

Mountain Wave



FALL 2006

Quarterly newsletter of the Colorado Department of Transportation-Aeronautics Division

WHAT'S NEW IN THE SKIES

..a look at the latest entries
into the aircraft market



Showing great style are: (upper left) Adam A700, (center) Eclipse 500 (upper right) Spectrum Jet (lower right) HondaJet, (right below) Cessna Mustang and ATG Javelin (left below).



With the entrance into the market of the very light jet (VLJ) **Adam A700** and **Eclipse 500**, the 21st century began a new era in aircraft production. Now the **HondaJet** and **Diamond D-Jet** are coming on the horizon, with concept aircraft showcased for the first time at *AirVenture 2006*. The **Eclipse 500** received FAA certification in September - and Honda and Diamond made maiden appearances at Oshkosh to excite the flying public. Cessna surprised its followers with the **Next Generation Piston (NGP)** and its **Light Sport Aircraft (LSA)** proof-of-concept renditions.



With the additional inconveniences that are the fallout of continued bombing scares and extended security delays at airports, it is no wonder that corporate and professional travelers who can make the investment may look more keenly at the personal aircraft option. The **General Aviation Manufacturers Association (GAMA)** reports orders are up significantly for very light jet (VLJ) and biz jet aircraft during the first half of 2006.

And there's no shortage of players in the personal jet market. In various stages of development and certification, **Eclipse 500** and the **Adam Aircraft A500** push-pull are the only aircraft to have fully overcome the FAA certification hurdle, but **Cessna's Mustang** and **Adam Aircraft A700** both are running hard to the finish line. **HondaJet**, **PiperJet** and **Cessna CJ4** look at 2010 as production start-up; **Aerion** projects a service entry date of 2012 for its supersonic bizjet. New alliterations of **Dassault Falcon**, **Bombardier Challenger** and **Boeing BBJ** all promise to go higher, faster and farther - and on just a sip of petrol.

And suddenly, the aircraft industry is bombarding us the options for the checkbook - almost affordable in today's market.

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A TIME TO SAY THANKS

Travis Vallin, Aeronautics Division Director

By the time this edition of the *Mountain Wave* is printed, election season will be over. I am often asked during an election year where there will be some form of change in Colorado Politics which candidate for Governor would be most beneficial for airports and aviation throughout the state. The good news for everyone in aviation and air transportation is that both Republicans and Democrats care about aviation and the issues that impact Colorado Airports. Former US DOT Secretary Norman Mineta once said, "There are no Republican roads and Democrat highways. We all benefit from transportation, no matter which side you sit on" and I have found this to be true here in Colorado as well.

I would be remiss if I did not mention that over the past eight years **Governor Owens** and **CDOT Executive Director Tom Norton** have been wonderful to work for and everyone involved in aviation throughout the State of Colorado has benefited from their leadership and support!

Speaking of Support, all of us in Colorado owe a heart felt "Thank You" to **Lowell Johnson**, who is retiring this December from the FAA. Over the past 12 years, Lowell has served airports throughout the seven state **FAA Northwest Mountain Region** as the **Airports Division Manager**. His support and dedication to the development of airports is recognized by everyone who has worked with Lowell and his staff. The Colorado Aeronautical Board and Division of Aeronautics wish Lowell the very best in his retirement as it has been our pleasure working with him to develop Colorado airports over the past 12 years. THANKS, LOWELL!!

I also want to say "Thank You" to **Darci Wert** who as many of you know is the new **Aviation Education Director** for the **Wings Over the Rockies Museum**. When Darci took the newly-created job to develop a statewide aviation education program within the Aeronautics Division, nobody, including me, knew exactly where we were going to end up. Through her hands-on approach and dedication to aviation education, Darci has established a great foundation for the Division to build on and the good news is that we will continue to work with Darci and the **Wings Over the Rockies Museum** to further aviation education throughout Colorado.

On a final note, our five year report card is in! The update to the **Colorado Aviation Systems Plan** has just been completed which shows the effectiveness of the Colorado Aviation Discretionary Grant Program. In the previous plan, we identified performance measures or benchmarks for the entire aviation systems and with the update we can measure the improvement in performance of the system as a result of grant funding. For a copy of the Executive Summary of the Systems Plan, go to www.colorado-aeronautics.org or give us a call at (303) 261-4418 and we will be happy to send you a copy in the mail.

AVIATION TAXES REFLECT THE HEALTHY SKIES

Fuel tax reimbursements to Colorado airports can be seen as a barometer of the system's health.

Fuel tax formula refunds are based on reimbursements defined in legislation as a means of returning to the airports-of-origin \$.04 for each gallon of AvGas and non-commercial jet fuel sold to general aviation - and 65% of sales tax revenues collected on jet fuel sold to carriers operating out of Colorado's fourteen commercial airports. The same legislation also created and defined the responsibilities of the Aeronautics Division, which receives its operating budget and revenues for the discretionary grant program from funds not included in the reimbursements. Roughly, 35% of commercial jet fuel sales taxes and small amounts of excise taxes are available for such purposes.

Totals shown by the CDOT-Aeronautics Division in the year preceding June 30, 2006 reflect a greater proportion of commercial jet fuel sales tax revenues than in the past, ear-marked particularly from the State's principal airports .. in fact, sales tax revenues represent over \$10.2M of the \$11.58 total reimbursements during the mid-2005 to mid-2006 timeframe.

For the most part, statewide aviation appears to be recovered from the declines following 9/11. Increased fuel costs have, unfortunately, negatively impacted general aviation and numbers are down. Reimbursements of non-commercial excise taxes have fallen slightly from last year and as much as 30% from just five years ago. But, additional costs to commercial carriers are felt in increased percentage sales taxes as the gallon of jet fuel has risen dramatically.



Jet fuel sales taxes comprise roughly 85% of the total revenues through the Division's annual rebate program. Therefore, increases felt in reimbursements mean more funds are also available to the Aeronautical Board for award to statewide airports as individual project and statewide system grants that impact flight safety and security.

AVIATION SYSTEM PLAN



Chris Pomeroy, Senior Aviation Planner

After nearly a year of compiling, reviewing and formatting data, the **2005 Colorado Aviation System Plan (CASP)** is complete. Unveiled at the October 2006 CAO/Aeronautics Conference, the new CASP is an update to the last CASP completed in 2000. Since 1992, the Division of Aeronautics has updated its aviation system plan approximately every five years.

The Statewide Inventory and Implementation Plan, published in 2000, laid the groundwork for a new approach to planning for Colorado's system of airports. Goals for the Colorado airport system were established and translated into performance measures. For each of the system performance measures, benchmarks were also set. System performance measures and benchmarks were used to evaluate the airport system's performance. The aviation system plan released in 2000 provided the first report card for the Colorado airport system. In the report card, the performance measures are the categories used to grade the system and the benchmarks are actual tests applied to assess system performance.

The prior update to Colorado's aviation system plan was completed well in advance of 9/11. It goes without saying that both the commercial and the general aviation environments have changed since the prior plan. The focus of the 2005 update was to identify how system performance has changed since the last plan was completed in 2000. To accomplish this comparison, an updated system report card was prepared and captured performance of the Colorado system of airports as it was reported and evaluated in the 2005-2006 timeframe.

Recently, the commercial airline industry has been characterized by weak financial performance. Increasing passenger demand has been offset by even higher increases in airline operating and fuel costs. Many of the nation's legacy carriers have sought bankruptcy protection. As the legacy carriers have struggled, low cost carriers such as Frontier and Southwest have expanded in Colorado.

An increasing number of businesses rely on general aviation to meet their air travel needs. The frequency and availability of commercial airline service has diminished, and travel by commercial airlines continues to have a considerable hassle

factor. With the introduction of very light jets (VLJs), it is anticipated that more travelers may use on-demand general aviation service to reach destinations throughout the State. New security guidelines for general aviation airports, prepared by the Transportation Security Administration (TSA), were evaluated for the first time in this study.

The economic benefit of airports in Colorado is growing. When the system plan was published in 2000, the annual economic benefit of commercial (excluding Denver International) and general aviation airports in Colorado was estimated at \$5.4 billion. The most recent update to Colorado's economic impact analysis for its airport system shows that since the prior study, annual economic impact attributed to Colorado airports has increased to \$6.7 billion. In 2000, 44 of the system airports had an annual economic impact of \$1 million or greater. In 2005, 47 of the airports had an economic impact of \$1 million or greater. This helps to demonstrate not only the growing importance of the airports for the essential transportation services they support but also the very important role that airports throughout Colorado play in the statewide and local economies.

This information and much more can be found in the 2005 CASP Executive Summary on our website at: www.colorado-aeronautics.org. For more detailed information, contact Chris Pomeroy, Senior Aviation Planner, via e-mail at chris.pomeroy@dot.state.co.us or by phone at 303-261-4418.

VALLIN BECOMES NASAO CHAIRMAN

Colorado Aeronautics Division Director, Travis Vallin, was recently elected chairman of the **National Association of State Aviation Officials (NASAO) Executive Committee** by a unanimous vote of the NASAO membership present at the organization's 75th Annual Meeting and Tradeshow held in New Orleans in September 2006.

The **National Association of State Aviation Officials** is one of the most senior aviation organizations in the United States, pre-dating even the Federal Aviation Administration's predecessor, the Civil Aeronautics Authority. Since its founding in 1931, the Association has represented the men and women in state government aviation agencies, who serve the public interests in all 50 states, Guam and Puerto Rico. With legislation in 1988, Colorado was the last state in the Union to create a state aviation entity.

Also serving with Mr. Vallin as executives of NASAO are Vice Chair Michelle McEnany, Director of the Iowa Office of Aviation, Treasurer Victor Bird, Director of the Oklahoma Aeronautics Commission; and Secretary Mark Brewer, President and CEO of the Rhode Island Airport Corporation. Each elected officer will serve a one year term that will expire in September 2007.

AVIATION GRANTS TOP \$4M

Colorado Discretionary Aviation Grants amounting to nearly **\$4.4M** were awarded to **forty-seven Colorado airports** during the annual funding cycle which ended in October. Twenty-seven of those grants - totalling over \$1.35M - were as match for over \$64M in FAA Airport Improvement Program projects scheduled for 2007.

During the hearings held on October 13th, the **Colorado Aeronautical Board** heard of plans for the reconstruction and lengthening of the runway at **Telluride Regional Airport** and the construction of new administration and storage facilities at the **Garfield County Regional Airport**. **Burlington-Kit Carson County Airport** plans completing the reconstruction of its primary runway; **Aspen-Pitkin County Airport** continues its expansion of safety areas and relocation of taxiways and ramps. **Yampa Valley Regional Airport** is in Year-3 of the construction of new terminal facilities and ramp development; and a new partial parallel taxiway is planned for the **Wray Municipal Airport**.

Since its inception in 1992 and through State Fiscal Year 2006, the **Colorado Discretionary Aviation Grant** program has awarded \$36.25M in the form of 616 individual grants throughout the State.

In 2005, nearly \$7M in discretionary grants were awarded during the fall application cycle and as individual requests during the course of the remaining year. Significant projects included the award of **\$2.7M for the development of enhanced mountain radar services**, **\$268K in support of the state's Automated Weather Observation System (AWOS) program** and **\$379K for the completion of updates to the State Aviation System Plan and Capital Improvement Program planning**.



The discretionary aviation grant program is recipient each year of **35% of all aviation sales taxes on commercial jet fuel and \$.02 excise tax on each gallon of AvGas** sold at Colorado Airports. 65% of sales taxes and \$.04 on each gallon of AvGas and non-commercial jet fuel is reimbursed to the airport-of-sales.

The **Colorado Discretionary Aviation Grant** program continues to be a conduit through which the Aeronautical Board can fund important advances for Colorado's airports and is an integral part of the maintenance tomorrow's airport network.

BE ALERT TO TODAY'S WEATHER

Just when we thought that summer was truly going to last forever, along comes the northerly blasts that remind us it's not likely true. Long summer days and clear endless skies give summer a *plus* when it comes to general aviation flying.

But just as we are made keenly alert to the thunderstorms and density altitude our high terrain offers in the warmer months, so must the winter flying environment bring a new class of considerations for the safe pilot.

Winter brings sudden weather changes, shorter days and often reduced visibility. It's the time of the year to have up-to-date weather forecasts and know potentials for icing - to appreciate the capabilities of our aircraft and its instruments... and, most importantly, to acknowledge our own limitations in the cockpit. Today's technology gives us the added value of accurate, more up-to-date information on board, but it's no better than a brightly-colored weather scope if we are not fully up to the skill of managing it correctly. Proficiency as a pilot means taking stock of our abilities, reviewing all the safety-related material, and making decisions that reflect our best judgment.

In recent comments to Cirrus aircraft owners following a spate of fatal encounters with weather, owners-association president, Mike Radomsky stated that "no technology can replace training, skill, proficiency and judgment."

A prominent late nineteenth century midwestern bishop pronounced from his pulpit - and in a regional periodical that he edited, that heavier-than-air flight was both impossible and contrary to the will of God.

**Oh, the irony of it all!
Bishop Wright had two sons - Orville and Wilbur.**

IT'S ALL ABOUT THE KIDS

A familiar face in the Colorado aviation education arena, Darci Wert, left the Aeronautics Division in September to join the staff of the **Wings Over the Rockies Museum** as Educator Director.

Still able to push forward her goals for increasing the awareness to aviation as math and science in the classroom, she will remain closely linked to the Division's mission.

During her tenure at the Division, Ms. Wert developed the **Science of Flight Teacher Workshops**, **KidSpace** - hands-on activities at airshows and fly-ins, **Science of Flight** elementary classroom curriculum kits and **Get 'Em Flying** competitions for "Young Eagles" flights.

We wish Ms. Wert all the best in her new undertaking and hope she continues to provide the enthusiasm and energy toward aviation education that she brought to the Division's program.

“My name is Joanie Ewing ...

and I just started my internship with the Aeronautics Division on September 18th of this year.

I was born and raised in Eagle, Colorado. I went to high school there at Eagle Valley High School and after graduating I went to Daytona Beach, Florida where I attended **Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University (ERAU)** from the fall of 2001 to the spring of 2005. I initially went to ERAU to become a professional pilot but I ended up in the aviation business school. I received my degree in Aviation Business Administration with a concentration in Airport Management.

While attending ERAU I was also on the Women’s Golf Team. All four years I was lucky enough to play with my team at the **National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) National Championships**.

Since graduating from ERAU I came back to Colorado from Florida with my fiancé because I missed the mountain-living lifestyle. Up until September when I accepted the internship, I’d been working as a customer service representative at the Vail Valley Jet Center at the **Eagle County Airport**.

From this internship I hope to gain a better understanding of the industry and find out which part of the industry best suits me for my future career goals.”



During her year-long internship, Joanie will share her time equally with the CDOT-Aeronautics Division, the FAA-Denver Airports District Office and Front Range Airport.

CDOT DIRECTOR HONORED

The Colorado airport community made the Annual Colorado Aviation Conference an opportunity to say “thank you” to **Executive Director of the Colorado Department of Transportation, Tom Norton**, for his steadfast support of aviation issues.

Travis Vallin, Aeronautics Division Director, presented Mr. Norton with the **Outstanding Achievement Award** and thanked him on behalf of statewide aviation for his support of the **Colorado Aviation State Infrastructure Bank**, which has provided development loans in the amount of \$10,351,427.00 to eleven airports; for his encouragement of the Colorado Transportation Commission’s financial backing for the **Mountain Radar Service project**; and for his commitment to the purchase of the **Division’s permanent offices at Front Range Airport**.



Travis Vallin present the traveling propeller trophy to Tom Norton, CDOT-Executive Director - winner of the 2006 Outstanding Achievement Award.

FORMER COLORADO DIRECTOR RELOCATES WITH FAA

Former Colorado Aeronautics Division Director, Dennis Roberts, relocates shortly to a new position as **Regional Administrator** for the **Federal Aviation Administration’s Northwest Mountain Region** in Seattle, WA. He has served as Director of the FAA Office of Airport Planning and Programming since January 2004.

Mr. Roberts assumed the management of the Aeronautics Division shortly after it was created by the Legislature in 1989 and served through its formative years until 1997. He oversaw the creation of many of the programs that Colorado aviation has come to know, including the discretionary grant program, the pavement condition indexing program, the aviation management intern program and joint capital improvement program with the airports and the FAA.

Prior to his association with the FAA, Mr. Roberts served as Executive Director of AOPA Government and Technical Affairs and Deputy Executive Director for the Louisville Kentucky Regional Airport Authority.

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Contact us at: 303-261-4418 or at www.colorado-aeronautics.org



As the VLJs become a more proven option, will we see the start of a new era that provides point-to-point travel with fewer passengers through airline hubs and greater use of smaller markets? Never before has the aviation industry offered more shiny, bright alternatives than the innovations that are forcing a change on the horizon and a re-look at the way we travel.

At this year's **National Business Aviation Association (NBAA) Convention and Trade Show** recently concluded in Orlando, FL, **Honeywell**, the avionics and engine manufacturer, forecast a strong long-term outlook which predicts 12,000 bizjets worth \$195B will be delivered by 2016 into hot markets in North America, Asia, the Middle East and Africa. Other estimates paint a less rosy picture - still a very promising future for the many new concepts and aircraft production in general.

More than 115 static aircraft exhibits were parked on the ramp at Orlando Executive Airport during the 3-day NBAA event. According to the **National Business Aviation Association (NBAA)**, this years attendance of the event was the biggest and best in the Association's history. The three day event attracted just over 33,000 people, which surpassed the previous attendance record of 31,665 set in Las Vegas in 1998.

The State of Colorado made another grand appearance at the **59th Annual National Business Aviation Association Convention and Trade Show** that took place October 17th – 19th, in Orlando, Florida. A 50' x 50' pavilion was the setting for the Colorado pavilion at this year's convention. Eleven Colorado airports and economic development organizations gathered together to promote Colorado as a premier destination in the country. The calf roping machine was a hit amongst the convention attendees and helped attract plenty of traffic through the Colorado pavilion.

The Aeronautics Division is already looking forward to next year's event to take place in Atlanta, GA. The NBAA Convention has been an excellent marketing avenue for Colorado airports to reach potential aviation traffic and airport development.



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**Colorado State System Plan
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\$4+M Awarded in Annual Airport Grants

A Time to Say Thanks