

Washington Skies

Washington State Department of Transportation Aviation Division

August 19, 2026



FROM THE FLIGHT DECK

UPCOMING EVENTS/REMINDERS

- **Tacoma Narrows Airport Day: Aug. 29, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.** Tacoma Narrows Airport Day is a free, family-friendly event offering a rare opportunity to get up close to the operations and activities at the airport.



Did you know WSDOT manages 15 airports? 4 are currently supporting wildfire response by providing bases where firefighting aircraft can stage, refuel and receive maintenance closer to affected areas.

Watch our Facebook video to learn how maintaining these airports year-round helps keep them ready when emergencies arise.

[Sheriff's Office says fines, arrests could be made if people continue flying drones near Spokane fires | News | kxly.com](#)

[Drones interfere with Monday's firefighting efforts; DNR calls for grounding of all unauthorized aircraft](#)

[Wildfires Near Spokane Threaten Key Airports](#)

[PHOTOS: The view from 3,000 feet: inside the Washington State Patrol Aviation Division - The B-Town \(Burien\) Blog](#)

[Private pilots airlift supplies from Arlington to families affected by Colville Reservation wildfires | king5.com](#)

[Delta launches new Seattle to Tokyo-Narita direct route | FOX 13 Seattle](#)

[Self-flying air taxis and drones: Boeing sells key aviation technology businesses to Archer - GeekWire](#)

[SEA Airport advances \\$2.5 billion overhaul of aging S Concourse | king5.com](#)

2026 Airport Restaurant List

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

Views from the Field: 5010 Inspections

Our Aviation team has been out in the field conducting annual 5010 inspections at airports across Washington.

These inspections help ensure airport information such as runway conditions, lighting, signage and other facilities are accurate and up to date in the Federal Aviation Administration's Airport Data and Information Portal.

Here's a look at some of the airports and scenery our inspectors encountered along the way!



Angel Flight West Washington Wing



Meet Command Pilot Victor Asp of Washington. Since 2016, Victor has been volunteering with Angel Flight West (AFW), a nonprofit that provides free air transportation to patients who need to travel long distances for vital medical care. Pictured here is Victor alongside AFW passenger Perla and her mother, Geovanna.

Recently, Victor flew Perla and Geovanna to and from Seattle Children's Hospital from their home in Manson, Washington, to ensure Perla could access the health care she needed — saving the family from a nearly 200-mile car trip.

To learn more about Angel Flight West and how you can get involved in our Washington Wing, please visit www.angelflightwest.org.



Angel Flight
WEST

Understanding Washington's new aviation taxes and fees

WSDOT Aviation recently released an [informational flyer](#) outlining upcoming changes to Washington's aviation fuel tax, aircraft registration fee and aircraft and commercial drone excise taxes following the passage of House Bill 2711.

The flyer provides operators with an overview of the new rates, effective dates and aircraft fee schedules. Since its release, members of the aviation community have asked for more information about how aviation-related revenue is used.

The following overview provides additional context about how this revenue supports Washington's statewide aviation system, how airport projects are prioritized and where pilots and airport representatives can find more detailed information.

How aviation revenue supports the statewide system

Washington's aviation system connects communities, supports businesses, enables emergency response and provides access to essential services across the state. Maintaining that system requires continued investment in airports, safety, planning and other aviation programs.

Washington's aviation system is supported in part by aviation fuel taxes, aircraft registration fees and aircraft excise taxes. Under state law, revenue from these sources is deposited into several aviation-related accounts and may be spent only after appropriation by the Washington State Legislature.

Depending on legislative appropriations and the specific account into which revenue is deposited, funding may support:

- Aviation planning and system studies.
- Airport infrastructure grants.
- Airport safety, education and technical assistance.
- Sustainable aviation programs and related infrastructure.
- Administration and delivery of WSDOT Aviation programs.
- Certain aviation-related activities administered by other state agencies.

The Legislature may also direct funding to specific aviation programs or projects through the state transportation budget.

What is changing under House Bill 2711?

House Bill 2711 repealed a previously proposed 10% luxury aircraft tax and replaced it with increases to existing aviation-related taxes and fees.

Changes outlined in WSDOT Aviation's informational flyer include:

- An increase in the aviation fuel tax from 18 cents to 25 cents per gallon, effective Nov. 1, 2026.
- An increase in the annual aircraft registration fee from \$15 to \$30, effective Jan. 1, 2027.
- Revised aircraft excise tax schedules, including a new category for commercial uncrewed aircraft systems, effective Jan. 1, 2027.
- Annual 2% adjustments to registration fees and excise taxes beginning Jan. 1, 2028.

The legislation also creates the Sustainable Aviation Fuel Airport Infrastructure Account in the state

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treasury. Subject to legislative appropriation, funding from the account may be used for activities at airports that support sustainable aviation fuel infrastructure improvement and preservation projects.

As with other state transportation revenue, the Legislature determines how funding is appropriated through the budget process. WSDOT Aviation administers the programs and funding assigned to the division in accordance with state law and legislative direction.

Operators are encouraged to review the legislation and monitor implementation timelines to understand how the changes may affect future operating costs and aircraft registrations in Washington.

How airport projects are selected

WSDOT Aviation's Airport Aid Grant Program provides financial assistance to eligible public-use airports across Washington. Because available funding does not always meet the full level of statewide need, grant applications go through an established evaluation and scoring process.

Chapter 5 of the Airport Aid Grant Procedures Manual explains the criteria used to review and prioritize applications. Factors may include project purpose, safety, system benefit, airport planning, project readiness and the availability of matching funds.

The State Capital Improvement Program also plays an important role in identifying and prioritizing aviation infrastructure needs. The program provides a statewide overview of anticipated airport projects and helps WSDOT Aviation, airport sponsors, the Federal Aviation Administration and other partners coordinate future investments.

Learn more

Pilots, aircraft owners, airport representatives and other aviation community members can use the following resources to learn more about the new taxes and fees, aviation funding and project prioritization:

- [House Bill 2711](#): Review the legislation, supporting documents and legislative history.
- [Previous Airport Aid grant recipients](#): View airports and projects that received WSDOT Aviation grants from 2009 through 2020.
- [Airport Aid Grant Procedures Manual](#): Learn about grant eligibility, application requirements and the project evaluation process. Chapter 5 explains how applications are evaluated and scored.
- [State Capital Improvement Program](#): Learn how aviation infrastructure needs and projects are identified and prioritized statewide.

Together, the [informational flyer](#) and these additional resources provide a broader picture of what is changing and how aviation-generated revenue supports Washington's airports and statewide aviation system.



WASHINGTON STATE IMPORTANT UPDATE FOR AIRCRAFT & DRONE OPERATORS

The Washington State Legislature has passed House Bill 2711 (HB 2711), which includes increases to aircraft and drone taxes and aircraft registration fees.

WHAT'S CHANGING?

HB 2711 repeals the previously proposed 10% luxury aircraft tax and replaces it with increases to existing aviation-related taxes and fees.



AVIATION FUEL TAX INCREASE

CURRENT **18¢** per gallon
NEW RATE **25¢** per gallon
Effective date: November 1, 2026



AIRCRAFT REGISTRATION FEE INCREASE

CURRENT **\$15** per year
NEW RATE **\$30** per year
Effective date: January 1, 2027



AIRCRAFT AND DRONE TAX INCREASE

Annual aircraft excise tax will increase under a revised fee schedule, including a new category for commercial UAS.
Effective date: January 1, 2027



ANNUAL ADJUSTMENT: Starting January 1, 2028, registration fees and excise taxes will be adjusted annually by 2%.



WHO IT AFFECTS?

These changes may impact a broad range of aviation stakeholders, including general aviation, business aviation, helicopter operators, and unmanned aircraft system (UAS/drone) operators depending on aircraft registration applicability and operational fuel usage.



WHY THE CHANGE?

State legislators indicated the revised approach was intended to maintain transportation revenue while addressing concerns raised by the aviation community regarding the economic impacts of the previously adopted luxury aircraft tax.

The legislation also creates the Sustainable Aviation Fuel Airport Infrastructure Account in the State Treasury to support investments in airport infrastructure related to sustainable aviation fuel development and use.



STAY INFORMED: Operators are encouraged to review the bill language and monitor implementation timelines to understand how these fee and tax adjustments may affect future operational costs and aircraft registrations in Washington State.



REVIEW THE BILL

Read the full text of Engrossed Substitute House Bill 2711; Chapter 255, Laws of 2026; 69th Legislature, 2026 Regular Session.



PLEASE SHARE THIS INFORMATION

Please share this information with other operators and aviation partners.

TYPE OF AIRCRAFT FEE SCHEDULE

Type of Aircraft	Excise Tax 1	Excise Tax 2 (increase)	New Total Excise Tax
Single engine fixed wing	\$50	\$70	\$120
Small multi-engine fixed wing	\$65	\$155	\$220
Large multi-engine fixed wing	\$80	\$140	\$220
Turboprop multi-engine fixed wing	\$100	\$370	\$470
Turbojet multi-engine fixed wing	\$125	\$1,095	\$1,220
Helicopter	\$75	\$145	\$220
Sailplane	\$20	\$100	\$120
Lighter than air	\$20	\$100	\$120
Home built	\$20	\$100	\$120
Commercial unpowered aircraft systems (commercial drones)	\$0	\$120	\$120

WEIGHT-BASED FEE SCHEDULE

Gross Maximum Takeoff Weight	Excise Tax 1	Excise Tax 2 (increase)	New Total Excise Tax
Less than 4,001 lbs.	\$500	\$500	\$1,000
4,001–6,000 lbs.	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$2,000
6,001–8,000 lbs.	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$4,000
8,001–9,000 lbs.	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$6,000
9,001–12,500 lbs.	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$8,000



For questions regarding aircraft and drones, please email wsdotaviation@wsdot.wa.gov.

Title VI Notice to Public: It is the Washington State Department of Transportation's (WSDOT) policy to assure that no person shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, as provided by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise discriminated against under any of its programs and activities. Any person who believes his/her Title VI protection has been violated, may file a complaint with WSDOT's Office of Equity and Civil Rights (OECR). For additional information regarding Title VI complaint procedures and/or information regarding our non-discrimination obligations, please contact OECR's Title VI Coordinator at (360) 705-7090.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Information: This material can be made available in an alternate format by emailing the Office of Equity and Civil Rights at wsdotada@wsdot.wa.gov or by calling toll free, 855-362-4ADA(4232). Persons who are deaf or hard of hearing may make a request by calling the Washington State Relay at 711.

2026 Tacoma Narrows Airport Day Aug. 29

[Tacoma Narrows Airport Day](#) is a free, family-friendly event offering a rare opportunity to get up close to the operations and activities at the airport. The event will be held on Saturday, Aug. 29.

Event details

The airport and runway will remain open during the event. Watch for additional details about the event as planning progresses.

- **9 a.m.** Gates open
- **9:30 a.m.** Welcome
- **10 a.m. to 4 p.m.** Activities

Did you know?

WSDOT's Washington Zero-Emission Incentive Program, or WAZIP, can help eligible Washington businesses reduce the cost of purchasing zero-emission medium- and heavy-duty vehicles and zero-emission off-road equipment.

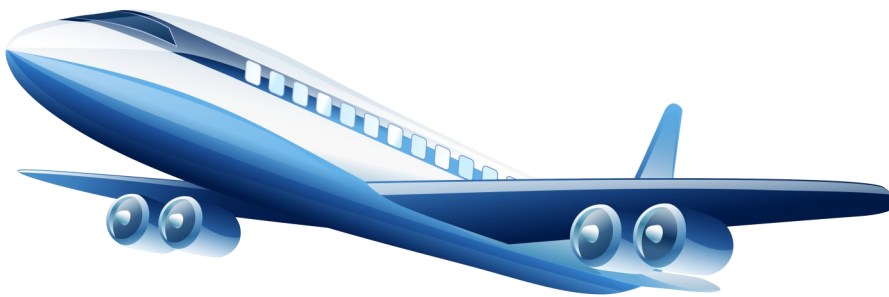
Airports may be eligible for incentives on qualifying equipment purchases. The program is administered by CALSTART. Learn more at www.wazip.org.

WSDOT Aviation to participate in FAA Advanced Air Mobility Pilot Program

WSDOT Aviation is proud to participate in the FAA's newly selected Advanced Air Mobility and [eVTOL Integration Pilot Program \(eIPP\)](#), a national effort to accelerate the safe integration of next-generation aircraft into the National Airspace System. Washington will participate through a Pennsylvania DOT-led multistate collaborative focused on regional passenger transportation, working with public-sector partners and private AAM companies including BETA Technologies and Electra.

WSDOT's role will help ensure that Washington's aviation system, communities, airports, and emerging mobility partners are represented as the FAA develops practical operational, infrastructure, and regulatory pathways for AAM. The program is intended to generate real-world data and policy insights that will inform future FAA rules and support safe, scalable deployment of electric and advanced aircraft across diverse operating environments.

What is Aviation's Role 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.

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.

Upcoming aviation event: Caldwell Airport 50th Anniversary



WSDOT Commercial Drone Registration Renewal

Friendly reminder to commercial drone operators: the annual registration renewal window is open.

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](https://www.wsdot.wa.gov/uas).



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.

WSDOT Aviation phone number update

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.

Recruiting applicants for 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 [Governor's 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 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 environmental 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
W16

FIRST AIR FIELD

13812 179TH AVE SE
MONROE, WA 98272



WASHINGTON
Aviation Economic Impact Study

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

First Air Field (W16) is a privately-owned, public-use airport located two miles northwest of Monroe in Snohomish County, Washington. W16 supports 23 jobs and has a total economic impact/business revenues of \$2.9 million annually. The airport has one runway (07/25) that is 2,087 feet long by 34 feet wide. The airport provides training and emergency landing access to pilots flying in the Seattle/Everett region.

AIRPORT CHARACTERISTICS

Location	Service Classification	Organization
Legislative District: 39	Federal: N/A	Ownership Type: PRIVATE
Associated City: MONROE	State: COMMUNITY	Owner/Sponsor: DARYL HABICH
County: SNOHOMISH		

AVIATION ACTIVITIES

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

Ground Transportation Options	
☐ Bus	☐ Taxi
☐ Courtesy car	☐ Rideshare
☐ Limousine service	☐ Rail
☐ Other:	

Airport Activities (2018)	
Scheduled commercial service	
Operations	N/A
Enplanements	N/A
General aviation	
Operations	18,169
Percent GA transient	35%



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

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

FIRST AIR FIELD (W16)

WASHINGTON

Aviation Economic Impact Study

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	3	\$296,000	\$368,000	\$610,000
Visitor Spending	11	\$437,000	\$640,000	\$991,000
Total Direct Effects	14	\$732,000	\$1,009,000	\$1,601,000
Supplier Sales	4	\$205,000	\$341,000	\$642,000
Re-Spending of Worker Income	5	\$213,000	\$394,000	\$697,000
Total Economic Impact	23	\$1,150,000	\$1,744,000	\$2,941,000

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	\$5,390	\$33,090	\$38,480
Visitor Spending	\$16,420	\$89,360	\$105,780
Total	\$21,810	\$122,450	\$144,260

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



AVIATION WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES



Scholarships

- [NASAO 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.