Alaskan Region Airports Division News

JUNE 2017

MESSAGE FROM THE REGION DIVISION DIRECTOR

Greetings Alaska Aviation Stakeholders and welcome to the latest edition of the FAA Alaskan Region Airports Division periodic newsletter. It has been a while since we last published a newsletter, but that doesn't mean we haven't been in communication with our customers. We always strive to stay in close contact with all of our stakeholders, and especially with our airport operators and sponsors.

It goes without saying that we've experienced a great deal of change over the last year or so, culminating with the election of a new president and the peaceful and orderly change of leadership throughout government. In addition to the change of national leadership, we bid Eddie Angeles, our Associate Administrator for Airports (ARP-1) for the last two years, a reluctant but fond farewell. We also said goodbye to Ben DeLeon, the Deputy Associate Administrator for Airports (ARP-2), as he retired after over 35 years of exceptional service to the people of the United States of America. With Ben's departure we also welcome an outstanding new ARP-2, Winsome Lenfert, who made the transition from Director of the Southern Region Office of Airports. As is usual with a change of administration, we are still awaiting designation of a new ARP-1, but Winsome is holding down the fort in the meantime with some assistance from some of the Headquarters and field directors.

We are now going through the process of getting our FAA authorization extended and looking at the budget process for future years. Now that the new leadership is settling into place, we are starting to provide AIP grant offers so that our sponsors can get construction projects underway.

I continue to be pleased and impressed with the level of collaboration we enjoy with our sponsors and operators. My team and I are always at the ready to provide any support we can as we all work together to further enhance and improve the aviation system in Alaska, providing access to as many of the citizens of Alaska as possible.

My team has put together a very informative and timely series of articles in this edition and I hope each of you will find meaningful information in all of the articles. Please give us your feedback and any suggestions for future articles.
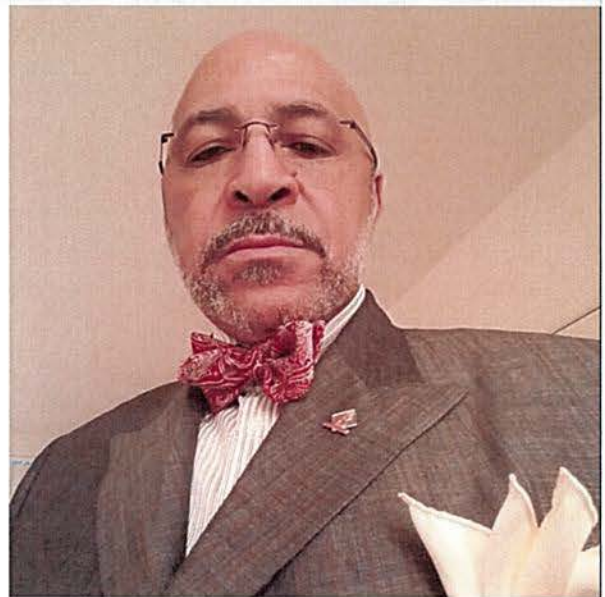
AIRPORTS CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN (ACIP)

Is Your Project Ready to be Funded Next Year?

With the 2017 Airport Improvement Program (AIP) established and underway, now is the time to make preparations for the 2018 program. The FAA has an established national Airports Capital Improvement Plan (ACIP) that systematically identifies and prioritizes anticipated AIP-funded initiatives. The ACIP is an ongoing needs-based program that acts as the foundation for identifying and prioritizing airport planning and development to be undertaken within the next 3 to 5 years.

So how is the FAA's ACIP developed? It starts with the coordination and feedback that we receive from Airport Sponsors. It is important that all Sponsors maintain an ongoing needs-based capital improvement plan (CIP) that outlines both the near-term and long-term priorities of the airport. CIPs are typically based on needs identification tools such as: airport master plans, system plans, joint Sponsor/FAA planning conferences, pavement condition surveys, FAR Part 139 inspections, Airport Layout Plan (ALP) updates, airport capital needs inspections, 5010 inspections, and land use inspections.

Although the FAA utilizes the National Priority System (NPS) for prioritizing AIP-funded projects, we also consider State and local priorities when formulating the ACIP. Projects that have been shown to be AIP eligible, justified, and reasonable for near-term implementation are typically incorporated into the ACIP. Good airport planning establishes the basis for project need, eligibility, and justification determinations.

On June 16, 2017, the FAA will validate Sponsor CIPs and perform an initial "snapshot" review of the ACIP. It is at this time that the FAA establishes an initial focus on next year's 2018 projects; financial planning also occurs for remaining "out year" needs. A second final snapshot occurs in September. It is important that Sponsors submit/update their CIPs as early as possible so that projects can be reviewed and prioritized in conjunction with these snapshots. The later an initiative is identified, the greater the chance it could be delayed for funding consideration.

Important upcoming deadline dates for projects anticipating AIP grant funding in 2018 include:

October 1 – Project planning initiatives completed

October 1 – Airport Layout Plan (ALP) submitted to FAA for approval

October 1 – Accurate up-to-date "CIP Data Sheet(s)" submitted to FAA

November 1 – Final environmental document(s) submitted to FAA for approval

January 1 – Land acquisition and right-of-way actions completed

April 1 – Summer construction projects ready to bid

May 1 – Sponsor declaration on use of entitlements

July 1 – Winter construction projects ready to bid

Pat Oien, Lead Planner and Brad Garland, AIP Program Manager

ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

NEPA Start-up Process to Environmentally Clear AIP Planned Projects

Submittal of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Class of Action (COA) to the FAA Alaskan Region Airports Division is the official start-up with FAA to environmentally clear your project for an AIP grant. So, while the environmental process can seem resource intensive, cost too much, take too much time causing delays, and inconvenient at best, burdensome at worst…it's the law AND no grant can be issued without a complete environmental review. We do our very best to focus the environmental review and provide our responses throughout the process as quickly as we can. Since it is the one thing between you and the AIP money, start early!

Step 1: NEPA Class of Action (COA) FAA concurrence

- Submit a detailed project description to the FAA environmental email box AK-Airport-ENV@FAA.gov – Include the following:

  ◊ Thorough written project description – provide a brief, but complete, description of the proposed project, including all project components (list each work item for every project big and small), season work will occur in, and duration of the project.

  ◊ Include connected actions (moving NAVAIDS, changing flight procedures temporarily/ permanently), material sources, haul routes, staging areas, and disposal areas.

  ◊ Include a graphic of the project area (aerial is best) showing the airport boundaries, all project components including the locations and footprints.

  ◊ Describe ground disturbing activities, purpose, locations, and depth.

  ◊ Include the Environmental Inventory for each impact category for all projects to be cleared.

  ◊ Include your finding for the proposed level of NEPA review (simple categorical exclusion, (CATEX), documented CATEX, focused EA, EA). If it is a CATEX, cite the relevant CATEX(s) paragraphs from FAA Order 1050.1F.

    * Describe how you arrived at your COA determination.

  ◊ FAA EPS will review the materials and make an independent decision on the COA. Providing all information to the EPS the first time helps facilitate a speedy review and response. We may need additional information and will request as needed.

  ◊ FAA EPS will provide guidance on the level of effort and the specific environmental impacts to focus on, including public involvement efforts if necessary.

  ◊ FAA will either concur or make a recommendation in writing based on the information.

  ◊ Once you have your COA, you are approved to move to the next step toward the NEPA documentation preparation—Simple CATEX, Documented CATEX, and Environmental Assessment.

- If you decide to bypass the COA step and move directly into document preparation, please note that the environmental project has not officially started with FAA EPSs and no work will be recognized until the COA coordination and concurrence has taken place. This also applies to every level of NEPA (simple and documented CATEX, EA, written reevaluation etc.).

ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAM

Leslie Grey, Lead Environmental Program Manager

ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

FAA Alaskan Region Streamlines Simple CATEX Process

Where projects qualify for a Simple CATEX with no extra ordinary circumstances, a Simple CATEX may apply. We have developed the documentation in a memo format that can now be used for applicable projects.

Our past practice has been to require the Airport Sponsors to submit a letter to the FAA EPS describing the project, citing the CATEX paragraph, and documenting that there are no extraordinary circumstances for every simple CATEX (i.e., equipment acquisition, crack sealing).

In 2017, we prepared the Simple CATEX documentation. It is a "Memo to the File" format for each type of project that applies (see below). These Memos will be prepared annually by FAA and made available to the Sponsors for Simple CATEX projects.

To start the process, follow the steps for obtaining an FAA Class of Action concurrence. If the project qualifies, we will send the Memo to the Sponsor and the environmental process is complete. Easy!

Types of projects that typically qualify for use of the FAA-prepared Simple CATEX documentation:

♦ ALP updates, Aeronautical Surveys, Crack sealing, Equipment acquisition, Lighting replacement, Marking/grooving, Master plan update, Visual aid replacement, and grant amendments that do not alter environmental impacts.

Environmental Documentation Submittal Timeline—November 1, 2017

For the past several years, we have required that project NEPA documentation be submitted and approved by FAA by December 31st for grants that would be issued in the next calendar year (e.g., NEPA documents approved December 31, 2017, for projects anticipating a 2018 grant). This date is moving up to November 1st starting this year - 2017.

Also, we anticipate commencing a standard practice requiring the Sponsor to submit the COA project concurrence request earlier in the year for all projects by a certain date in the near future.

Other Environmental Program News and Reminders

♦ Effective June 2, 2017, the Nationally updated CATEX SOP 5.1 superseded the CATEX SOP 5.0 and the Alaskan CATEX form. We request that the National CATEX SOP be used for new projects that qualify for a CATEX after June 2, 2017. Projects in process do not need to change over to the National CATEX SOP 5.1. The SOP can be found at: https://www.faa.gov/airports/resources/sops/

♦ Be sure to have your Environmental Specialist complete the FAA environmental documentation required. While it may seem simple to prepare, there are lots of potential pitfalls for those not as familiar with NEPA as an environmental analyst.

♦ All Section 106 letters must be reviewed by FAA EPSs prior to distribution.

♦ Prepare, including filling out, the Government to Government template letter for FAA to review, sign and send.

♦ Call or email FAA EPSs for questions – early coordination with us a best practice that avoids potential headaches!

Leslie Grey, Lead Environmental Program Manager

AIRPORT COMPLIANCE

Focus on Exhibit "A" Airport Property Inventory Map

The FAA must have a current Exhibit 'A' Airport Property Inventory Map on file prior to issuing a grant. The Exhibit 'A' Map is contractually referenced in the grant agreement.

- FAA Order 5100-38c provides guidance on project eligibility and states that no airport development project may be approved unless the following condition is met:

  ◊ Chapter 5, Section 1, 500.a. Good Title and Property Inventory (Exhibit A): The sponsor, a public agency or the Government must hold good title to the areas of the airport intended to be used for the landing, take off or surface maneuvering of aircraft, or good title will be acquired.

- Advisory Circular (AC) 150/5100-17, Change 6 Land Acquisition and Relocation Assistance for Airport Improvement Program (AIP) Assisted Projects, states: "The grant agreement with the FAA requires airport sponsors to prepare and maintain a current Property Inventory Map (Exhibit A) of airport owned land.

Helpful Compliance Tips!

- Don't just put a new date on an old Exhibit A for your grant applications.

- Exhibit A's should be updated (and re-dated) when property is acquired or released. A release includes release of the aeronautical use grant provision.

- Exhibit A's should depict non-aeronautical uses (including parks and recreational areas) and when FAA approved those releases.
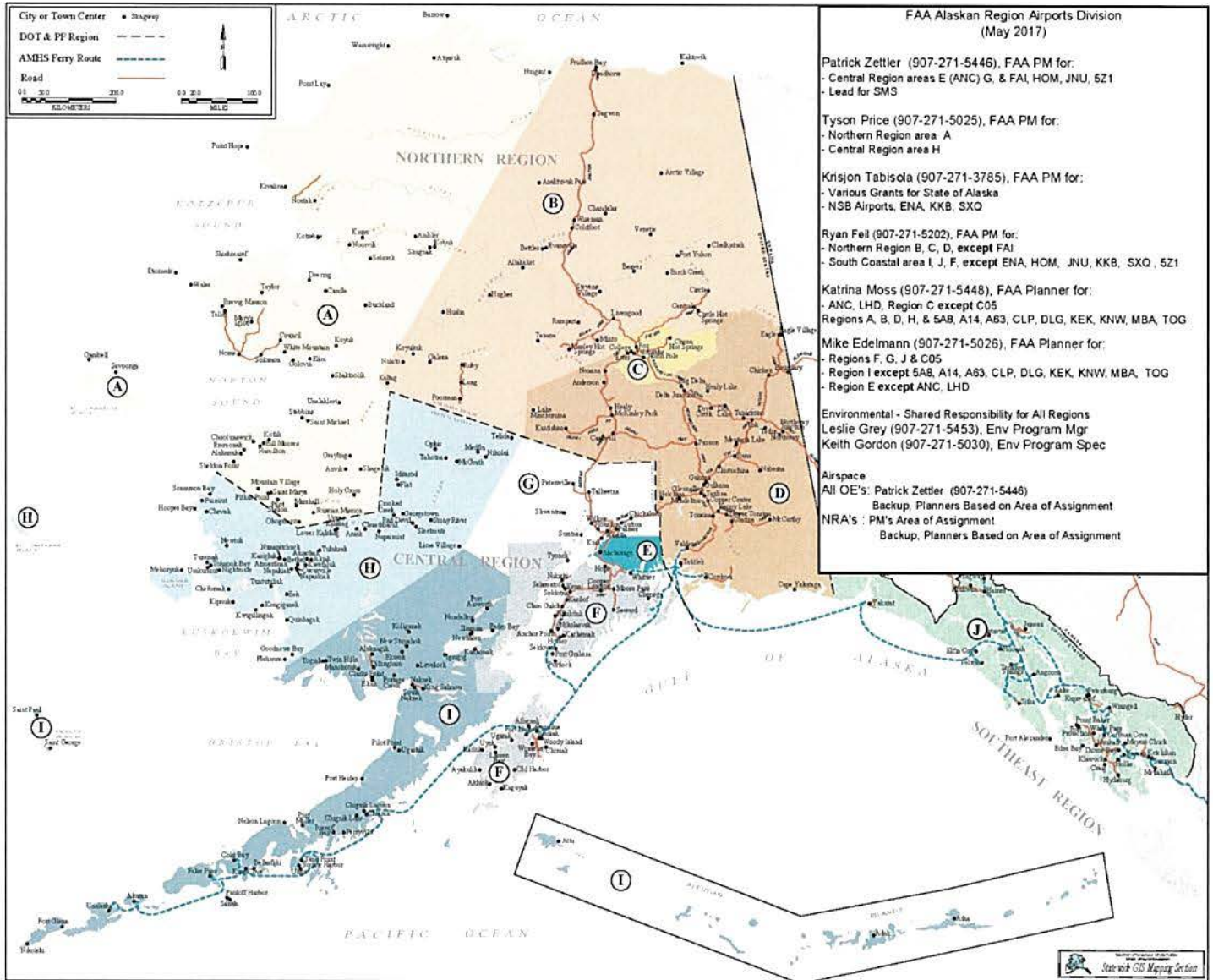
- Your Exhibit A should include utility easements.

Molly Lamrouex, Compliance Program Manager

PROJECT MANAGER AND PLANNER ASSIGNMENTS
Which FAA Project Manager and/or Planner Has Which Airports?

The map below indicates all of our Project Manager and Planner geographical and program assignments. Use the key in the upper right of the image to identify areas of responsibility.

FAA Alaskan Region Airports Division
(May 2017)

Patrick Zettler (907-271-5446), FAA PM for:
- Central Region areas E (ANC) G, & FAI, HOM, JNU, 5Z1
- Lead for SMS

Tyson Price (907-271-5025), FAA PM for:
- Northern Region area A
- Central Region area H

Krisjon Tabisola (907-271-3785), FAA PM for:
- Various Grants for State of Alaska
- NSB Airports, ENA, KKB, SXQ

Ryan Feil (907-271-5202), FAA PM for:
- Northern Region B, C, D, except FAI
- South Coastal area I, J, F, except ENA, HOM, JNU, KKB, SXQ, 5Z1

Katrina Moss (907-271-5448), FAA Planner for:
- ANC, LHD, Region C except C05
- Regions A, B, D, H, & 5A8, A14, A63, CLP, DLG, KEK, KNW, MBA, TOG

Mike Edelmann (907-271-5026), FAA Planner for:
- Regions F, G, J & C05
- Region I except 5A8, A14, A63, CLP, DLG, KEK, KNW, MBA, TOG
- Region E except ANC, LHD

Environmental - Shared Responsibility for All Regions
Leslie Grey (907-271-5453), Env Program Mgr
Keith Gordon (907-271-5030), Env Program Spec

Airspace
All OE's: Patrick Zettler (907-271-5446)
            Backup, Planners Based on Area of Assignment
NRA's: PM's Area of Assignment
            Backup, Planners Based on Area of Assignment

Ryan Feil, Project Manager

AIRPORTS CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN (ACIP)

Quarterly Reporting—Tell Us All About It!

OK, so you received an AIP Grant to complete a project on your airport. Great!

As you know, that grant comes with a few strings. Among them, one is the requirement to keep the FAA informed of project progress. Yes, we want to know that the AIP funds you received are being used expediently and appropriately.

And, no, this requirement is not just the FAA's. There is a regulatory requirement for project reporting under 2 CFR § 200.328. (Available here: https://www.law.cornell.edu/cfr/text/2/200.328)

What that particular regulation states is that the Grantee (you, the sponsor) holds the responsibility to ensure that the project proceeds in a timely manner. And, the Grantor (we, the FAA) must be informed of that progress on a regular basis. It also contains valuable information on how to satisfy the reporting requirement.

So, how often do you need to report? What do you need to report? And, how do you report it?

First of all, a caveat on the information presented below. I am not a lawyer. What I present below is a high level summary of what the regulation and FAA policies based on that regulation are requiring. In the event there is a conflict between this article, and FAA policy, the policy takes precedent.

Now, let's start exploring the wonderful and exciting world of quarterly reporting.

How often do you need to report? The FAA expects the sponsor to take a day-to-day interest in the project, keep a log, and ensure progress. The project is taking place on your airport and you have a vested interest in ensuring it is completed to the highest standards of performance. But, does that mean the FAA wants to see daily reports? No, we trust you. (Mostly.) But, we do want to see progress reports regularly. Per FAA Policy, the sponsor is expected to submit quarterly progress reports on AIP funded projects. More frequent reporting satisfies the requirement, but can be unnecessarily burdensome if not needed.

What to report? For non-construction projects (typically planning projects), a quarterly progress report must contain:

♦ comparison of proposed work versus actual accomplishments;

♦ justification for delays;

♦ impacts to other AIP, PFC, or other FAA programs, and

♦ explanation of any cost overruns.

And, yes, just because the grant is not constructing something does not mean we do not require regular reporting of progress.

Construction projects are expected to report:

♦ site conditions;

♦ estimated percent of work completed;

♦ work completed during reporting period;

♦ summary of field testing;

♦ materials, and

♦ anticipated work during next quarter.

AIRPORTS CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN (ACIP)

Quarterly Reporting—Tell Us All About It! (cont'd)

For a full listing of what is required in a quarterly report, please refer to paragraph 5-40 Quarterly Performance Reporting, in the AIP Handbook, FAA Order 5100.38D. (Available here: https://www.faa.gov/airports/aip/aip_handbook/)

How to report? Construction projects get a little bit of a break here. FAA Form 5370-1 (available here: https://www.faa.gov/forms/index.cfm/go/document.information/documentID/186168) acts as a guide and provides a standardized format for reporting project progress.

Non-construction projects do not get it quite that easy, as there is no readily available form to assist in gathering and reporting the progress. What that means is that any format is acceptable (including FAA Form 5370-1 if you really must use a standardized form) as long as the report meets the requirements mentioned above. A detailed e-mail hitting all the points is acceptable, but a standardized format makes it easier on all involved.

What has proven useful in the past for non-construction project reporting is to include the required reporting elements as part of the consultant's regular monthly progress reports. (Typically monthly reporting of progress is included in the consultant's contracts, and if it isn't, consider adding it.) The advantage of doing it this way is that quarterly reporting is as simple as forwarding the monthly reports to your FAA Airports Grant Manager. And, yes, we will accept your quarterly progress reports in three convenient monthly installments.

Before you ask, let's be clear about one thing. The quarterly progress report is not the same as a payment request. A reimbursement request is financially focused, and does not provide adequate information on project progress to satisfy the regulatory requirement.

Which actually reminds me: please do not attach the quarterly report to the reimbursement request. An e-mail to the FAA Grant Manager with the report as an attachment is perfectly acceptable. If your organization has a more formal method of tracking progress, including the FAA on the reports works just fine.

Regardless of the method used to report, or how frequently you choose to report, the requirement still remains. Keep the FAA informed on project progress. Not only is it a good idea, it is a regulatory requirement.

	Construction Progress and Inspection Report	Period Ending
U.S. Department of Transportation **Federal Aviation Administration**	**Airport Grant Program**	Project Number
Airport Name		
Project Description	Contractor's Name	

FAA Form 5370-1 (4/15) SUPERCEDES PREVIOUS EDITION

Mike Edelmann, Planner

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AIRPORT SAFETY & STANDARDS

Beefing Up Airport Inspection Readiness

All too often, airport inspection results reveal non-compliance issues that should or could have been identified internally and corrected prior to an FAA inspection. Readiness should include conducting internal self-inspections using the same guidelines, orders, and checklists that FAA inspectors utilize. A quarterly or semi-annual self-inspection program should identify and correct 14 CFR Part 139 compliance issues or establish a correction prior to an airport's periodic inspection. An airport certificate holder can perform this function by employing members of their own team to look at specific areas within their expertise.

FAA Order 5280.5D contains the procedures, checklists, and expectations for airports to achieve successful inspection results. Along with coordination and collaboration with your assigned FAA Airport Certification and Safety Inspector, the airport can identify issues and either correct them on the spot or schedule a correction within a reasonable time-frame that will ensure full compliance with 14 CFR Part 139.

Take a look at the below recent photos reflecting less than optimal conditions on Alaskan airfields . . .

Matt Stearns, Lead Airport Certification and Safety Inspector

FAREWELL AND BEST WISHES IN RETIREMENT

Matthew Freeman, Project Manager

Completing nearly 26 years of Federal service, I retired on May 31st and am headed for new adventures.

I joined the Northwest Mountain Region FAA in Seattle in the spring of 1999 after working for an FAA contractor. At FAA, I began a career in Airway Facilities siting and constructing terminal and long range radars. After a radar tour, my focus area shifted to upgrading air traffic control towers, Terminal Radar Approach Control facilities, Air Route Traffic Control Centers, and siting visual aids. To round out the adventure, I worked on communications, radars, VOR, and ILS systems before relocating with family for a great Alaskan adventure. Eventually I transferred to the Airports Division as a Planner focusing on airports located in the State of Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities' Northern Region, and then moved into Project Management for the duration. I somehow outlasted many Design Chiefs in Northern Region Alaska DOT and then finished up my career working the Southcoast region.

Flying has been and continues to be my passion. You may see me at one of your airports searching for fuel, food, or a rest. My favorite places to land may not be marked on the sectional and are missing from the Alaska Supplement.

What a great journey to work with the State of Alaska, City and Borough of Juneau, City of Nenana, North Slope Borough, East Aleutians Borough, City of Anchorage, Kenai Borough, and many planning and engineering consultants. I have learned much from the countless interactions as we all advocated for aviation safety.

It's time to make room for new blood. Happy and safe flying!

Matt Freeman, who retired from the FAA Alaskan Region Airports Division on May 31, 2017, pictured in front of his Stoddard-Hamilton GlaStar. Thank you for all of your contributions to FAA and the Airports Division, Matt!

FAREWELL AND BEST WISHES IN RETIREMENT

Patricia Oien, Lead Planner

After 31 years of federal service I will be retiring on July 20, 2017.

I began my career in 1986 working for Public Works at Fort Richardson, Alaska. I was a planner, project manager and eventually a manager during the twelve years at Public Works. In 1998, I began working for the FAA Airports Division. There were a number of us who made the transition from the Army Civil Service to FAA during that time and we often joked that FAA stood for "Former Army Assets".

It's hard to believe I have been with the FAA Airports Division for nineteen years now. My time here has been split between engineering and planning and I have gained tremendous knowledge of airports by working with many experienced and capable engineers and planners with the Alaska DOT, Local Sponsors, and Consultants. I've had the opportunity to see most of our beautiful state. Some of my most memorable experiences have included accompanying the Alaska DOT to look at future rural airport relocations which often involved boats, four wheelers, waders, mosquito repellent, and a lot of walking. It's been a great journey and I would like to thank all of you who have worked with me over the years to make our Alaskan airports safer.

For now I plan to focus on fishing, family, traveling and yoga and I know that our talented staff will carry on the good work.