtml>

**Q** How can I bring a need to the attention of the APEB?

**A** The first step is to inform the designated planner for your airport. Planner contact information is available on the AASP website at: <https://alaskaasp.com>: under the Facilities tab, select your airport and then select the contacts tab on the left side of the screen. When reporting an issue, please provide as much detail as possible. Photographs are especially valuable!

**Q** My project scored relatively low at the last APEB. Will it ever get constructed?

**A** Low scoring APEB projects are generally repackaged and brought back if conditions have deteriorated at the airport or the work scope can be modified to boost the score. With new (and potentially high scoring) projects entering the queue every year, low scoring projects may not be funded for a considerable time period. If your project received a low score, carefully consider your options for increasing the score. The APEB scoring criteria is available on the DOT&PF website at: <https://dot.alaska.gov/stwdav/documents/APEB/CriteriaRevised10.1.10.pdf>



Galena airport reconstruction.



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## FACT SHEET

March 2022

# Project Development Process

## DOT&PF Rural Airport System

Projects to upgrade and improve rural Alaska airports owned by the State of Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) go through a process approved by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to obtain federal [Airport Improvement Program \(AIP\)](https://www.faa.gov/airports/aip/)<sup>1</sup> grant funding. AIP grants are available nationally to public-use airports included in the [National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems \(NPIAS\)](https://www.faa.gov/airports/planning_capacity/npias/current/media/NPIAS-2021-2025-Narrative.pdf)<sup>2</sup>. Because demand for AIP grant funds far exceeds the availability, FAA bases distribution of these limited funds on current national priorities and objectives. The statutory requirements and obligations associated with obtaining AIP grants are the responsibility of the airport owner or grant sponsor.

The DOT&PF rural airport system consists of 235 airports. The Division of Statewide Aviation (SWA) oversees policies, procedures, and programs to support the three DOT&PF regions in complying with FAA regulations and obtaining AIP grant funding to develop, construct, and improve those facilities. The following chart provides a high-level flow of how rural Alaska airport projects are identified, designed, prioritized for federal grant funding, bid, and constructed. Other airports utilize similar AIP-compliant processes appropriate to sponsors of a single airport.



Ralph Wien Memorial Airport, Kotzebue

### > Airport Need Identified

- > Airport needs are projects that need to be completed to preserve the airport, enhance safety, or improve service. The addition of runway edge lighting, construction of a Snow Removal Equipment Building (SREB), erosion repair, and pavement or gravel resurfacing are all examples of airport needs.
- > Needs are reported to the airport manager or airport planner by an air carrier, tenant, or the public.
- > Routine inspections identify needs, as does an update to the Airport Layout Plan (ALP) or Master Plan. This information is tracked in the Airport Needs List to inform future project development.

### > Project Defined

- > Airport planner (Division of Program Development) works with stakeholders and other DOT&PF sections to define project scope.
- > Airport planner gathers documentation, photos, and required justification, reviews planning documents, existing environmental concerns, and land ownership.
- > Calculations of runway length, width, and other airport geometry required to accommodate the largest aircraft routinely operating at the facility are completed. (critical aircraft determination).
- > Potential funding source and eligibility are determined.
- > Planning level cost estimate provided by DOT&PF Design.

### > Aviation Project Evaluation Board (APEB)

For additional information see [APEB Fact sheet](#).

- > Documents and information defining a proposed project are compiled by the airport planner into a project nomination.
- > All nominated projects are scored by the APEB based on specific criteria for building and airfield projects. The resulting scores facilitate consistent prioritization of limited project funding.
- > Communities with no road connection, who are reliant on their airport for year-round access, are more likely to receive higher scores.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.faa.gov/airports/aip/>

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.faa.gov/airports/planning\\_capacity/npias/current/media/NPIAS-2021-2025-Narrative.pdf](https://www.faa.gov/airports/planning_capacity/npias/current/media/NPIAS-2021-2025-Narrative.pdf)

## Capital Improvement Plan

- Scored project is entered into DOT&PF spending plan; also known as Airport Capital Improvement Plan (ACIP).
- APEB scored projects are placed in spending plan queue and depending on score and anticipated federal funding available, the project is assigned a funding year.
- Low scoring projects may sit in the queue for years. High scoring projects do not supersede projects previously programmed in the current budget year or the following two years.
- Unless determined an emergency, large construction projects typically take at least 3 years before they are funded and generally longer.

## Design

- Environmental considerations are addressed through the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process.
- DOT&PF determines if Right of Way (ROW), easements, and all other property ownership meet funding and construction requirements.
- Aviation Design tracks and updates the project Scope, Schedule, and Estimate (SSE). Projects that exceed the lesser of 100% or \$5M above the original estimate must be re-evaluated by the APEB.
- Depending on staffing levels and scheduling, project design is completed by in-house staff or consulted out to an engineering firm.

## Funding

- Federal funding availability varies by federal fiscal year and is based on legislation.
- DOT&PF acquires Legislative Authority (LA), authorizing the acceptance of federal grant funds and providing the required state match.
- A project bid solicitation is developed and advertised.
- Bids are reviewed, scored, and a contractor is selected.
- Available grant funding and LA is based on the design cost estimate, if bids substantially exceed this estimate the project could be delayed, phased, or reduced in scope.

## Construction

- Selected contractor is awarded the project.
- Construction typically takes one to three seasons, depending on project scope and location.
- Once construction is complete, there is an inspection process and formal acceptance of the improvements by the state and FAA.
- After final inspection, the project and corresponding grant funding must be closed out and airport information is updated.
- Most federal funded construction projects obligate DOT&PF to operate and maintain the airport for 20 years from project completion.

## Frequently Asked Questions:

### Q What is the most frequent cause of project delay?

A Right of Way (ROW) acquisition is a common factor in project delays. Often it is as simple as not having valid contact information for a listed property owner or it can be complicated by inaccurate property data, unanticipated environmental issues, or previously undocumented issues such as heritage sites.

### Q What factors are unique to project development in rural Alaska?

A Many areas of Alaska experience challenges transporting adequate gravel or other critical construction supplies to the project. Barge availability is seasonal and, in some locations, not available in years with low precipitation. The airport undergoing construction is often the only reliable transportation mode available to the community. Finding ways to improve the runway while allowing mail, supplies and medevacs to operate creates additional complexity in project development.



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Fairbanks International, Lake Hood, and Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airports are part of the Alaska International Airport System (AIAS). Unlike the rural airport system, AIAS is operated as a self-sustaining enterprise fund and not reliant on state general funds. Thus, any improvements to these airports run through a separate project selection process that includes public involvement in the Airport Master Plan and contractually required consultation with the air carriers operating at and paying fees to AIAS.

Another 36 airports in Alaska are owned and managed by local government entities rather than by DOT&PF. These airports are listed by the /FAA as part of the National Airport System, are eligible for AIP funding, and must meet FAA guidance for projects, but have their own project priority process.

