Juneau Flightseeing Operators
Results and Action Plan
12/7/99

Short-term

1. Routes/altitude
   a. Review existing routes- is there anything more that can be done.
   b. Alternate/ rotate routes- don't fly same route every flight.
   c. Timing use of different routes- select routes based on what most people in noise footprint are doing; i.e.,- at work, at home, weekday, weekend, etc.
   d. Identify most noise sensitive areas.
   e. Look at Juneau growth projections.
   f. Look for new routes-IE; ERA eliminate mining theme at beginning of flights thus eliminating channel flight path and allowing nearly direct glacier access via Salmon Creek
   g. Establish voluntary "low use zones." Avoid trails and recreation cabins- maintain minimum distance from them.
   h. Review letter of agreement with FSDO.

In evaluating the feasibility of a,b,c,f, the trading of one set of impacts for another must be considered. Noise abatement for currently impacted areas may result in new noise patterns. The seriousness of these new impacts will naturally depend on the number of people impacted as well as whether the impacts are residential or recreational. Both are undesirable but residential impacts are considered to be the more serious since those impacted have little alternative.

ACTION:
   a. Each operator review current routes and evaluate feasible alternatives NLT Feb.1, 2000.
   b. Each operator select new routes, if possible, recognizing noise sensitive areas and daily activities of those under route NLT March 1, 2000.
   c. All operators identify voluntary low use zones and agree to observe these areas NLT Feb. 1, 2000.
   d. All operators and FSDO review letter of agreement NLT March 1, 2000.

2. Clarify operators' icefield landing requests of Forest Service.

ACTION:
   All operators agree to revised landing permit request language and submit to US Forest Service NLT March 1, 2000.

3. Public demonstration in the spring of varying noise levels of different aircraft, different flight paths, varying numbers of aircraft, and different spacing of aircraft. Use findings to guide operations adjustments for upcoming season.

ACTION:

Selected operators provide public demonstration of the varying noise levels of different aircraft, different flight paths, varying altitudes, varying numbers and spacing of aircraft NLT May 1, 2000.

Short-term to Mid-term

1. Satellite heliports- Develop 2 to 4 seasonal heliports to be operated as a part of the airport. At least one heliport south of town and one north desirable. Selected sites must meet FAA technical criteria as well as have surface access(road preferred) and aircraft landing access under varying weather conditions. Site must be large enough to accommodate passenger orientation/waiting building. Fueling of aircraft must be a consideration. Sites should allow access to permitted icefield landing sites with minimum community exposure to noise. Possible sources for funding of these heliports include the cruise ship passenger fee as well as FAA funding.

Issues associated with establishing satellite heliports include "just moving the impact," the need for large land areas, and meeting the technical criteria for heliports. The use of satellite heliports will result in noise abatement for currently impacted areas but will also result in new noise patterns. The seriousness of these new impacts will naturally depend on the number of people impacted as well as whether the impacts are residential or recreational. Both are undesirable but residential impacts are considered to be the more serious since those impacted have little alternative.

Large land areas are desirable for satellite heliports. The most obvious need is to provide for the safe landing and departure of aircraft under a variety of weather conditions. Large buffer areas surrounding satellite heliports prevents the encroachment of residences, businesses, etc., that helped caused the need for satellite heliports in the first place.

Any satellite heliport location must meet certain criteria. These criteria are:

a. Safety
    1. Approaches and departures
        A. Clear of obstructions (trees, power lines, terrain) to ensure adequate forced landing areas during critical phases of flight.
        B. Ensure that there are no conflicts with existing flight routes that cannot be managed through company dispatch or Air Traffic Control.

2. Servicing
   A. Location does not preclude the construction of a permanent fueling system that can ensure spill containment or timely response by fire fighters in the event of an emergency.
   B. Fueling system must meet all relevant standards.

3. Area size
   A. Design allows enough space to ensure each helicopter has distance of 1.5 rotor widths between tip paths.
   B. Design allows for FAA required Final approach and Takeoff Points.

b. Noise abatement
   1. Location is away from present and future residential areas, considering acoustics and terrain/vegetation masking.
   2. Remain at or below FAA residential noise minimum of 65 DB.
   3. Routing to and from site does not exceed prescribed noise limits and minimizes exposing new residential areas to overflights.
   4. Does not infringe upon areas of voluntary compliance described as " Low Use Zones" (Gold Creek, Peterson Lake, Eagle Glacier, John Muir, Dan Moeller).
   5. Ground transportation routes do not impact residential areas and/or minimizes increased impacts on existing routes.

c. Access
   1. Ground transportation time round trip less than 45 minutes desired.
   2. Multiple operator coordination impacts minimal.
   3. Icefield access routes to and from do not appreciably increase flight times or Air Traffic Control delays.

d. Economics
   1. Ground transportation doesn't increase in price more than 50%.
   2. Relocation, development and ground transportation costs are able to be absorbed with product price increases of less than 10% per year based on current permitted landings.
   3. Relocation minimizes adverse effects on other Juneau businesses.

e. Environment
   1. Relocation minimizes adverse effects on areas not otherwise slated for future development.

Sites to be evaluated include:

a. Montana Creek
b. Lemon Creek
c. Rock Dumps
d. Sheep Creek

e. Eaglecrest Road
f. Peterson Creek
g. Barge
h. Gastineau Channel- both sides beyond Thane
I. West Douglas- Hilda Beach, etc.
j. Herbert River area
k. Yankee cove area
l. Bridget Cove area
m. Auke Rec cut-off area
n. Dredge Lake/ Mendenhall VC area

ACTION:

a. All operators evaluate potential seasonal satellite heliport sites NLT Jan. 15, 2000.
b. Provide info to TAC NLT Feb. 15, 2000.
c. TAC provide to operators public comments on potential sites NLT May 1, 2000.
d. All operators consider public comments and make final recommendations to TAC/Assembly NLT June 1, 2000.
e. Assembly consider dedicating funds for selected sites NLT Oct. 1, 2000.
f. If approved, CBJ contract design and construction and any needed NEPA work for selected sites NLT Jan. 1, 2001.

2. Times of operation

a. Work with cruise lines to adjust schedules so that visitors are more evenly distributed throughout week.
b. Work with cruise lines to adjust cruise ship arrival/departures to avoid midafternoon ship arrivals that require running late tours.

ACTION:

All operators work with TAC and cruise lines to adjust ship schedules to more evenly distribute visitors and avoid mid-afternoon arrivals NLT Jan. 15, 2000.

Mid to long-term

1. Adopt quiet technology as it becomes available. The state of the art differs between fixed wing and rotary wing. Turbines may offer a more immediate answer for fixed wing while quiet technology for rotary wing is more in the not to distant future. Nonetheless there are some things that should be done to facilitate development and adoption of technological changes as they become available.

a. As the third largest flight seeing area in the US, CBJ should encourage helicopter manufacturers to develop quiet technology

b. CBJ should encourage FAA to work with helicopter manufacturers in the development of quiet technology

c. Encourage the Forest Service to explore basing the permitting system for icefield landings on a system that provides permittee incentive to adopt quiet technology as it becomes available.

d. CBJ should provide incentive for the adoption of quiet technology by enacting a tax code that provides for tax subsidies or tax discounts for commercial aircraft that use quiet technology.

e. CBJ should establish a low cost source of capital for those wanting to convert to quiet technology. This could be a revolving loan fund established with cruise ship passenger fees.

ACTION:

a. CBJ encourage manufacturers to develop quiet technology. Done and continuuing as opportunities arise

b. CBJ encourage FAA to work with manufacturers in the development of quiet technology. Done and continuuing as opportunities arise

c. All operators, TAC, CBJ encourage Forest Service to base permitting on a system that provides incentive to adopt quiet technology NLT March 1, 2000.

d. All operators recommend to TAC/Assembly the enactment of a tax code that provides incentive for conversion of at least the commercial fleet to quiet technology NLT Feb. 1, 2000.

e. All operators recommend to TAC/Assembly the establishment of a revolving loan fund to help finance conversion of at least the commercial fleet to quiet technology NLT May 1, 2000

f. Each operator evaluate feasibility of conversion to quiet technology NLT May 1, 2000.

g. Each operator where conversion feasible develop plan for conversion NLT Dec.1, 2000

Continuing

1. Develop educational materials important to public understanding of flightseeing industry.

ACTION:

All operators develop educational materials regarding relevant information about flight seeing industry important to public understanding of the industry NLT April 1, 2000.

2. Don't sacrifice safety for noise abatement

3. Use aircraft with friendlier noise footprint