



October 9, 2018

Honorable Bill Walker
Governor, State of Alaska
Post Office Box 11001
Juneau, AK 99811-0001

Re: Short and Long Term Solutions
For Operation of Klawock Airport

Dear Governor Walker:

I have recently met with your employees at DOT and Mr. John Hozey, your Deputy Chief of Staff regarding operational changes put in place for the Klawock airport. These operational changes greatly diminish the ability to use the airport (due to lack of snow plowing the 5-8 times a year it is needed) in the winter. Because there will not be any plowing of the airport after 1:00 p.m., and I cannot predict when it will snow, I cannot safely schedule flights after this time. This greatly affects our scheduled air service.

Perhaps the most frustrating thing is that as far as I can tell, these changes by DOT may save little or no money at all, but as mentioned above, will have tremendous impact on the eight communities, several tribes, and thousands of residents living on Prince of Wales Island. Not to mention the travelling public from outside Prince of Wales who need to conduct business, travel for routine medical purposes to Ketchikan or SEARHC facilities, visit relatives, or otherwise use the Klawock Airport.

I believe a short term solution to get us through this winter would be to temporarily transfer an existing operator position or create a new temporary operator position that would help the existing crew maintain roads and the airport (if necessary) in the mornings, (new position starting at 9:00 am) and if needed to, plow the airport in the afternoons early evenings. There are 355 lane miles of road on Prince of Wales Island and all of the existing crew is needed to plow roads for the school buses and travelling public. The transfer or new temporary position would only be needed for the months of November, December, January, February, and March.

The longer term solution is to propose new funding the FY 20 budget to make Klawock an "attended" airport with dedicated maintenance staff, (the airport would be the priority, but the new employee(s) would also help out the road crew when work at the airport was not needed)

A description justifying the added position(s) to make Klawock an attended airport are attached.



Why the Klawock Airport needs to be an attended airport with more realistic maintenance hours (0500 – 1700)

1. Unknown to many, the Klawock Airport is the fastest growing non-hub airport in the state right now (per Statewide Rural Aviation Leasing office) with over 10,000 enplanements per year making it eligible for \$1,000,000 per year of federal funds for airport improvements. Klawock Airport has more enplanements annually than the Yakutat Airport. Even with less enplanements per year the Yakutat airport is listed as attended for 11 hours each day in the winter months including weekends, yet the Klawock Airport is listed as unattended.
2. The State's fastest growing airport is the ONLY airport serving 8 communities one Prince of Wales Island. We currently have to accept that the DOT responsible for keeping the airport in a usable condition will shut their doors at 1:00 – 1:30 pm leaving the rest of us crossing our fingers to see if the remaining 6 scheduled flights at Klawock Airport will be able to operate each day.
1. Of the 5 airports statewide (non-part 139) that meet the 10,000+ enplanements for AIP qualification (\$1,000,000 of Fed funds to the State each year per qualifying airport) in Alaska NONE of them have a 1:00 – 1:30 pm “after hours” start time?
3. With the Klawock Airport officially unattended and the DOT stretched very thin plowing the 355 lane miles of road on Prince of Wales Island it is not realistic to expect a crew of 5 to keep up with all the roads and also keep 19 lane miles of airport plowing required. The Klawock DOT is only open 5 days per week for 8 hours each day. This leaves a serious void in airport snow removal after 1:00 – 1:30 pm each week day and NO snow removal for two entire weekend days.
4. The Klawock Airport is not like any other of the 10,000+ enplanement airports in the state, the other airports mostly accommodate the local community they are located in. The Klawock Airport is the ONLY airport for 8 island communities and 1/2 of the communities are about an hour drive or more away from the airport.



1. The "Ask"

- a) Change the Klawock Airport to an attended airport 7 days per week from 0500 – 1600 with snow removal services during this time period.
- b) Add two seasonal (winter) plow truck positions to the Klawock DOT staff which is estimated to provide much better hours of plowing at the airport as well as the 355 lane miles of highway.

2. The "Benefit"

- a) Provides the 8 towns that rely completely on the Klawock Airport as the **ONLY** airport on Prince of Wales Island benefiting over 4000+ Prince of Wales residents.
- b) Brings the Klawock Airport into an attended status just like the other 5 airports in the state that exceed 10,000+ enplanements per year.
- c) Allows for plowing of the airport and the extensive 355 lane miles of highway on Prince of Wales on a much more realistic 7 days per week schedule with daily DOT hours that don't end at 1:00 – 1:30 pm.
- d) By hiring two seasonal winter employees the labor/ burden cost is lowered substantially when compared to hiring year-round, full-time positions (November through March- 6 months)

Sincerely,

Scott Van Valin
Owner/ Director of Operations
Island Air Express



Summery of Signatures in Support

Island Air Express- Klawock Airport Snow Removal

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|---|---|
| 1. Mayor of Klawock | Lawrence Armour |
| 2. Mayor of Hydaburg | Anthony Christianson |
| 3. Mayor of Whale Pass | Gregg Cook |
| 4. Mayor of Coffman Cove | PJ Olsen |
| 5. Mayor of Thorne Bay | Harvey McDonald |
| 6. Mayor of Craig | Tim O'Connor |
| 7. President/ CEO- Sealaska | Anthony Mallott |
| 8. President- Craig Tribal Association | Clinton Cook |
| 9. President- Klawock Cooperative Association | Patricia Rowan |
| 10. COO- Klawock Heenya Corp. | Mary Edenshaw |
| 11. Liaison Officer- Klawock Heenya Corp. | Marge Guthrie |
| 12. President/ COO- Shaan Seet Inc. | Ed Douville |
| 13. GM- ACA Sealaska Corp. | Bill Bennett |
| 14. Executive Director- Southeast Conference | Robert Venables (Signed in person at Governor's Office) |
| 15. Superintendent- Klawock Schools | Jim Holien |
| 16. POW Chamber of Commerce | Wendy Hamilton |
| 17. Chairman- POW Advisory Council | Lawrence Armour |
| 18. VP Operations- AP&T | Greg Mickelson |
| 19. Concerned Resident | Don Hall |
| 20. Concerned Resident | Mary Healey |

Attachments:

Jon Bolling, City Administrator, City of Craig

Gregg Cook, Mayor, City of Whale Pass

Scott Harris, President, Harris Air

Sharilyn Zellhuber, President, Prince of Wales Chamber of Commerce