



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Aviation
Administration**

Northwest Mountain Region
Seattle Airports District Office
1601 Lind Avenue S.W., Suite 250
Renton, Washington 98057-3356

November 30, 2009

The Honorable Bert Kulesza
Mayor, City of McCall
216 East Park Street
McCall, ID 83638

Dear Mayor Kulesza:

McCall Municipal Airport Environmental Assessment
Taxiway Relocation

It has come to the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) attention that the McCall City Council (Council) is debating the selection of the preferred alternative to be analyzed in the environmental assessment (EA) for meeting the runway/taxiway centerline separation standard. As you are aware, the existing runway/taxiway centerline separation of 200-feet at the McCall Municipal airport (Airport) is out of compliance with FAA design standards.

The alternatives currently under discussion are the runway/ taxiway centerline separation design standards of 240-feet, 300-feet, and 400-feet. These design standards are for families of like sized aircraft and are denoted by the airport reference codes (ARC) of B-II, C-II and C-III respectively.

We understand the Council is strongly considering the alternative that meets the minimum standard of 240-feet, even though larger types of aircraft are frequently using your airport today that would justify a wider runway taxiway separation standard. We think the 240-foot option represents a short term vision for the Airport by the Council and strongly recommend this alternative not be selected.

The following are important factors we think you should consider in your decision.

The 300-foot Taxiway/Runway Separation is Justified:

There are currently over 500 operations of A-III, B-III, and C-II type aircraft that occur annually on the airfield which justifies a 300-foot separation. In addition, historically a number of C-III aircraft also operate from your airport, but the number has never exceeded 500, the number needed to justify a 400-foot separation. Although these are predominantly United States Forest Service (USFS) flight operations, we support the relocation of the taxiway to the 300 or 400-foot standard in order to ensure safe operations of all aircraft using the Airport, now and into the future. Typically the FAA does not fund improvements necessary to serve government aircraft, however the comparatively low additional cost to construct out to 300-foot or 400-foot runway/taxiway separation would be money well spent.

Constructing to C-II or C-III Standard is a Wise Use of Federal Funds:

As pavement is designed for a 20 year life span, it is prudent to design the location of the taxiway in a location that accommodates both the existing USFS and the ever increasing number of C-II operations (by the general public) at your Airport. It would not be a wise use of federal funds to construct a taxiway to the B-II standard when already there are current operations that require meeting at least a 300-foot separation. Relocation of the taxiway will require the acquisition of property. It would be prudent to acquire the property needed for the 400-foot separation now, which will ultimately meet the long term needs of the Airport. This

will preclude the Airport from having to negotiate in the future for the additional land needed to move the taxiway at a later date..

Building the Taxiway to C-II or C-III standard Does NOT Help Justify Runway Extension:

Moving the taxiway to the C-II or C-III standard now does not move the Airport any closer to justifying a runway extension. The taxiway separation requirement is based on the largest typical wingspan of aircraft most commonly using the airport, also known as the critical aircraft. When justifying a runway extension, the FAA considers the critical aircraft performance requirements and the typical and maximum stage lengths of these aircraft. The length of the runway an aircraft requires is directly affected by type of aircraft, outside air temperature, field elevation and aircraft weight. Your current runway length is adequate to serve the critical aircraft using the airport.

Relocation of the taxiway will not affect growth or influence the users of your airport but it will increase safety. Growth will occur regardless of whether or not the taxiway is built to a larger standard, although building to either the C-II or the C-III standard will provide a safer, longer term, more cost efficient option that will last into the future. Because the additional cost to construct the taxiway at 400-feet instead of 300-feet is minimal, we can support the project at either location with Airport Improvement Program (AIP) funds.

We Support Keeping the Taxiway Width at 50 feet

The USFS clearly needs to retain the 50-foot taxiway width standard to accommodate operations of their P-3 Orion aircraft. Because the USFS originally funded the additional cost necessary for the taxiway to be constructed at 50 feet, and because we are promoting the relocation of the taxiway to meet standards, we find it reasonable that we should fund the relocated taxiway (either at 300 or 400 feet separation) at 50 feet wide.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, the FAA does not believe that construction of the taxiway to the B-II standard is the safest and most prudent option and therefore cannot financially support a taxiway that only meets the B-II standard. As a minimum, the taxiway should be constructed 300-feet from the runway, to meet the existing demand at your airport. We urge you and the other members of the council to reconsider endorsement of the B-II, 240-foot runway/taxiway centerline separation alternative based on the factors outlined above.

We hope this gives you the information you need to support a greater separation standard than the B-II standard of 240-feet. Our hope is that you will support the 300-foot alternative as a minimum and consider the 400-foot alternative which will meet your Airport's long term needs.

Sincerely,

Carol A. Suomi
Manager, Seattle Airports District Office

cc: John Anderson, McCall Municipal Airport Manager
Lindley Kirkpatrick, McCall City Manager
Rainse Anderson, WHPacific