



Durango-La Plata County Airport Newsletter – June 2016

Summer Construction Projects

The Airport maintains almost 2.5 million square feet of pavement on our airfield. This includes our runway, taxiways, and aircraft parking aprons.

From May until mid-August, a major taxiway rehabilitation project will be underway. This project will involve significant asphalt work, taxiway lighting improvements, and the re-painting of surface markings. All of the work associated with this project has been scheduled in phases so that aircraft will always maintain a clear taxi route to our runway.

The taxiway rehabilitation project is funded through a partnership with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). The FAA helps airports to fund critical infrastructure through their Airport Improvement Program (AIP). AIP funds are generated through user fees on both commercial airline tickets and aviation fuel. The FAA collects these fees and then distributes the funds to airports across the country for eligible projects.

The taxiway rehabilitation project carries a total expense of approximately \$5,970,000, of which 91.88% is being funded by the FAA through the AIP. The remaining 8.12% is being split between by the Colorado Department of Transportation Division of Aeronautics

and the Durango-La Plata County Airport (DRO). DRO's portion of the funding is generated through Passenger Facility Charges (PFC's), a \$4.50 fee that is collected on each airline ticket purchased out of Durango.



In the late summer timeframe, the airport's sole runway will receive a seal coat to extend the useful life of the pavement. Since we do not have the luxury of a second runway to divert air traffic onto, this project will be conducted at night in order to limit the impact on aircraft operations. Commercial flights are not expected to be interrupted by this work.

Airport staff have a busy summer ahead planning and coordinating these two pavement projects. As always, safety is the number one priority, and our staff will be diligently ensuring that all construction activities do not pose a threat to aircraft operations.



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Non-Stop Service to Los Angeles

American Airlines began nonstop Saturday air service from the Durango-La Plata County Airport (DRO) to Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) on Saturday June 4th.



This new route will provide travelers with improved access to Southern California, the west coast, Hawaii, Asia, and Australia.

American Airlines is operating the route through August 20th, and will be utilizing CRJ-700 jets, with seating for 70 passengers.

The flight will leave LAX at 11:00 am and arrive at DRO at 1:57 pm. It will subsequently leave DRO at 2:30 pm and arrive at LAX at 3:40 pm.

2016 Aviation Celebration

The 2016 Aviation Celebration is scheduled for Saturday, September 17th. Please pencil in this date on your calendar and plan for a fun and full day at the airport with the whole family!

This year's event will include static aircraft displays, activities for children, live music, prize giveaways, aircraft snow removal and firefighting equipment tours, and an exciting performance by the US Army's Golden Knights Parachute Team.



Attendees of all ages will enjoy seeing aircraft up close, learning about the airport, and watching the US Army parachute jump team.

Your family and friends can come experience this fun and unique event with no admission or parking costs!



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US Forest Service Tanker Base

Not everyone may be aware that the US Forest Service maintains an active air tanker base at DRO.

Depending on the wildfire threat in any given season, the base may be lightly staffed or it may be a hub of activity.



Having an air tanker base in close proximity provides our region with a valuable asset in the fight against damaging wildfires.

Everything from light scout aircraft up through heavy air tankers can be spotted at the base when conditions are primed for wildfires.

Employee Spotlight

Lise MacArthur is the Administrative Assistant for the Durango-La Plata County Airport and has been in her position for nearly five years.



Some of Lise's many responsibilities include managing the airport's accounts receivable and payable, overseeing all of the airport's records and files, providing exemplary customer service, communicating with tenants, and facilitating Airport Commission meetings.

Prior to her time with the airport, Lise worked for several airlines as both a flight attendant and customer service agent, she owned her own record store, she drove a taxi cab, and she even worked in a molybdenum mine near Leadville, CO.

In her time away from work, Lise enjoys golfing, beekeeping, skiing, caring for her pets, and spending time with family and friends. Lise's favorite aircraft is the Mitsubishi MU-2.



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Go Where Your Bags Go Tours

The airport conducts “Go Where Your Bags Go” tours on the first Thursday of every month.

While on the tour, you will see first-hand how the airport’s facilities are struggling to keep pace with the growing airline operations at DRO. Additionally you will get a behind-the-scenes look at how the airlines process a commercial flight.



To sign up for a tour, go to the airport website (flydurango.com) and click the link shown above.

On a related note, if you know of any school or community groups that might be interested in either the “Go Where Your Bags Go” tour or a separate tour of the airport’s snow removal and firefighting equipment, please have them contact us at 970-382-6051 or airport@durangogov.org.