

**Merrill Field,  
Alaska's First  
Official Airport**



**Providing over  
78 Years  
of Service**

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## **MERRILL FIELD BULLETIN**

*Current News About Your Airport*

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*Merrill Field Airport  
800 Merrill Field Drive, Anchorage AK 99501*

*September, 2008  
[www.muni.org/merrill1/merrill1.cfm](http://www.muni.org/merrill1/merrill1.cfm)*

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### **GLENN HIGHWAY: Gambell Street to McCarrey Street Project Update**

As Merrill Field customers and users have undoubtedly noticed, this summer has been a very productive season for the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT) and its contractors in efforts to bring the Gambell Street to McCarrey Street Reconstruction Project on line by the end of the 2008 construction season. Early utility relocation work completed in the fall of 2007, and the wonderful cooperation from Merrill Field users and the general public, have afforded DOT the opportunity to deliver a functional project in a single full construction season.

The project's purpose is to relieve traffic congestion and improve safety on the 5th/6th Avenue Couplet and the Glenn Highway by eliminating the existing "bottleneck" that constricts traffic flow to and from downtown Anchorage. This segment of roadway is currently operating near capacity and accident rates are growing. Widening the existing four-lane section to six lanes will promote more efficient traffic flow, create safer driving conditions, and improve air quality by reducing stoppages and delays.

DOT is very pleased to report that the \$13.6 million project will be functionally complete for use in October. Some remaining work will carry-over into the 2009 construction season, including final lift paving, landscaping, and some grading and drainage work along the Merrill Field side of the project. This work will require some traffic restrictions during the early part of the 2009 season, and will impact Merrill field users adjacent to the project.

DOT thanks you for your patience, understanding, and cooperation. For further information please contact Project Engineer Ken Thomas at 269-0453.

*-- submitted by Rick Feller, Media Liaison, State of Alaska DOT*

### **Alaska 99s complete Merrill Field remarking**

Our hats are off to the Alaska Chapter 99s for remarking Merrill Field on Saturday, September 6. The new paint certainly refreshes the airport marking and makes Merrill Field very noticeable. The 99s volunteer this service to many airports around the state—a behind-the-scenes labor of love that never receives enough credit. Thanks to Patty Livingston and all the members who donated their time on one of the very few pleasant Saturdays of 2008. We appreciate you!

# What's Happening at Merrill Field

It has been a busy summer construction season and our capital improvement projects are still in progress. We are hoping that by the end of September, most if not all of these projects will be completed:

## Rehabilitate Aircraft Aprons

- Block 5, Lots 2-5 (located adjacent to Taxiways Quebec and Golf) apron rehabilitation and drainage improvements. This is the third phase of a multi-phased project. We appreciate your patience as personnel and equipment are continuously moving in the vicinity of Taxiways Quebec and Golf.

## Security Improvements

- Taxiway Barrier Gates at Quebec and Golf are in the process of rehabilitation work as well. This year, we have a grant from FAA to upgrade the pavement sensors and electronic controls to make the gates more reliable particularly in the midst of winter season.
- All airport vehicle gates are operated through the wireless network system. Gate users should **ensure that gates are fully closed** before leaving the premises so that unauthorized pedestrians or vehicles do not access the movement area.

This year to date we have experienced a total of three pedestrian and vehicular deviations. Your assistance in guiding people to their intended destinations and away from the movement area contributes to the Airport's safety and security and is greatly appreciated by Airport Management.

## Commission terms expire

### MUNICIPAL AIRPORTS AVIATION ADVISORY COMMISSION

The Municipal Airports Aviation Advisory Commission meetings are open to the public and held the first Thursday of every other month. Please call 343-6303 for additional information.

#### Meeting Dates:

Nov 6, Jan 8, Mar 5, May 14

#### Commissioner Term Exp.

Tony Follett, Chair	10/14/09
Rick Davis, V Chair	10/14/08
Don DeVoe	10/14/10
Dick Armstrong	10/14/09
Allen Kemplen	10/14/09
Erin Marston	10/14/10
Jim Powell	10/14/08

#### Statistics

Operations:

Sept. '07 – Aug. '08: 167,792  
2008 Based Aircraft: 892

The Mayor's office is looking for citizens who would like to take part in the Municipal government process and who are willing to work toward keeping our community a great place to live. Currently, there are two vacant positions on the Municipal Airports Aviation Advisory Commission: Member-at-Large and FAA Licensed General Aviation Pilot.

If interested, send a brief letter and résumé with your application to the Mayor's office. Application forms and additional information are available online at the Municipal Boards and Commissions website [www.muni.org/boards/index.cfm](http://www.muni.org/boards/index.cfm). Applications are kept on hand for openings that may become available throughout the year. The three-year terms are subject to approval by the Anchorage Assembly.

## Transient helicopter parking spaces identified

The Alpha Transient apron has been designated as the location for transient helicopter parking. Alpha Transient is located on the north side of Taxiway Alpha near the Air Traffic Control Tower. Two spaces at this location have been marked with blue rings for easy identification. This location is ideal for separation between rotor and fixed wing aircraft. Please call the Airport Manager's Office (343-6303) for information about permanent helicopter parking spaces.

# TOWER TALK

## Taxi approval on uncontrolled surfaces

Thanks to a lot of work at the Airport Manager's Office in conjunction with Airport Safety the online driver training program now agrees with the Alaska Supplement. A BIG thank you to Mr. Lundebey, Mr. Jumao-as, Mr. Motzko and their respective offices for their tireless efforts. The driver training program and the Alaska Supplement both state that if you are taxiing an aircraft and will require the use of a controlled surface, you must contact ground control on 121.7 prior to beginning taxi. This is an effort from the Merrill Field airport management team and the tower team to reduce coordination efforts and ensure airport safety.

## Special VFR Procedures

As fall approaches, the Anchorage Bowl area sees an increase in Special VFR Weather. An ATC clearance must be obtained before operating within a Class B, Class C, Class D, or class E surface area when the weather is less than that required for VFR flight.

1. A VFR pilot may request and be given a clearance to enter, leave, or operate within most Class D and Class E surface areas, traffic permitting, and providing such flight will not delay IFR Operations. A Special VFR Clearance is required to operate in Special VFR Conditions. This clearance must be requested by the pilot and approved by ATC. Because it is the pilot's prerogative as to whether or not to operate in Special VFR weather conditions, controllers may not assign a Special VFR Clearance until you request it. If a tower or radar controller states, "Merrill is below basic VFR Weather Conditions" or "A Special VFR clearance is required to operate in the Merrill Control Class D Surface Area", that is your clue that **you** must request a clearance. That can be accomplished by telling the controller, "Request SVFR Clearance out of/into the Merrill Class D Surface Area." (Note: Tower Controllers can issue you a Special VFR Departure Clearance after coordinating with Anchorage Approach Control. Inbound aircraft to Merrill Field should contact Anchorage Approach Control directly to request a Special VFR Clearance.)

2. During periods when low ceilings and good visibility is in effect, controllers will often try to expedite traffic by asking pilots if they can maintain visual separation with either another Special VFR Aircraft or an IFR aircraft. For instance, to get several departures off the airport, the Local Controller may ask if you can follow and maintain visual separation with a preceding departure. If you can, then both of you can be departed. If you cannot, then the preceding aircraft will be departed. You will have to wait until the previous departure exits the Class D Surface area or reports in VFR Conditions. Radar controllers may also try to bring a group of you into the Class D Surface Area using Visual Separation, rather than bringing you in one at a time. To help this process, it helps if you remain aware of the traffic situation by listening to the radio and scanning for the traffic.

You can find additional information on Special VFR Clearances in Chapter 4 of the Aeronautical Information Manual (AIM). If you have questions or would like further information, please call 271-2698.

Scotty Auton, Interim Air Traffic Manager



## USDA on patrol for roosting waterfowl

We continue utilizing the services of USDA Wildlife Services to reduce the possibility of bird strikes on the Field. This fall, the Specialists are utilizing an airport vehicle after business hours to discourage migrating waterfowl from roosting during the evening. This program was implemented several years ago, and as a result there is a noticeable decline in the number of geese and other wildlife congregating on the field. Remember to be on the alert for raven activity during this upcoming winter season, proactively discourage raven activity by properly containing all refuse, and promptly report damage to the Airport Manager's Office, 343-6303. We appreciate your assistance.

## Merrill Field Driver Training Program Updated

The Merrill Field Driver Training Program (DTP) has been updated to reflect current runway designations and to include instruction on new aircraft taxiing requirements. This information matches language published in the Alaska Supplement. We encourage all airport users to review the online program located at <http://www.muni.org/merrill1/drivertraining.cfm>.

The DTP was designed to enhance safety and raise security awareness of airport users, as well as familiarize them with practices and requirements during airport operations. The program also specifies the Airport Manager's policy with respect to the driver's qualification, vehicle equipage and mandatory communication procedures necessary to operate within Merrill Field Airport's movement areas. We appreciate your attention to and assistance with improving airport safety and reducing the number of vehicle/pedestrian deviations.

### Aviation Events

#### Alaska Airmen's Association Oktoberfest: October 11

A festive evening is planned with food, beverage, music, a silent auction and hangar flying.

The annual general membership meeting begins at 5:00 p.m. followed by dinner and entertainment at 6:00 p.m. RSVP with the Airmen's Association to help determine cost, 245-1251.

#### Aviation North Expo 2008: October 16 - 18

The Northern Alaska Aviation Symposium, Inc. invites you to Aviation North Expo 2008, a statewide general aviation conference for pilots, mechanics, airport managers and aviation enthusiasts! The Expo will be held at the Fairbanks Princess Riverside Lodge, Fairbanks, Alaska. For details, call 877-427-5599 or go to <http://www.aviationnorth.org>

#### Fall Safety Seminar: November 1

The Alaskan Aviation Safety Foundation encourages all pilots to "gear up and get ready for winter". The location of this important Seminar has not been determined; call the AASF at 243-7237 for details.

### *Seasonal Snippets*

#### ✓ *Prepare for seasonal changes*

The cooling temperature is the first sure indicator that the fall/winter season will be here soon, and the Airport maintenance staff is busy preparing for the first snowfall. Please help by removing all items and/or debris from your tie-down area that could potentially be pushed away with a pile of snow. Not only can items of value be lost or damaged; these items can also cause substantial damage to snow removal equipment and may cause blockage to the storm drainage system. Your cooperation and attention to this important request is greatly appreciated.

#### ✓ *Wash rack reminder*

If you have been putting off cleaning your aircraft, you may not want to wait much longer. When the temperature dips below freezing, the high-pressure wash system will be shut down for the season.

#### ✓ *Identify your covers*

Just as certain as the seasonal winds will be howling, a pilot will be asking if anyone has found and turned in a wind-blown wing cover. You can help by marking your covers with your aircraft N number. If we know who owns the associated aircraft, we'll gladly inform the rightful owner that a missing cover has been found.

#### ✓ *Noise reduction guidelines*

Use these procedures to reduce noise: maintain the lowest propeller RPM setting necessary for safe flight, utilize the entire runway length, remain at recommended pattern altitude, request Runway 7 or 25 to use higher power settings, and follow published arrival and departure routes.

#### **Merrill Field Airport Bulletin, Published Quarterly**

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