

The Manager's Approach



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Columbia & Pine Mountain Lake Airports

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Columbia Airport Layout Plan

There are several airport improvement projects that I consider very important to Columbia Airport. The three top projects that I would like to accomplish are:

- The installation of a fire protection system on the west side of the airport so we can build additional hangars;
- The construction of a perimeter vehicle access road around the south end of Runway 35 to reduce the number of runway incursions, and;
- Open the southwest area of the airport along South Airport Road for airport development.

The one big item that has been holding up these projects is a requirement that all airport development projects must be shown on the approved Airport Layout Plan (ALP). The current Columbia ALP does not show any of the above projects. Thus, we cannot apply for FAA grants to fund the first two projects and the County cannot issue any building permits for the South Airport Road development.

I expect the ALP to be completed by March and then approved by the County and FAA by June. It will be a relief to have this one major step out of our way.

Teething Problems

We thought that installing a new gate controller at PML Airport would be simple and straight forward. Wrong! Installing the card reader and clicker receiver that would read the PMLA cards and clickers ended up being more of a headache than any of us realized. Finally, through persistence we have things nearly back to normal. We

apologize to those that were inconvenienced during this change over.

If you are still having trouble accessing the PML Airport, please call the office and we will get you set up. There is a \$25 programming fee for people requesting new access. Those who previously had gate cards will have their cards programmed at no cost.

2005 In Review

I thought since this was the last issue of *The Manager's Approach* for 2005 I would list many of the things that we accomplished at our airports this year. We were very busy and made some good progress, however I still have a long list of projects that I feel need to be done at both airports. The following are the major accomplishments in 2005;

- Changed the CTAF at both airports to reduce frequency congestion
- Installed additional fire detectors in the old hangars at Columbia
- Signed a contract with Cingular Wireless for a cell site on the Mt. Brow beacon tower
- Installed new REILs on Runway 35
- Had the Baseline crew clear brush and grass to reduce fire hazard and eliminate deer browse
- Obtained a FAA grant for the design of a perimeter vehicle access road around the south end of Runway 35
- Obtained a FAA grant for the updating of the Columbia Airport Layout Plan
- Had a successful Father's Day Fly-In
- Began implementing the new Reserved Space Permit for hangars and tie-downs

- Continued to work with the CDF Division of Aviation and State Agency for Surplus Property to obtain the S-2A Tracker N417DF for display.
- Submitted paperwork to FAA to sell the Springfield lots
- Installed shields in the Columbia Airport and Mt. Brow beacons to reduce light impact on neighbors
- Reissued several commercial leases
- Obtained a utility easement across one Springfield Estates lot to accommodate a waterline for our planned fire protection system on the west side of the airport
- Worked with BSA Eagle Scout to install owl boxes along the grass runway
- Updated the Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plans for both airports
- Completed the Final Draft of the PML Airport Master Plan
- Issued a contract for the preparation of a CEQA Initial Study for PML Airport
- Supported several aviation organizations fly-ins including the Gathering of Luscombes, West Coast Mooneys, Taylorcraft Rendezvous, EAA Chapter 96 Fly-In, Bellanca Champion Club, International Stinson Club, Sacramento Valley Airmen Assoc., Flying Doctors, North/South Canard Fliers, SF Air Squadron Deputy Pilots, and others.
- Verified approach path lighting location and elevations for the FAA
- Supported the production of NBC's Three Wishes pilot program partially filmed at Columbia Airport.
- Repaired the drainage system at PML
- Worked on the deer control at PML
- Relocated the density altitude display from Columbia to PML Airport
- Replaced the gate controller at PML and added clicker access
- Requested that the FAA survey both airports for possible WAAS-LPV approaches

Several of these projects were supported by volunteers, without whose help we could have never done the work. I would like to thank all those that supported the Airports Department's efforts in 2005.

Santa and the FAA

In these days of the global marketplace and heightened travel security, it might seem unreasonable for a jolly fat man in a red suit with a sleigh and a team of reindeer to expect free access to the nation's skies.

But imagine for a minute the sheer size and agonizing detail of the flight plan that Kriss Kringle, aka Santa Claus, would file before embarking on his trip each Christmas Eve. In the past, Santa had been required by the Federal Aviation Administration to obtain a special flight certificate and specify each rooftop he'd visit and in what order. The flight plan and other paperwork were just more bureaucratic details for a cadre of busy elves to add to their preflight checklists.

So in an effort to make Santa's job easier, U.S. Secretary of Transportation Norm Mineta signed an Open Skies Agreement with the North Pole in Washington today. The North Pole, represented at a press conference by Santa himself, became the 75th territory to have an Open Skies agreement with the United States but the first governed by elves.

"Now the only restrictions on Santa's flight are the weather and snow on the rooftops," said Mineta as he stood next to Santa before reporters and television cameras. "Now the only time he needs to worry about red tape is if he wants to use it to wrap presents."

The above article consists of excerpts from a CBS News report dated December 21, 2005. Stupid Pilot Tricks will return next month.

The Manager's Approach is a monthly publication from the Tuolumne County Airports Director for the purpose of keeping our community informed of local aviation and airport issues. You can contact me at:

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