



SKY HARBOR RUNWAY RELOCATION NEWSLETTER

AVIATION SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PRESERVATION

AUGUST 2017 – VOLUME 1



Learn More:

Project newsletters including construction updates and photos will be distributed and posted on the airport website monthly. If you would like to be emailed the monthly newsletter, please contact Brandon Twedt (contact info below).

 skyharbor.duluthairport.com

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INTRODUCTION

We are pleased to be distributing the first monthly newsletter for the Runway Relocation project at the Sky Harbor Airport. We will be using these monthly newsletters to provide updates throughout the 3-year project regarding construction impacts, temporary runway conditions, and other information as needed.

PROJECT BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

Sky Harbor Airport is owned by the Duluth Airport Authority (DAA) and has been in operation on Minnesota Point since 1939. The airport consists of a paved 3,050 foot runway and a seaplane ramp and dock for seaplane access to Superior Bay. The unique location of the airport allows it to serve a wide variety of users including multiple businesses and U.S. Customs Services. Over time, a number of red and white pine trees located off the south end of the runway within airport property and the Minnesota Point Pine Forest Scientific and Natural Area (SNA) have grown tall enough to be considered obstructions for aircraft on approach to the airport. A majority of the obstructing trees are part of the old growth forest protected by the SNA. The old growth forest on Minnesota Point is uniquely significant in Minnesota by virtue of its presence on Lake Superior sand dunes, with the red and white pine woodland, its understory components, and ecological setting being the only example of this in Minnesota.

A multi-year environmental review process evaluated alternatives that would safely meet the needs of airport users and provide a long-term solution that balances the sensitive natural resources in the area. The selected alternative shortens the runway to 2,600 feet and rotates the south end into Superior Bay.

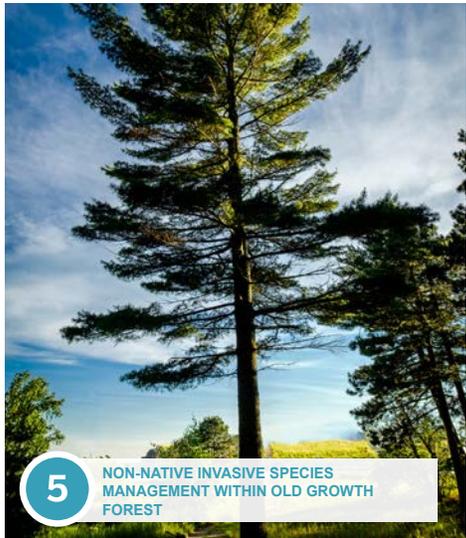


PLACEMENT OF:

- 7.6 ACRES OF IN WATER FILL
- CONSTRUCTION OF 2,600 FOOT LONG RUNWAY AND TAXIWAY



USE OF EFFICIENT MATERIAL DELIVERY METHODS, INCLUDING BARGING, TO MINIMIZE CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS TO THE SURROUNDING COMMUNITY



5 NON-NATIVE INVASIVE SPECIES MANAGEMENT WITHIN OLD GROWTH FOREST



3 SUBMERGED CRIB STRUCTURE WITH ROOT WAD



4 BEACH GRASS PRESERVATION & CREATION



The DAA has worked in consultation with many federal and state agencies, as well as local interested public groups throughout the environmental review process. The project results in approximately 7.6 acres and 70,000 cubic yards of fill into Superior Bay and serves to protect the valuable resources within the SNA while increasing aviation safety.

- Aquatic vegetation enhancement
- Upland beach/terrestrial vegetation restoration
- Shoreline enhancement through construction of submerged wooden crib structures and aquatic vegetation.

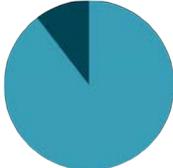
PROJECT MITIGATION

Through the environmental permitting process, the DAA worked in partnership with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MnDNR) and the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to develop an acceptable mitigation package that mitigates project impacts. Mitigation for the project includes the following environmental enhancements which will be completed during various phases of the 3-year project:

- Establishment of terrestrial native vegetation along the shoreline and around the new runway
- Terrestrial enhancements through invasive species removal and management

PROJECT FUNDING

This project is 90 percent funded by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) through use of Airport Improvement Program (AIP) funds. These funds are generated through user fees and aviation fuel taxes which are used to fund development of public-use airports. The remaining 10 percent of the project is funded by the State of Minnesota.



■ 90%
■ 10%



PROJECT SCHEDULE - OVERVIEW

The project is anticipated to take place over a 3-year period with the majority of construction occurring in the fall season in order to minimize environmental and socioeconomic impacts.

Phase 1 – Fall 2017 – Engineered shoreline construction

Phase 1 Overview:

Construction will begin after Labor Day in 2017. This phase includes construction of an engineered slope around the footprint of the new runway and placement of riprap (rock) and fill material. The parallel taxiway will also be removed during this phase of the project in order to utilize the underlying material as fill material, minimizing the amount of material needing to be brought to the site. Phase 1 will be completed in three separate sub-phases, Phase 1A, Phase 1B and Phase 1C, shown on the graphic above. The project has been designed to utilize barging to the greatest extent possible in order to minimize impacts from trucking.

Phase 1 also includes removal of the existing timber seaplane base retaining wall and replacement with a vinyl seawall with concrete cap.

The mitigation elements being completed as part of the Phase 1 project include:

- Terrestrial native vegetation establishment
- Terrestrial enhancement through removal and management of invasive species within the old growth forest (DAA property)

Airport Impacts:

The runway will remain open, without a parallel taxiway, throughout Phase 1. However, periodic runway closures may be necessary. Closures will be closely coordinated with airport users to minimize impacts. The seaplane base will remain open with minimal impacts throughout Phase 1 construction.

Phase 2 – (Tentatively fall 2018) Surcharge Placement

Phase 3 – (Tentatively fall 2019) Runway and Taxiway Construction