

Washington Skies

Washington State Department Of Transportation Aviation Division

March 27, 2026



FROM THE FLIGHT DECK

UPCOMING EVENTS/REMINDERS

- April 1: Commercial drone operator annual [registration](#) begins!
- May 18-20: [2026 WAMA Annual Conference](#)

[2026 Airport Restaurant Lists](#)



[Yakima TSA agents display act of kindness to stranded passengers | News | nbcrighnow.com](#)

[SEA Airport launches food pantry for unpaid TSA workers | king5.com](#)

[Tri-Cities residents urged to step up for TSA agents in financial hardship | NBC Right Now](#)

[Inside the World's Largest Building: Boeing's Everett Factory](#)

[Aviation Academy adding remote hub at Narrows Airport as application deadline nears - Gig Harbor Now | A hyperlocal nonprofit newspaper in Gig Harbor](#)

[Gonzaga celebrates opening of materials research center, a key piece of the Spokane Aerospace Tech Hub](#)

[Congress — and Washington state's key aviation lawmakers — split on safety reform | The Daily Chronicle](#)

[Yakima Airport Earns Rare Perfect Score in FAA Inspection | KIMATV](#)

[Seaport Adds News Commuter Service at Boeing Field | Airline Geeks](#)

[A Washington Airport Just Became the First in the U.S. to Earn a Major Environmental Certification - Green Matters](#)

[SEA Airport's new C Concourse races to finish line ahead of World Cup | krem.com](#)

[New 2-story Alaska Airlines lounge at SEA to be largest in the country - MyNorthwest.com](#)

[Sundance Aviation celebrates 20 years of flight training in Richland | News | applevalleynewsnow.com](#)

[Chelan advances airport waterline project - Lake Chelan Mirror](#)

[Tri-Cities Airport gets specialized aircraft rescue and firefighting vehicle | News | applevalleynewsnow.com](#)

Send us your flying photos & stories! Please email: Christina.Crea@wsdot.wa.gov

Commercial Aviation Work Group tour SEA



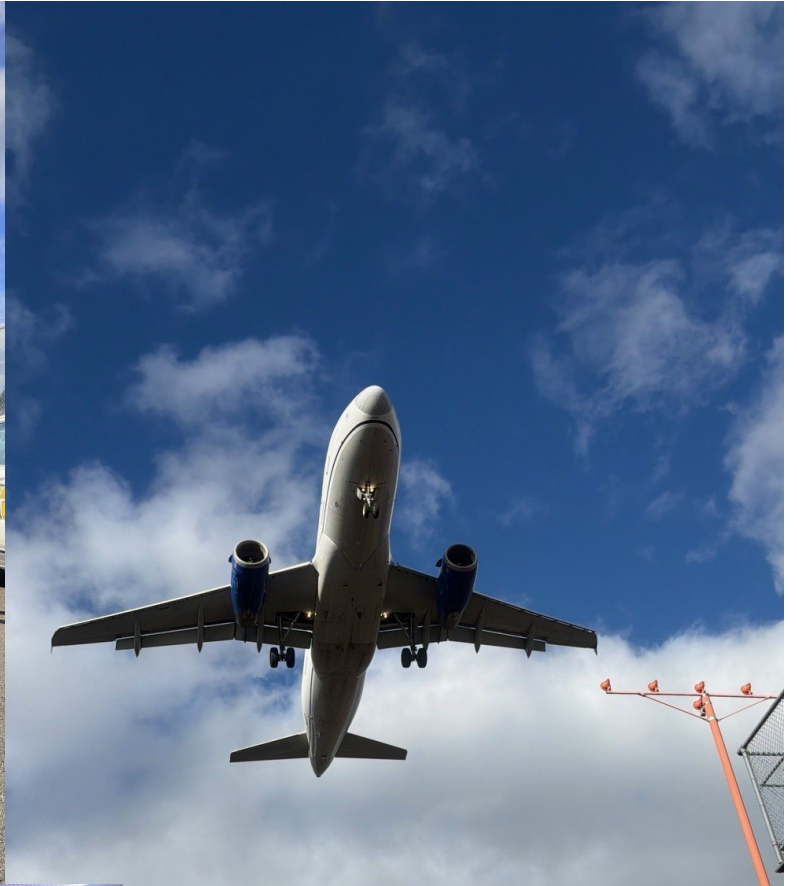
Following their most recent meeting on Feb. 25, members of the Commercial Aviation Work Group (CAWG) had the opportunity to tour Seattle-Tacoma International Airport (SEA) for a behind-the-scenes look at one of Washington's busiest transportation hubs.



The group visited Alaska Airlines' new concourse, observed aircraft departures up close, and experienced a rare opportunity to drive on the airfield. The tour highlighted the scale and complexity of airport operations - from passenger travel to air cargo movement—and reinforced the critical role airports play in connecting communities and supporting Washington's economy.



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Statewide Rates and Fees Study Underway

WSDOT Aviation has initiated a Statewide General Aviation Airport Rates and Fees Study to support the long-term financial sustainability of Washington's public-use airport system and ensure continued compliance with Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) grant assurance requirements.

The Aviation Management Consulting Group (AMCG) of Centennial, Colorado, will conduct the study, which will include approximately 91 small and mid-size general aviation airports across the state.

Purpose and Approach

General aviation airports face a wide range of operational, maintenance, and capital costs. This study will evaluate existing lease rates and user fees to ensure they more accurately reflect the true cost of operations while aligning with current market conditions. The effort will provide data-driven, fair, and consistent recommendations to strengthen financial sustainability across the statewide system.

AMCG will review existing leases, permits, and fee schedules; assess operating and maintenance costs; evaluate how revenues support airport expenses; and benchmark rates against comparable airports within Washington and regionally.

Collaboration is Key

Airport sponsor and manager participation is critical to the success of this study. Data will be collected through surveys and coordination with AMCG to ensure each airport's unique operational and market conditions are accurately represented. This input will help ensure recommendations are practical, equitable, and reflective of local realities.

Timeline

The study is anticipated to be completed by early fall 2026. Final documents and recommendations will be made available electronically to all airport sponsors for reference and implementation.

WSDOT Aviation appreciates the continued partnership of airport sponsors and managers in supporting this important initiative to strengthen Washington's general aviation airport system.

For questions, contact State Airports Manager John Wilson 360-618-2477
email:john.wilson2@wsdot.wa.gov

Aircraft and Commercial UAS owners

Has your contact information changed recently? If so, this is your friendly reminder to update your contact information with WSDOT by logging into your [SAW account](#).

Did you sell your aircraft or buy a new aircraft? Please remember to submit an Aircraft Report of Sale at <https://wsdot.wa.gov/travel/aviation/pilots-aircraft/register-aircraft/aircraft-report-sale-form>.

If you bought a new aircraft, remember you have 30 days to contact WSDOT Aviation regarding your registration or exemption of the new aircraft.

If you have any questions, please email wsdotaviation@wsdot.wa.gov or call Tracy at 360-709-8015.

Riley Wagner is latest Fly Washington Passport winner!

Riley Wagner is the latest Fly Washington Passport winner!



The Fly Washington Passport Program encourages pilots and aviation enthusiasts to explore Washington's public-use airports.

Beyond motivating pilots to fly, this program supports general aviation airports, area businesses, tourism, and provides flight planning, safety, and educational opportunities. The program relies on the voluntary participation of Washington's public-use airports, pilots, aviation enthusiasts, and sponsors.



The ultimate objective for this program is to increase aviation economic activity and enhance general aviation visibility. Participants, using an official Fly Washington Passport Program booklet, collect "passport stamps" at enrolled public-use airports. Any licensed pilot from any state, and their passengers, may participate.

Participants will earn levels of recognition and prizes as they explore the airports of Washington State.

Interview with Riley Wagner :

1. What type of aircraft did you complete the program in?

The Cessna Family: 150's, 172's, 182's, Carbon Cub, Mooney, Cherokee.

2. Home Base airport?:

BFI, RNT.

3. Approximately how much total time do you have?

600.

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4. Highlight of the program?

Getting to visit every area of the state, WA has so much diverse terrain and geography, highlight to see and experience all of it

5. Favorite Airport you flew into as part of the program?

Electric City

6. Most Challenging Flight?

Stehekin, took a while to figure out a plan to get in there, recruited a friend with a Cub.

7. Most memorable flight?

Completed the Snake River airports in one day, enjoyed the region.

8. Encountered anything unexpected?

Goheen took three times: 1st - runway flooded, 2nd - garbage all over the runway, 3rd - clear and beautiful.

9. How has the program inspired you?

Discovered a whole new side of the state had never been before and want to share it with other people

10. Comments to the sponsors who make the Passport Program possible:

Thank you for contributing for all you do, best way to time build ever!

Glad people are generous to make it happen!



**WSDOT Commercial Drone Registration
Renewal Opens April 1**

Friendly reminder to commercial drone operators that the annual registration renewal window opens April 1.

All members of the public operating drones for profit must complete their annual renewal to maintain authorization.

Operators must also comply with all applicable Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) requirements.

For more information or to renew, visit WSDOT's [UAS website](#).

52 Flights of Hope:

Veronika's Journey with Angel Flight West

Meet Angel Flight West (AFW) passenger Veronika from Spokane Valley.

Since the spring of 2024, Veronika has relied on the support and generosity of AFW's volunteer pilots to ensure she makes it to her appointments and has access to the essential care she needs at Seattle Integrative Cancer Center.

Command Pilot John Bartlett (pictured here) of Seattle completed his very first AFW mission back in September, helping Veronika fly home safely and comfortably - saving her from a four-hour, 300-mile drive.

Thanks to the kindness of volunteer pilots like John, Veronika has been gifted 52 Angel Flights to date, easing the burden of transportation costs and extensive travel plans.

We're deeply grateful to the volunteer pilots in our Washington Wing who grant the gift of flight to patients and passengers in need.

Want to get involved in the life-changing work taking place at Angel Flight West? You can learn more about our volunteer pilot and Earth Angel (ground transportation) opportunities at angelflightwest.org.



FAA MESSAGE ABOUT NOISE COMPLAINTS

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has recently changed to the agency's aircraft noise complaint intake process. Effective February 1, 2026, the FAA retired its legacy regional noise-complaint telephone hotlines and transitioned fully to the national Aviation Noise Complaint and Inquiry Response (ANCIR) Portal as the single, standardized method for receiving public noise concerns.

This modernization effort was designed to improve service to members of the public, enhance national data integrity, and reduce administrative burden on FAA regional staff. Telephone submissions accounted for fewer than ten percent of all noise complaints yet required extensive manual transcription, spam filtering, and duplicate record review. Exclusive use of the ANCIR Portal for noise concerns will eliminate these inefficiencies while strengthening consistency, auditability, and compliance with OMB Circular A-123 internal-control requirements.

Removing the phone line does not limit public access. To obtain the phone numbers, members of the public already must have internet access, since these numbers are only available online. Additionally, the ANCIR Portal remains fully Section 504 and 508 compliant, compatible with assistive technologies, and accessible on desktop and mobile devices, ensuring continued and equitable access to the system.

Noise concerns may be submitted on the national portal at: <https://www.faa.gov/ancir>

CALDWELL AIRPORT'S
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September 5th 2026
— CALDWELL, IDAHO —

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Off-Airport Landings in Washington State: Regulations and Best Practices

Federal Aviation Rules and Enforcement

Federal aviation regulations do not contain a blanket requirement to land only at airports, but they impose strict safety obligations. For example, **14 CFR 91.13** forbids “careless or reckless” operations endangering people or property. Likewise, **14 CFR 91.119** sets minimum altitudes, with a key exception: aircraft may operate below those minimums only when necessary for takeoff or landing. In other words, a pilot may legally descend for a landing (even off-airport), but the FAA



retains discretion to judge whether the descent was truly “necessary.” These rules mean any off-airport landing must still meet 91.13 (operate safely) and 91.119 (meet the exception).

For seaplanes on water, **14 CFR 91.115** applies: a waterborne aircraft must “keep well clear of all vessels” and follow marine right-of-way rules. There is no separate state aircraft right-of-way on water beyond U.S. Coast Guard navigation rules, so seaplanes on a lake or river must yield to boats.

In summary, federal aviation law simply mandates safe operations. It neither explicitly authorizes nor forbids off-airport landings. Instead, it imposes general duties (no careless flying, adhere to obstacle clearance altitudes except for takeoff/landing) that pilots must satisfy anywhere they operate. Violation of those duties (for example, flying too low without necessity) is the usual enforcement trigger when the FAA reviews an off-airport landing.

Federal Land and Water Management

When landing off-airport, the surface rights belong to someone. Federal agencies (BLM, USFS, NPS, USFWS, etc.) strictly regulate their land and waters, often by land unit or area designation. Pilots should contact the appropriate federal manager’s local office before planning any off-airport landing on federal land.

- **National Parks (NPS):** 36 CFR §2.17 prohibits operating aircraft on park lands or waters except at designated sites. No Washington park (e.g. Olympic, North Cascades, Mount Rainier) has any general backcountry airstrip. Park policy (FAA’s AIM 7-4-6) recommends staying 2,000 ft over parks, but the actual rule is the CFR prohibiting landings.
- **Wildlife Refuges (USFWS):** 50 CFR §27.34 plainly bans any unauthorized aircraft landing on refuge lands or waters. Overflying low enough to harass wildlife is also forbidden. Certain coastal areas in Washington, including National Marine Sanctuaries, National Wildlife Refuges, and National Parks,

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contain landing prohibitions or overflight advisories. FAA Advisory Circular 91-36D recommends maintaining at least 2,000 feet AGL over parks and wildlife areas where practicable. Pilots should consult sectional charts and applicable federal regulations before conducting low-level operations in coastal wildlife-sensitive areas.

- **Wilderness Areas (USFS, NPS, BLM):** The Wilderness Act itself forbids “landing of aircraft” in wilderness. BLM’s regulations similarly ban landings in designated wilderness areas. In Washington, this includes dozens of wilderness units. There are generally no grandfathered backcountry airstrips in Washington wilderness areas, so pilots must treat them as no-landing zones by default.
- **Other National Forest Lands (USFS):** Outside wilderness areas, landing aircraft is not absolutely banned by regulation, but can be specifically closed by Forest Orders. In addition to wilderness prohibitions and Forest Orders, unauthorized use or resource damage may be enforced under 36 CFR Part 261 (including §§ 261.9 and 261.10). These provisions prohibit damaging natural resources or unauthorized occupancy and carry potential criminal penalties (up to 6 months imprisonment and/or fines). Even where landing is not expressly prohibited, causing measurable ground disturbance or operating contrary to posted restrictions may result in enforcement.

Under 36 CFR §261.50, forest supervisors can issue orders using the prohibitions in §261.58. In practice, orders often explicitly prohibit aircraft landing (e.g. “No. 17: Landing of aircraft”). Pilots must check each National Forest’s official closure orders (or contact the local ranger district) to see if a particular lake or meadow is off-limits. Some lakes on National Forest lands may be open to floatplane operations where no Forest Order or local restriction prohibits them, but check for prohibitions.

- **Bureau of Land Management (BLM):** Non-wilderness BLM lands are often open in principle, but pilots must watch for area-specific restrictions. BLM can ban landings via closure orders (43 CFR 8364.1) or supplementary rules (43 CFR 8365.1-6) for sensitive zones (e.g. wildlife sanctuaries, cultural sites). There is no single “no landing” clause; rather, landings on BLM land are allowed unless an order or rule forbids them. For example, BLM wilderness areas prohibit landings, and BLM offices may publish supplementary rules (often in local land use plans) banning landings in specific places. Pilots should consult the BLM field office or RMPs for any closures or rules. The Spokane District Office (Oregon/Washington BLM) handles Eastern WA BLM lands, including the San Juan Islands National Monument. Its phone and map info are publicly available on the BLM website.

However, pilots remain responsible for avoiding resource damage and complying with any posted restrictions, travel management plans, or closure orders applicable to the specific land unit.

In short, federal law generally defers to the land manager: check the unit’s status (Park, Refuge, Wilderness, etc.) and any published closures. No Washington federal refuge, park, or wilderness area is open to general landings.

Washington State Land Management

State-owned lands and waters come with their own rules:

- **State Parks:** The Department of Natural Resources manages forests, but the Park Commission specifically prohibits aircraft unless designated. **WAC 352-32-130** forbids landing or taking

off in any state park area unless that specific site is designated (with narrow emergency or official exceptions). No Washington state park (aside from Copalis on a federal road right-of-way beach) is designated for aircraft. The ocean beaches, largely State Parks lands, follow **WAC 352-37-170**: airplanes may only land in emergencies on ocean beaches except the Copalis Beach strip. (Even in Copalis, pilots must obey elevation/tide limits and not stray into off-limits zones.) In practice, Copalis (airport “S16”) is the only public beach landing area; Jefferson County further bans any beach landings outside emergencies.

- **WDFW Wildlife Areas:** WAC 220-500-090 makes it unlawful to land aircraft on Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife lands except by director’s permission or in bona fide emergencies. This covers wildlife refuges (federal) and state wildlife lands, adding another strict no-landing category on state-managed habitat.
- **DNR Lands (State Forest & Trust Lands):** Washington DNR supervises state trust lands (forests, aquatic bottoms, etc.). There is no blanket rule in Washington law explicitly prohibiting landings on DNR lands outside parks or refuges. However, most state trust land is held for forestry or leasing, and DNR requires authorization for sustained uses. DNR’s Aquatic Resource Leasing guidance states that “projects” on aquatic beds or shorelands need authorization, and its rules allow trespass penalties for unauthorized occupancy of aquatic lands. This implies that frequent use of riverbeds without permission could lead to enforcement. Pilots should treat DNR-managed beaches and bars with caution and consult DNR or county authorities.

Because many navigable riverbeds are managed as state-owned aquatic lands, pilots should confirm whether the area falls under DNR aquatic jurisdiction before considering a gravel bar landing.

Private and Tribal Lands

Landing on private property is permitted only with the landowner’s consent. Under RCW 9A.52 (Criminal Trespass), entering or remaining unlawfully on private property may constitute a misdemeanor or gross misdemeanor, depending on circumstances. Washington law does not provide an aviation-specific exemption. Except in bona fide emergencies, pilots must obtain express landowner permission prior to landing on private property.

Additional Practical Considerations

- **Airspace Restrictions:** Even if the surface is legal, be mindful of airspace. Near airports, in controlled airspace, or in temporary flight restriction (TFR) areas, off-airport approaches could violate airspace rules. Always check NOTAMs and sectional charts before considering a landing site.
- **Special Use Permits:** Situations like emergency landings for rescues or official business are generally allowed, even in parks/wilderness (36 CFR §2.17, 36 CFR §261.18(b)), but these are exceptions. A recreational pilot should not expect approval for non-emergency landings in closed areas (forest, park, refuge) without an official use permit.
- **FAA Reporting:** Even an authorized landing should be planned carefully. You must still comply with all applicable FAA rules (weather minimums, performance requirements, obstacle clearance, etc.) and file any required flight plans.

- **Miscellaneous:** Even where a landing may not be explicitly prohibited by regulation, off-airport operations on public lands may attract scrutiny if they conflict with land management objectives or cause visible resource disturbance. Agencies retain broad enforcement discretion. Coordination with the managing agency prior to recreational off-airport use is strongly recommended to preserve continued aviation access and maintain public trust.
- **Insurance and Liability:** Off-airport operations can affect insurance. Pilots should confirm with their insurer whether landing on unimproved fields or beaches is covered. If a landing is later ruled illegal (trespass or violating a ban), insurance claims could be denied.

Additional Aviation Safety Resources

- AOPA Air Safety Institute – Backcountry Resource Center: <https://www.aopa.org/training-and-safety/air-safety-institute/BackcountryResourceCenter>

This resource provides operational guidance, safety training, and best practices for backcountry and off-airport operations.

Summary Checklist for Pilots

Before planning an off-airport landing in Washington State, confirm:

- **Surface Ownership/Manager:** Identify who owns or manages the ground or water. (Check DNR maps, USFS/BLM map, park/refuge boundaries, etc.)
- **Regulatory Status:** For that land: What designation applies? (State Park, Wilderness Area, etc.) Is there a specific prohibition (e.g. 36 CFR 2.17, 50 CFR 27.34, WAC 352-32-130, WAC 220-500-090, etc.)?
- **Local Orders/Rules:** Are there any active closure orders or supplementary rules? (E.g., USFS/BLM orders, or local county ordinances.)
- **Permissions:** If it's private or tribal land, get permission. If it's public land with special restrictions, seek any required permit or written authorization from the managing agency.
- **Safety:** Even if landing is legally allowed, perform a low-altitude site check (1000 AGL crosswind pass), evaluate obstacles (power lines, trees, fences), and have a clear go-around plan.

Key Contacts (Washington State)

- **FAA Seattle FSDO:** (206) 231-3828 – 216th St S., Des Moines, WA. For FAA safety advice and regulation questions.
- **WSDOT Aviation Division:** (360) 709-8015 – Olympia, WA. For questions regarding WSDOT managed airports, including Copalis Beach Airport.
- **BLM Spokane District Office:** (509) 536-1200 – Spokane Valley, WA. Inquiries about public land use (including San Juan Islands National Monument).
- **USFS District Offices (Pacific NW Region 6):** e.g., Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie NF, Okanogan-Wenatchee NF (phone numbers via fs.usda.gov). For specific forest orders.

- **NPS Park Offices:** Olympic NP (360-565-3000), North Cascades NP (360-854-7200), Rainier NP (360-569-2211). Landings prohibited except emergencies.
- **WDFW:** (360) 902-2200. For AIS permits (seaplanes) and wildlife area questions.
- **DNR Aquatics:** (360) 902-1600. For questions about state aquatic lands and use authorizations.
- **Tribal Governments:** Contact via Washington Governor's Tribal Directory (goia.wa.gov) for permission to land on reservations.

By following these rules and checking authoritative sources, Washington pilots can navigate off-airport operations safely and legally. Always verify the latest regulations and notices before each flight.

Sources: Federal regs (14 CFR, 36 CFR, 43 CFR, etc.), Washington Administrative Code and Revised Code, and official agency publications, as detailed above.

Washington State Off-Airport Takeoff and Landing Reference Sheet

1 Federal law governs *how* you fly — not *where* you land

There is **no FAA rule requiring landings only at airports**, but all operations must comply with:

- **14 CFR § 91.13** (no careless or reckless operation)
- **14 CFR § 91.119** (minimum altitudes — exception only when necessary for takeoff/landing)

The FAA evaluates off-airport operations under general safety standards. If the landing or low pass is not clearly necessary or safely conducted, enforcement is possible.

2 Surface ownership controls landing legality

Even if the flight itself is legal, **the land manager determines whether you may land there.**

In Washington, the following are **generally closed to recreational off-airport landings**:

- National Parks (36 CFR § 2.17)
- National Wildlife Refuges (50 CFR § 27.34)
- Federal Wilderness Areas (Wilderness Act; 36 CFR § 261.18; 43 CFR § 6302.20)
- Washington State Parks (WAC 352-32-130)
- WDFW Wildlife Areas (WAC 220-500-090)

No Washington federal park, refuge, or wilderness area is open to general recreational landings.

3 Copalis Beach (S16) is the only public ocean beach landing site

Under **WAC 352-37-170**, aircraft may only land on Washington ocean beaches in emergencies — **except at Copalis State Airport (S16).**

Landing on any other Washington ocean beach is prohibited unless authorized.

4 Some lands may be open — but only after verification

- **Private land:** Legal with landowner permission.
- **Non-wilderness BLM land:** Often permitted unless a closure or supplementary rule prohibits it.
- **Non-wilderness National Forest land:** May be permitted unless a Forest Order prohibits landings.

However, pilots must verify:

- No Wilderness designation
- No closure orders
- No wildlife or environmental restrictions
- No county or local prohibitions

The default should never be assumption — always confirm with the managing agency.

5 Seaplane operations require special attention

- Must comply with **14 CFR § 91.115** (water right-of-way rules).
- Washington requires an **Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Permit** (RCW 77.135.210).
- Many lakes are restricted due to state park, wildlife, wilderness, or local rules.

It cannot be assumed that all bodies of water are open to the public.

Off-Airport Landing Decision Flowchart (Washington State)

1. Identify the surface you intend to land on.



2. Who owns or manages the surface?

- Private property → Obtain explicit landowner permission.
- Tribal land → Contact the tribal government for authorization.
- Federal land → Identify the managing agency (NPS, USFWS, USFS, BLM).
- State land → Determine whether it is State Parks, WDFW, DNR, or other agency.



3. Determine the land designation.

- National Park → Landing prohibited except emergency.
- Wildlife Refuge → Landing prohibited except emergency.
- Wilderness Area → Landing prohibited.
- State Park → Landing prohibited unless specifically designated (Copalis Beach).
- WDFW Wildlife Area → Landing prohibited without authorization.
- Non-wilderness USFS or BLM → Continue to next step.



4. Check for area-specific restrictions.

- Forest Orders (USFS)
- BLM closure orders or supplementary rules
- Local county ordinances
- Wildlife or environmental restrictions



5. Confirm operational safety.

- No wires, fences, or obstacles
- Adequate landing distance
- Surface condition suitable
- Go-around plan available



6. Confirm regulatory compliance.

- Meets 14 CFR §91.13 (no careless/reckless operation)
- Meets 14 CFR §91.119 exception for landing
- Seaplanes comply with §91.115 and AIS permit if applicable

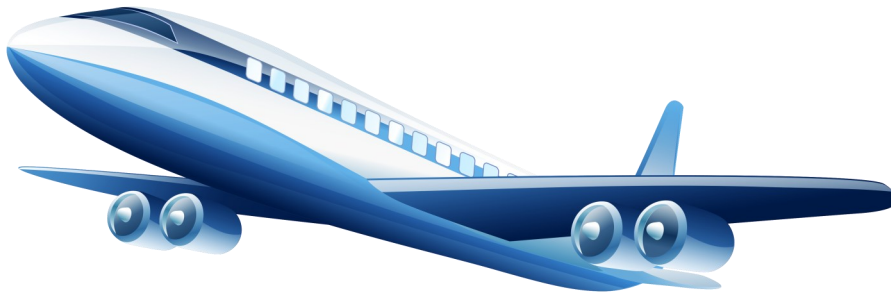


7. When uncertain → Contact the managing agency before landing.

Regulatory Matrix for Off-Airport Landings (Washington State)

Land Type	Typical Landing Status	Primary Authority	Notes
Private Land	Allowed with permission	RCW 9A.52	Landing without permission may constitute criminal trespass.
Tribal Lands	Permission required	Tribal sovereignty	Contact the tribal government before landing.
National Parks	Prohibited	36 CFR §2.17	Only emergency or authorized government landings allowed.
National Wildlife Refuges	Prohibited	50 CFR §27.34	Unauthorized aircraft landings prohibited.
Federal Wilderness Areas	Prohibited	Wilderness Act; 36 CFR §261.18; 43 CFR §6302.20	Applies across USFS, NPS, and BLM wilderness units.
National Forest (non-wilderness)	Case-by-case	36 CFR §261; Forest Orders	Landing may be restricted by local orders.
BLM Lands (non-wilderness)	Often permitted unless restricted	43 CFR §8364–8365	Check RMPs and closure orders.
Washington State Parks	Prohibited	WAC 352-32-130	Exception: Copalis Beach Airport (S16).
Ocean Beaches	Emergency only	WAC 352-37-170	Copalis Beach (S16) is the only designated landing area.
WDFW Wildlife Areas	Prohibited without permit	WAC 220-500-090	Director authorization required.
DNR Trust Lands / Aquatic Lands	Unclear / authorization recommended	RCW 79; DNR policies	Riverbeds and gravel bars may fall under DNR aquatic jurisdiction.
Lakes / Rivers (seaplanes)	Varies by location	14 CFR §91.115; RCW 77.135.210	AIS permit required in Washington.

Who/What is Aviation in Washington state?



[This video](#) is a great overview of Washington State's aviation system – a reminder of how critical multimodal transportation is to our communities and economy.

Washington is home to 134 public-use airports that support everything from commercial aviation and cargo operations to emergency services and local economic development. Each plays an important role in keeping people and goods moving across regions – especially in rural and remote areas.

WSDOT Aviation Division is a vital piece of the state's transportation network. Whether it's enhancing connectivity, supporting tourism, or enabling critical medical flights, airports – large and small – help communities thrive.

As we continue to plan and build the future of transportation in Washington, it's exciting to see all the pieces coming together – from highways and rail to our skies.

A promotional graphic for the Washington Airport Management Association (WAMA) 2026 Annual Conference. The background is a photograph of a large, multi-story brick building with a clock tower, set against a sunset sky. The WAMA logo is in the top left. The text 'Washington Airport Management Association' is written in a curved path above the main title. The main title '2026 ANNUAL CONFERENCE' is in large, bold, black letters. A 'Mark your calendar' icon is in the bottom left. A green banner at the bottom right contains the dates 'May 18-20, 2026' and the location 'Marcus Whitman Walla Walla, WA'.



Washington Airport Management Association

**2026 ANNUAL
CONFERENCE**



May 18-20, 2026

Marcus Whitman
Walla Walla, WA



The Aviation Specialty License Plate features a **Boeing Stearman Model 75** with Mount Rainier in the background, both symbols of Washington state.

The cost for the Aviation Specialty License Plate is \$40 for the original plate in addition to specialty license plate fees and annual tab fees.

Plate renewals are \$30 for the subsequent years in addition to annual tab fees.

You can find out the total cost by contacting your local [vehicle licensing office](#).

To purchase your own, please visit: www.dol.wa.gov/vehicleregistration/specialdesign.html.

To make the best use of Aviation Division funds, we have decided to discontinue the 1-800-552-0666 phone number effective July 1, 2026.

We encourage you to begin using our primary contact number, 360-709-8015, for all Washington State Aviation inquiries moving forward. You may also reach us by email at wsdotaviation@wsdot.wa.gov or access services online at <https://wsdot.wa.gov/travel/aviation>.

Thank you for your understanding and continued support.

Want something in the next newsletter?

If there are any other events, information or stories that are aviation related you would like us to distribute, please email christina.crea@wsdot.wa.gov.

AVIATION WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES



Scholarships

- [NASAO Center for Aviation Research & Education for the Henry O. Scholarship](#) Awards \$2,500 to three college students continuing their education in the aviation or aerospace industry. Applicant must be an incoming junior or senior college student (or going into their second year of study for a two-year degree) and maintain a minimum major GPA of 3.0.
- [Washington Airport Management Association](#) (WAMA) has four scholarships available yearly and applications are typically due in March every year.
 - ⇒ Thomas Eller Memorial Scholarship. One scholarship awarded annually to students in aviation management or related undergraduate programs).
 - ⇒ Airport Manager Internship (For those wishing a career in Airport Management)
 - ⇒ Professional Development Internship (For airport personnel wishing to expand their academic knowledge in Airport Management)
 - ⇒ Community Aviation Internship (For teachers, individuals, or groups wishing to bring aviation education to their community)
- [Cascade Warbirds Memorial Youth Scholarship Program](#) Cascade Warbirds has teamed with several flight schools to provide the scholarship recipient with tuition, books and supplies, and two introductory instructional flights. This scholarship is available for students between the ages of 16 and 21 at the time of award. It is valued at approximately \$1,350 and several awards are made each year.
- [Washington Pilots Association Youth Aviation Scholarship Fund](#) – Deadline varies by Chapter. Chapter Scholarships for Bremerton, Green River, Paine Field, Southwest (Vancouver). The Youth Aviation Scholarship Fund (YASF) as established by the Washington Pilots Association is a 501(C) (3) foundation dedicated to the future of aviation. Individuals may contribute up to \$5,000 to Washington Pilots Association Youth Aviation Scholarship Fund per calendar year.

Internships

- [Washington Airport Management Association](#) (WAMA)
- [American Association of Airport Executives](#) (AAAE)

Please send any other aviation scholarship, internship or other workforce development opportunities in Washington state to christina.crea@wsdot.wa.gov.

Recruiting applicants for Commercial Aviation Work Group



COMMERCIAL AVIATION WORK GROUP

Applications are still open and the Governor's Office is still looking for more people to apply for Governor-appointed seats on the [Commercial Aviation Work Group](#) created in [HB 1791 \(PDF 10KB\)](#).

The position requirements can be found on the [Governors Board and Commission profiles website](#) under "[Commercial Aviation Work Group](#)" and those interested [can apply now](#).

Application reviews began Oct. 9, 2024, and will continue until all seats are filled.

Positions open include:

- **Position 3:** Rep. from a commercial service airport and ports from Eastern WA
- **Position 8:** Citizen rep. from Eastern WA
- **Position 14:** Citizen rep. for the public interest in the communities that are included in the work group's site research and understand the impacts of a large commercial aviation facility on a community
- **Position 15:** Rep. from a freight forwarding industry
- **Position 16:** Rep. from the trucking industry
- **Position 19:** Rep. from the statewide environment organization

Report Wildlife Strikes

Need to report a wildlife strike? Pilots can report wildlife strikes at the [FAA Wildlife Strike Database](#). The database contains records of reported wildlife strikes since 1990. Strike reporting is voluntary. Therefore, this database only represents the information received from airlines, airports, pilots, Mandatory Occurrence Reports (MOR), incident/accident information, and other sources.

Washington Airport Profile

Every month we will feature an airport profile from the 2018 Aviation Economic Impact Study. We hope this helps the aviation community see the positive impacts aviation has on the state's economy.

Airport Profile
ESW

EASTON STATE
7702 TERMINAL STREET SW
TUMWATER, WA 98501-7264



Washington's Airports Support Our State

The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) Aviation Division conducted an Aviation Economic Impact Study (AEIS) of Washington's 134 public-use airports to measure the annual economic impact that airports provide to local communities, geographic regions, and statewide. The study offers a detailed look into how airports contribute to our state and serves as a useful tool in communicating the economic value they bring to our world.

Study Approach

Economic impact is quantified by first calculating the effects of on-airport activity and visitor spending, then analyzing how these effects continue to generate money as they flow through the economy. Economic impacts are calculated by individual airport, then modeled to quantify the total statewide impact of Washington's airport system.

Resulting economic impacts for each airport are expressed in terms of jobs, labor income, value added benefits, and business revenues.



AIRPORT PROFILE

Easton State Airport (ESW) is a state-owned airport located two miles north of the central business district in Easton within Kittitas County, Washington. ESW supports 1 job and has a total economic impact/business revenues of \$71,000 annually. The airport has a single 2,640-foot-long turf runway (09/27) that is often used for ultralight activity. The airport also serves as a site for aerial/wildland firefighting staging, search-and-rescue training, forestry management spraying, and military operations.

AIRPORT CHARACTERISTICS

Location	Service Classification	Organization
Legislative District: 13	Federal: N/A	Ownership Type: PUBLIC
Associated City: EASTON	State: GENERAL USE	Owner/Sponsor: WSDOT AVIATION DIVISION
County: KITTITAS		

AVIATION ACTIVITIES

Key Activities			
<input type="checkbox"/> Air cargo	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Aerial inspections	<input type="checkbox"/> Aerospace manufacturing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pilot training and certification
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Aerial photography	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Personal transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial passenger service
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Skydiving/recreational flying	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Search and rescue	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medical air transport	<input type="checkbox"/> Business and corporate travel
<input type="checkbox"/> Shipping of perishable goods	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Environmental patrol	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Emergency preparedness and disaster response	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> National security/military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Firefighting		

Ground Transportation Options	
<input type="checkbox"/> Bus	<input type="checkbox"/> Taxi
<input type="checkbox"/> Courtesy car	<input type="checkbox"/> Rideshare
<input type="checkbox"/> Limousine service	<input type="checkbox"/> Rail
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other: Local road access	

Airport Activities (2018)	
Scheduled commercial service	
Operations	N/A
Enplanements	N/A
General aviation	
Operations	300
Percent GA transient	20%



Sources: FAA Air Carrier Activity Information System (ACAIS), 2018 Airport Manager's Survey, FAA Terminal Area Forecast, FAA 5010 Airport Master Record (as applicable)

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ECONOMIC IMPACTS

Direct economic impacts comprise on-airport activities including employment and construction as well as money spent off-airport by out of state visitors who depart via scheduled commercial service or general aviation.

Direct impacts have additional effects as money generated at and by airports flows through the economy. These effects are caused when a portion of direct business revenues are used to purchase goods and services in Washington (i.e., supplier sales) and worker income is re-spent within the state.

Economic impacts are expressed in terms of the following metrics:

- **Jobs:** Number of employed people
- **Labor Income:** Salaries, wages, and other benefits to workers
- **Value Added:** Value contributed to a product or service provided by a firm or group of firms (in this case, airport businesses)
- **Business Revenues:** Represents an airport's total economic impact

Airport Economic Impacts

Impact Types	Jobs	Labor Income	Value Added	Business Revenues
On-Airport Activity	0	\$16,000	\$19,000	\$35,000
Visitor Spending	0	\$1,000	\$2,000	\$3,000
Total Direct Effects	1	\$17,000	\$21,000	\$38,000
Supplier Sales	0	\$7,000	\$10,000	\$15,000
Re-Spending of Worker Income	0	\$6,000	\$11,000	\$18,000
Total Economic Impact	1	\$30,000	\$41,000	\$71,000

Impacts derived based on: 2018 Airport Manager's Survey, 2018 Airport Tenant's Survey, FAA 5010 Airport Master Record, FAA Terminal Area Forecast, Airline Data, Inc. Impacts modeled using IMPLAN by EBP. Analyses based on 2018 study year. **Notes:** Totals may not add due to rounding. Metrics (jobs, labor income, value added, and business revenues) represent various components of an airport's economic impact and are not additive.

TAX IMPACTS

Airports' direct economic impacts result in local and state tax revenues. On-airport businesses pay business and operating (B&O) taxes. Visitor spending generates taxes and fees associated with sales; hotel stays; and use of transportation services including rental cars, Transportation Network Companies (TNCs), and taxis.

Airport's Estimated Taxes to Each Jurisdiction

Impact Types	Local (County & Municipal)	State	Total
On-Airport Activity	\$520	\$2,770	\$3,290
Visitor Spending	\$40	\$250	\$290
Total	\$560	\$3,020	\$3,580

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding.

Statewide Tax Collections

The Washington State Department of Revenue reports that the state collected **\$3.18 million** in aircraft fuel and aircraft excise taxes. Together with taxes generated by on and off-airport aviation-related activities, the state's airport system, including SeaTac, generated over **\$913.3 million** in total statewide tax impacts (2018).

STATEWIDE ECONOMIC IMPACTS

