



# MOUNTAIN WAVE

Quarterly publication of the Colorado Dept. of Transportation-Aeronautics Division

SPRING 2003

## 2003 AIP FUNDING APPROVED Feds Support Airports

It was late in February before the **Omnibus Fiscal Year 2003 Appropriations Bill**, which included \$13.6B for FAA operations and \$5.2B for the Transportation Security Administration, was approved by the Congress. Part of that funding package was the \$3.4B Airport Improvement Program budget in support of the airport infrastructure development and expansion. Of the 2003 total, \$20M was earmarked for the continuation of the Small Community Air Service Development Program, which underwrites incentives and innovative means of attracting commuter service to small communities not otherwise served; and \$114M to the Essential Air Service program which guarantees subsidies to scheduled airlines flying into under-served markets.

Full funding as proposed by the Administration was made available for the Contract Control Tower program (\$78M) for building and equipping new air traffic control facilities and the Contract Tower Cost-sharing program (\$6M) for operating costs at these sites. Primary airports already accepted into the Contract Control Tower program may now opt to use their commercial service entitlement portions of federal Airport Improvement Program dollars for tower construction.

With the annual AIP budget increased by \$100M from its 2002 level, the federal government continues its commitment to the nation's system of airports. Colorado planners are daily working closely with the State's airports to insure that quality projects are ready when such funding is available.



*Work continues at Stevens Field in Pagosa Springs to meet the demands of increased resort traffic into southwestern Colorado.*



*Wray Municipal Airport's new runway on the eastern plains was recently funded through the FAA's Airport Improvement Program.*

Of immediate concern to the Colorado Aeronautical Board and the Aeronautics Division is that sufficient revenues flow into the Aviation Fund to meet the growing demand from airports for State grants to assist in meeting local match requirements. Over the past eleven years, the Colorado Discretionary Aviation Grant program has supported local match for FAA funds in excess of \$7M.

During the same period, FAA Airport Improvement Program grants to small commercial service and general aviation airports have been in excess of \$336M.

# THE DIRECTOR'S CHATROOM

**Travis Vallin, CDOT-Aeronautics Division Director**

## Planning on the Go!

It is no surprise that the economy is not what is used to be and, as a direct result, neither is the activity level of aviation throughout Colorado. Now don't get me wrong, - aviation in the state is still alive and well. But as an agency which is cash-funded or one that utilizes only the revenues directly collected from aviation fuel taxes, we are the first to notice the change.

At the last Colorado Aeronautical Board meeting we reported to the members of the CAB that our year-to-date fuel tax revenues were considerably lower than our original projections. What makes this even more difficult is that we are currently required to allocate funds in the year in which we collect them. So last October at the annual grant hearings, the CAB tentatively awarded airport grants to local communities equal to the amount of our FY 03 revenue projections. We felt fairly safe with our revenue estimates going into the start of the year, because we basically used the trend line from FY 02 in which total aviation fuel consumption was down almost 35% statewide. This was largely due to the impacts of 9/11 and the temporary shutdown of the aviation system throughout the country.

Being faced with this shortfall from projections, the CAB decided to proceed by having the Aeronautics Division communicate with airports who were grant recipients to see if they could complete their planned construction projects with reduced financial assistance from the CAB. In addition to reducing the amount of state grant funding, three reconstruction projects were put on temporary hold until additional funding becomes available. As you might have guessed, most of these conversations were not the most welcome piece of news from the Aeronautics Division – however, we were very impressed and pleased with how the airport managers - as well as city and county officials - had a “can-do” attitude to our current situation. I believe this is one of the best attributes of the aviation community and the CAB and the Aeronautics Division sincerely appreciate their help and understanding.

We believe that, in addition to the economic slowdown, we have also not been receiving the full amount of aviation fuel tax because of some recent oil company mergers. We have found over the years that anytime there is a change in the management or ownership of aviation fuel suppliers, there is a very good potential that the fuel tax payments will not be correctly reported. We have already identified a large fuel supplier who has not been reporting sales tax revenues and we are currently working with the Department of Revenue and the fuel supplier to correct this oversight. This will hopefully mean additional funding to complete all of the original projects that were tentatively awarded by the CAB last October.

We are also receiving some legislative assistance through House Bill 1073, which helps the Division of Aeronautics close a fuel tax loophole on the 4 cents per gallon excise tax on jet fuel. House Bill 1073 clarifies the definition of a *scheduled air carrier* as well as what operations are and are not eligible for the fuel tax exemption.

Another aviation bill that we are currently working on is Senate Bill 49. This piece of legislation would give the CAB and Aeronautics Division the authority to become continuously appropriated and would allow the CAB to provide formula tax refunds as well as grants to the airport community as the funds were collected throughout the year.

As we continue work through these very interesting times, all of us at the Aeronautics Division and the CAB appreciate the aviation community's understanding and flexibility as we are committed to working with each of the individual airport grant recipients to ensure a successful project.

## EXPERTS SAY AIRPORT CAPACITY A CONCERN FOR THE FUTURE

As we recover from the present economic stresses and anxieties in the years to come, experts in the aviation field will once again have to address the concerns they had identified prior to 9/11. Our airports will need more concrete, more terminals, and more intermodal facilities to mesh the needs for ground and air travel. The findings in the quote below are food-for-thought.

*“The FAA’s **Airport Capacity Benchmarks Report of 2001** indicates that many of the nation’s busiest airports were at or above capacity for at least some portion of the day in 2000. According to the report, 27 major airports in the U.S. were considered seriously congested, a number FAA projects will grow to 31 by 2007. According to the Commission on the Future of the U.S. Aerospace Industry, estimates of the cost of aviation delays to the U.S. economy range from \$9 billion in 2000 to over \$30 billion annually by 2015. Without improvement, the combined economic cost of delays over the period 2000 to 2012 will total an estimated \$170 billion.”*

In preparing the legislation which would reauthorize **AIR 21**- the broad funding program which has under-written much of the support for airport development in the past 5 years - Transportation Secretary, Norman Minetta, called for substantial investments in the National Airspace infrastructure. The Secretary affirmed he would call for investment that would “ensure our preparedness for a return to the demand levels of 2000 by funding airport capacity enhancements at record levels.”

Also on the Congressional plate is the urgency to bolster weakening airlines in the light of current economic woes. Travel uncertainties complicated by the war effort have caused airline bookings to drop nearly 40% - and the Air Transport Association (ATA) anticipates net airline losses in 2003 to reach \$10.7B. The airline jitters have cost a loss of nearly 2000 flights daily and almost 70,000 airline jobs.

Several airline bailout proposals are in the works - including the government’s assumption of costly security enhancements and a possible suspension of federal tax on jet fuel until conditions improve.



**1st Flight - 1903**

### **COUNTDOWN TO KITTY HAWK**

1903 - THE CENTENNIAL OF FLIGHT - 2003

What was the triumph of December 17, 1903, soon translated into a tough year for the beleaguered Brothers. Because there was little way to make a living from aviation, the Wrights decided to move their experiments closer to Dayton, so that they could keep an eye on their bicycle business and move back home with the Bishop and Mrs. Wright.

They secured the right to use Huffman Prairie, open land between Dayton and Springfield, OH, where in spring 1904, they built a hangar and *Flyer 2* – practically a clone of the historic Kitty Hawk machine. But it took nearly 40 attempts from May through October of 1904 before the first successful flight of 600 feet. Wilbur determined that the craft needed to move at least *27 to 28 MPH relative to the wind* and they recognized that they lacked the steady headwinds in Ohio that propelled them at Kitty Hawk.

So on *Flyer 3*, the Wrights nearly doubled the size of the elevator and rudder and moved them about twice the distance from the wings. They added two fixed vertical vanes (called blinkers) between the elevators and gave the wings a very slight dihedral. They disconnected the rudder from the wing-warp control and built separate handles for each. But they continued the use of the original, underpowered engine built by Charlie Taylor which had been fitted to *Flyer 1* and *Flyer 2*.

In early October 1905, Wilbur flew the refined aircraft nearly 39 miles in more than 24 minutes until *Flyer 3* ran out of gas.

Four days after this first truly successful flight in Ohio, the brothers wrote the Secretary of War offering to sell him the world’s first practical aircraft. Failing to hear the response they wanted, they determined to market their invention themselves and began the long process of obtaining a U.S. Patent.

## DIRECTORY UPDATE READY SOON

The newly-revised **2003-2004 Colorado Airports Directory** with expanded airport information and full-color graphics are now at the printers and should be ready for FREE distribution to pilots and airport users no later than June.

Watch for a link on our:

www.colorado-aeronautics.org website, letting you know that a free copy is available by visiting the CDOT-Aeronautics Division offices at

5126 Front Range Parkway  
Watkins, CO 80137

You may also receive a copy through the mail for a \$4 postage and handling fee.

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## New CDOT Planning Initiative

In November of 2000, the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) adopted the 2020 Statewide Transportation Plan. This 20-year plan identifies and prioritizes the future needs within the state for roads, bridges, public transit vehicles, rail, aviation and bicycle/pedestrian facilities. It is also the blueprint for utilizing federal, state and local transportation revenues to improve and maintain Colorado's transportation system. The plan reflects priorities identified by the state in cooperation with local and regional officials and the public. The plan, now referred to as the 2030 Statewide Transportation Plan, is also an important tool for providing information to transportation decision makers. CDOT recently began the process of updating this plan with the intention of its being adopted by the Colorado Transportation Commission by June 2005.

During the last update, airports throughout the state were involved in the aviation element of the plan. Technical Advisory Committees (TAC) located within their respective Transportation Planning Region (there are 15 TPR's within the state) consisting of airport representatives were created and worked to identify and prioritize their capital improvement needs for the 20 year planning period. The Aeronautics Division will be contacting airports to once again set-up Regional Technical Advisory Committees for the purpose of updating the aviation element of the plan.

One of the potential benefits to airports resulting from the update could be the creation of additional or enhanced funding sources. An outcome of the 2020 plan was the creation of the State Infrastructure Bank, making \$3M available to airports as low-interest loans.

We look forward to once again working with airports throughout the state as we go forward with the 2030 Statewide Transportation Plan Update. Airports will be contacted sometime in May with more details. Until then, our thanks in advance for your help in this process.

## ALAN WEICHMANN RETIRES

A long time friend of Colorado aviation has decided to reach out for different challenges. Alan Weichmann, who for the past 14 years was the manager of the FAA Denver Airports District Office, retired at the first of March. He left the states of Colorado, Wyoming and Utah with a vastly improved system of airports as a result of his vision and alertness to the needs of the aviation community.

Alan vows to play a little golf and become active in a number of part-time interests. His replacement has yet to be announced.

The Colorado aviation community salutes Alan Weichman and offers its sincere thanks for the commitment he has shown to airports throughout the state. He will be missed!

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## ***PILOT ALERT!! PILOT ALERT!!***

Because of major construction on Runway 02/20 at the **Durango-La Plata County Airport**, be advised that the following restrictions to operations have been put in place.

April 14-May 1	Runway shortened-south 1/3
May 1-May 31	Parallel taxiway will be used in place of the runway
May-31-June-20	Runway shortened-north 1/3

**Because of these limitations, the airport will be open for Day-VFR traffic only; no touch-and-go's are approved. Monitor 122.8 at all times.**

Be sure to check Notams before you arrive and depart the Airport. For any further information, please contact the airport administration at 970-247-8143.

*MOUNTAIN WAVE* is a quarterly publication of the Colorado Department of Transportation Aeronautics Division.

*Write us at:* CDOT-Aeronautics Division  
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*Or call us at:* 303-261-4418  
*Visit our website at:*

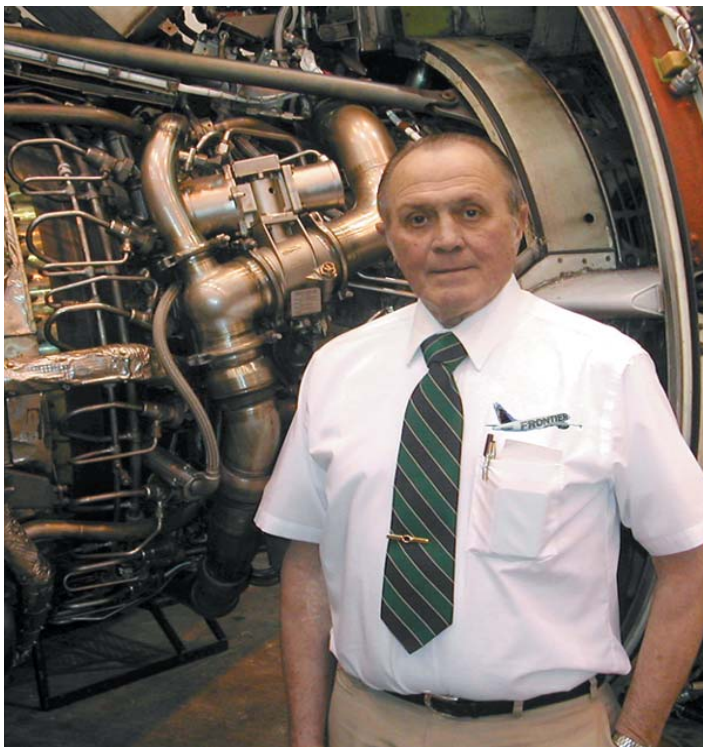
[www.colorado-aeronautics.org](http://www.colorado-aeronautics.org)

## Coloradoan Named Maintenance Technician of the Year

To an already very impressive resume, add AVIATION MAINTENANCE TECHNICIAN OF THE YEAR for Littleton, CO native, Tom Hendershot. Holder of airframe and powerplant certification with inspection authorization, Tom Hendershot of Frontier Airlines has contributed to his profession for the past 47 years. A certified flight instructor, Tom has more than 22,000 flight hours.

As has been the case for the past 40 years, a number of aviation groups, including AOPA, the Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA), General Aviation Manufacturers Association (GAMA) and Professional Aviation Maintenance Association (PAMA) and others have selected outstanding individuals to be honored as *Aviation Maintenance Technician of the Year* - Littleton resident, Tom Hendershot; *Certified Flight Instructor (CFI) of the Year* - Jeff Edwards of Chesterfield, MO; *Avionics Technician of the Year* - Al Ingle of Tallahassee, FL; and *Aviation Safety Counselor of the Year* - Jim McDonald of Jacksonville AR.

FAA Administrator, Marion Blakey, will honor this year's **National General Aviation Award** winners at the EAA AirVenture 2003 at Oshkosh, WI later in the summer.



## TWO NEW AWOS ON LINE

Two new AWOS sites, numbers 7 and 8 in the continuing program to provide real-time weather information from Colorado's mountain terrain, will be officially on line just as soon as FCC certification is complete - hopefully in the next several weeks.

The **Kremmling AWOS** - located adjacent to McElroy Field in Kremmling - will be available at 118.425 and 970-724-9659.

The **Saguache AWOS** can be reached on 118.625 and 719-655-2229.

## ALTERNATE AIRPORT ADVISED

Major runway reconstruction is planned for the Yampa Valley Regional Airport near Hayden **beginning May 5 and running through June 13**. *No flights will go in or out of HDN during that time.*

Alternate airports are **Craig-Moffat County Airport (CAG)** and **Steamboat Springs (SBS)**.

**Runway 07/25 at Craig is 5600 X 100 ft.** with a load bearing capability of 40,000 lbs. dual wheel gross weight. Heavier aircraft are encouraged to use another facility.

Use of the STOL port at **Steamboat Springs (Runway 14/32 - 4452 X 100 ft.)** should be limited to light aircraft only.

Refer to the latest NOTAMs before initiating flight. For more specific information about the closure of the Yampa Valley Regional Airport during construction, feel free to contact YVRA Airport Manager, Jim Parker, at 970-276-3669.

## The Reality of Recession Hits Home

What began this fall as a season so full of promise and fulfillment of the Aeronautical Board's long-term goal to meet the grant needs of the statewide airport community, has met some financial bumps in the road. All of us hope they are only "speed bumps" and that our revenues will recover in the near future. But, as we close out the Spring 2003 edition of *Mountain Wave*, Division staff and CAB members are taking a hard look at possible alternatives to lower-than-expected funds.

Meeting the needs of every airport has always been the holy grail of the **Colorado Discretionary Aviation Grant** program. This year, it offered funding for more than \$4M projects including long-overdue runway rehabs, routine maintenance and assistance in matching the large federal dollars that are being offered for capital projects. But now, as the Division looks at revenue shortfalls, projects have had to be delayed, re-evaluated and scaled back.

Several likely causes can be identified to explain the nearly \$1M shortfall to projections for revenues collected from aviation fuel taxes. These tax revenues are the only source of grant funding available - and CDOT-Aeronautics and Department of Revenue staffs will continue to look for answers and ways to limit the anxiety. But for the short-term, airports have been alerted to the possible reduction or delay in grant awards being finalized.

What is of longer-term concern for planners, too, is the likelihood that the FAA Airport Improvement Program funds for infrastructure investment will increase in the next few years. Along with the increased dollars comes the increased need for local matching funds; the State grant program has always prioritized its participation with the local community to make certain that local match is available when needed. It will take some long and hard searching for the CAB to keep that perfect balance between maintenance and other needs and making certain that the federal funds have the local support to keep them in Colorado. We'll keep you posted!

A BIG Hurrah for the high flying guys and gals at Hopkins Field at Nucla in western Colorado. These folks set the **national record for the most boys and girls flown in one day at an EAA Young Eagles event.**

The more than 90 young people who took their first airplane ride from Hopkins Field in **ONE DAY** in spring 2002 was **greater than the number of rides given at any airport in the U.S. for the entire year** - Ain't life a KICK!

## Opps! Did we mislead you?

The Winter 2003 edition of *Mountain Wave* reported that work had begun between the FAA and the National Park Service to design site-specific overflight regulations aimed at cutting noise and preserving the natural beauty of our national parks.

What we did not make clear was that these regulations-in-progress were being designed *specifically for operations by commercial scenic tour operators* and was NOT intended as an effort to regulate your pleasure flight in the family C182.

*Mountain Wave* extends its apologies to the National Park Service and the FAA for inadvertently including misleading and erroneous information related to pending air tour regulations over national parks in its Winter 2003 edition. And we hope that you understand, as well.

### Watch

[www.colorado-aeronautics.org](http://www.colorado-aeronautics.org)  
for an expanded

## ANNUAL AVIATION ACTIVITY CALENDAR

A great place for you to tell  
Colorado what's happening!

Contact Darci Wert about putting your event  
on the web...303-261-4418



One of a number of "T-6" aircraft to attend the Fly-In at Nucla's Hopkins Field.

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## **Email for economy!**

Like so many other states, the costs of government in Colorado have gone up - and the loss of revenues brought about by the current unrest in the world, has triggered a serious shortfall into the state coffers.

The Colorado Aeronautical Board and the Aeronautics Division appreciates you as a member of our very special aviation community and we value our communications with you through our quarterly publication, *Mountain Wave*.

But in an effort to see our funds put to the best good, the Aeronautics Division once again asks that you consider receiving your monthly copy of *Mountain Wave* electronically. A reduction in printing costs and the expense of postage will greatly help our bottom line.

For some of us, an email copy simply doesn't work - and we're glad to provide you with your familiar hard copy. However, if you can accommodate receiving your copy of *Mountain Wave* electronically, would you please complete and mail the form on the back of this page.

As always, the Aeronautics Division's most important constituent is you, our supporter. We will always consider our communications with you our most vital resource.

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**Federal Airport Funds Approved**

**Division Sees Funding Shortfall**

**Two New AWOS Ready**

***Plus* 2003 Activity Calendar**