



IN REPLY REFER TO:

United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

GRAND TETON NATIONAL PARK

P.O. DRAWER 170

MOOSE, WYOMING 83012



L7617 (GRTE)

SEP 27 2013

Dear Interested Party:

The National Park Service (NPS) has prepared a final environmental impact statement (EIS) entitled *Jackson Hole Airport Agreement Extension, Final Environmental Impact Statement*. This document is now available to the public.

The Jackson Hole Airport is located on 533 acres within Grand Teton National Park. The airport operates under the terms of a 1983 agreement between the Jackson Hole Airport Board and United States Department of the Interior. Within the Department of the Interior, the National Park Service administers the agreement.

The purpose of the proposed action, as described in this environmental impact statement, is to evaluate the Jackson Hole Airport Board's proposal to amend the 1983 agreement by extending the authorized term by 20 years (two 10-year terms). An extension to the agreement is needed to enable the Jackson Hole Airport to maintain eligibility for federal funding beyond 2013. The current agreement authorizes operation of the airport until April 27, 2033. However, under Federal Aviation Administration funding regulations, an airport must own its land or have more than 20 years remaining on its lease or agreement. Because the Jackson Hole Airport is on land owned by the U.S. Government, the airport will lose its eligibility for Airport Improvement Program funding on April 27, 2013, which is 20 years before the current agreement expires.

Airport Improvement Program grants cover 95 percent of eligible costs for airfield capital improvement or repair projects that enhance airport safety, capacity, or security or address environmental concerns. Over the past decade, this program funded almost \$28 million in projects at the Jackson Hole Airport. Similar funding will be needed in the future to enable the airport to maintain the federal certification that allows the airport to be used for scheduled passenger service.

The final environmental impact statement responds to public and agency comments received on the draft environmental impact statement issued in April, 2009 and incorporates additional analyses and information collected since that time. This final environmental impact statement considers two alternatives regarding the 1983 agreement:

Alternative 1: No Action: Under the no action alternative, the 1983 agreement would remain unchanged and would expire on April 27, 2033. Beginning in 2013, however, the amount of time remaining on the agreement would no longer satisfy Federal Aviation Administration requirements for funding. Without FAA funding, the Airport Board would be unlikely to be able to maintain certification for scheduled passenger service for more than a few years.

Alternative 2: Preferred Alternative: Under the preferred alternative, the authorized term of 1983 agreement would be extended by 20 years through the addition of two 10-year options, thereby allowing the Airport Board to meet FAA funding requirements. The agreement would also be amended to strengthen the requirements of the Airport Board and the NPS to further mitigate and reduce the effects of the airport on park resources.

A copy of the *Jackson Hole Airport Agreement Extension, Final Environmental Impact Statement* is available for download at parkplanning.nps.gov or at <http://www.nps.gov/grte/parkmgmt/planning.htm>. You may also request a copy by contacting the Superintendent's Office at 307-739-3410. Additional copies are available at the Craig Thomas Discovery and Visitor Center in Grand Teton National Park and at the reference desk in the Teton County Library in Jackson, Wyoming.

The National Park Service intends to issue of Record of Decision at least 30 days after the date of publication of the Notice of Availability by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in the Federal Register. For further information, please contact 307-739-3410.

I thank you for your participation in the development of the EIS and I look forward to your continued participation in future planning projects.

Sincerely,



Mary Gibson Scott
Superintendent