

Tourism Advisory Committee**Meeting Summary****Roundtable Discussion on Flightseeing Noise****October 26, 1999 - 6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. - Centennial Hall****Attendance****Tourism Advisory Committee:**

Susan Favro, Chair

Kathleen Morse, Incoming Chair

Bob Engelbrecht

Kirby Day

Dennis Meiners

Mary Irvine

Sandy Warner

Panel Members:

Dave Palmer, CBJ City Manager

Cheryl Easterwood, Community
Development

Pete Griffin, U.S. Forest Service

Steve Turner, FAA, Air Traffic Control
Tower

Jim Hettwer, FAA , Flight Standards

Tim Perry, ERA Helicopters

Bob Jacobsen, Wings of Alaska

Guests:

Dennis Egan, Mayor

Don Etheridge, Assembly Member

Dwight Perkins, Assembly Member

Jim Powell, Assembly Member

John Hartle, CBJ Law

Alan Heese, Juneau International Airport

Commander Robert Lorigan, Marine Safety
Office, U.S. Coast Guard

John Stone, Docks and Harbor Board

Clarence Goward, Regional Office FAA

CBJ Staff:

Donna Pierce, Deputy City Manager

Caryl McConkie, CBJ Tourism
Coordinator

Angela Hull, Executive Secretary

Background

The Tourism Advisory Committee (TAC) invited City and Borough of Juneau (CBJ) citizens to a solution-oriented roundtable discussion on flightseeing noise with a panel that included the CBJ City

Manager, flightseeing operators, and representatives from the U.S. Forest Service, Federal Aviation Administration (Air Traffic Control Tower and Flight Standards District Office), and CBJ Community Development Department. The committee also invited representatives from the U.S. Coast Guard, the Juneau Docks and Harbor Board, Juneau International Airport, and the CBJ Law Department to be on hand in case citizen questions required expertise from these particular agencies or departments. Approximately 70 members of the public attended the meeting.

Input and recommendations gathered at the Citizen Information Gathering Meeting on September 21, 1999, were used to help the operators and agency representatives prepare for the meeting, as well as identify areas where additional information and research were required. The committee has also continued to solicit and compile input that was received after the first citizen meeting so that everyone who wanted an opportunity to contribute was able to do so. A draft summary of the citizen meeting and a list of citizen recommendations are available on the Tourism Advisory Committee's web site at www.juneau.lib.ak.us/cbj/tourism/ or can be obtained by emailing the committee at Tourism_Coordinator@mail.ci.juneau.ak.us. The information can also be obtained by contacting the City Manager's Office at 907-586-0218.

The roundtable discussion was an important initial step in the solution-finding process. Because of the complexity of the flightseeing noise issue and the numerous government agencies and jurisdictions involved, even individuals with problem-solving attitudes will quickly reach a roadblock when solutions require more information or input from the agency that is legally empowered to take action on the proposed solution. Therefore, part of the process must include identifying all players involved in the issue, as well as clearly defining the scope of their specific jurisdictions. This information will help the different parties better understand how to manage and mitigate the impacts of noise from flightseeing operations and create new opportunities for collaboration. With these information needs in mind, the Tourism Advisory Committee identified the following objectives for the Roundtable Discussion:

- (1) Bring all of the stakeholders together to work on the impacts of flightseeing noise.
- (2) Review current and potential roles of the various agencies (federal and local).
- (3) Identify gaps and overlapping areas of responsibility.
- (4) Obtain feedback on citizen recommendations.
- (5) Identify opportunities for collaboration.
- (6) Focus on what we can do, rather than what we cannot do.

Introduction

Susan Favro, the current Tourism Advisory Committee chair, welcomed citizens to the meeting and thanked the agency representatives, flightseeing operators, and others who had put time and effort into the meeting. She emphasized that this meeting was the first time agency representatives, operators, and citizens have come together to discuss roles, jurisdictions, and possible solutions. She also said the meeting was an important opportunity for citizens to give input to the TAC.

Kathleen Morse, incoming TAC chair and meeting facilitator, introduced the agency representatives who would participate on the panel. She asked them to talk about their various jurisdictions and

identify the resources these agencies could offer to the solution set. She also outlined the meeting program that included presentations from flightseeing operators on the actions they have taken in the past to mitigate the impacts of noise and what they plan to do to mitigate impacts in the future. The operator presentations were followed by a roundtable discussion that gave the Tourism Advisory Committee members, agency representatives, operators, and citizens an opportunity to ask and answer questions.

Panel Presentations

Dave Palmer, City Manager

Comments: Tourism is one of the growing sectors of Juneau's economy, and the good news is that it is a growing economy. But the impacts of this growing economy are the bad news, and aircraft noise has come to be one of the downsides of tourism growth. Previously, we have focused on the things we cannot do to mitigate the impacts of flightseeing noise. Now the CBJ wants to encourage everyone to focus on the things we can do. In a recent noise study, the USFS counted 23 flights every hour over Mendenhall Lake and 27 flights over downtown Juneau. The community has hit its tolerance level. The constant noise has brought us to the point where people are angry and do not care about studies; they just want the problem fixed. Recently citizens voted for a five-dollar-a-head cruise ship passenger fee to send a signal.

The industry knows there is a problem and understand things must change. They understand they need to do things differently, and the agency representatives know this, too. There will be no easy solutions, and those that have been tried in other places such as the Grand Canyon or in Hawaii may not work here. We need a Juneau solution for a Juneau problem, and the solutions will cost money. If residents are looking for an end to helicopters and flightseeing, it will not happen. We will need to find many little solutions that will add up to one big solution. Hopefully we can compromise and work together to get this done.

Role: The CBJ has regulatory authority and operates the airport, issues permits through the Community Development Department, and writes zoning ordinances through the Assembly.

Resources: The CBJ can bring the solution-finding process to the solution set through the TAC, Assembly committees, and other community forums. In addition, it can offer incentives to encourage the use of quiet technology. For example, the Assembly can adopt an ordinance to provide incentives similar to what it has done for the export manufacturing industry. In addition to incentives, the CBJ will receive about \$3 million a year from the cruise ship passenger fee which can be used for facilities, infrastructure, and a variety of things to offset the impacts of tourism.

Cheryl Easterwood, CBJ Director of Community Development

Role: The Community Development Department is involved in the flightseeing noise issue, largely through permitting. The CBJ land use code allows heliports in certain areas after Planning Commission approval. The current code also deals with noise through other permitting activities such as large mines and gravel pits.

Resources: The Community Development Department has become familiar with the issue of noise and noise ordinances and brings this expertise and knowledge to the table.

Pete Griffin, District Ranger, U.S. Forest Service.

Comments: When I first started to participate in this process, I came to the table saying, "No, we cannot do this or that." Now we are focused on what we can do. The Forest Service is going to play a role in finding a solution. Currently, we are preparing an EIS for helicopter landings, but the EIS has not reached the draft stage yet. The scoping process is complete, and through it the Forest Service has identified four issues: noise impacts to wildlife, recreational users, residents, and Berner's Bay resources.

Role: The USFS authorizes permits to helicopter operators for icefield landings and conducts an environmental analysis (EIS) for those landings.

Resources: The Forest Service can establish limits to the number of landings, set conditions under which issuing the permits will be done, provide land base for satellite heliports (if the community decides that is what needs to be done to help solve the problem), and help implement community-based solutions. A solution imposed by one government agency rarely goes over well with anyone.

Steve Turner, Air Traffic Control FAA.

Comments: I agree with what Pete said. It is easy to come up with what we can't do and harder to come up with what we can do. The FAA will help implement community plans.

Role: The Air Traffic Control Tower provides air traffic services primarily around the airport area. As you get further away from the airport, air traffic control decreases. The tower has responsibility for routes into and out of the immediate area around the airport (3.5 mile radius).

Resources: The FAA can work with the CBJ and the USFS and help the community implement their plans. It can also provide expertise on aircraft movements and provide air traffic services related to routes entering and exiting the airport area. I can be a liaison with people in our regional office who may have experience with this issue and others and be a conduit for information.

Jim Hettwer, Flight Standards District Office, FAA.

Role: Flight Standards is very distinct from Air Traffic Control. We are basically responsible for the certification and regulation of licensed aircraft pilots, commercial operators, and others who use the national air space system. Our primary area of concern is seeing that safety requirements are met and aircraft operating rules are obeyed. There is some misunderstanding of operating rules and how they apply to aircraft. Flight Standards certifies new aircraft and outlines standards for continuing operation. Current aircraft must comply with their original standards, and you cannot impose new standards on aircraft that were built a long time ago. We are concerned with safety and low-flying aircraft, however, aircraft activity levels are not within our jurisdiction and noise ordinances are not relevant to certification.

Resources: The Flight Standards District Office can be involved in noise reduction. The agency does certify newer and more efficient aircraft technology, including changes to existing aircraft. Additionally, we are mandated to address safety issues.

Operator Presentations

Tim Perry (ERA Helicopters), Helicopter Operator Presentation

Helicopter operators are sensitive to how flightseeing noise impacts the community. In the past, the operators have adopted voluntary compliance procedures in the effort to make the noise issues better. They have also been involved in the Fly Neighborly Program to address some of these issues. Operators have also discussed routing changes and have made changes to their aircraft. The Hughes 500, for example, is an aircraft with a higher noise signature and has been phased out. And in the near future, the industry will be able to take advantage of quiet technology as it becomes available and less expensive to operate. ERA has also looked into different routes, different centers of operation, and new satellite heliports. The operators need citizen input on areas that best suit the community and will take questions on a draft document of ideas submitted by the helicopter operators. We have to stay within FAA regulations, and safety is our primary concern. We are doing what we can to minimize the impact. The flightseeing industry is important to Juneau and the people they serve on the waterfront, and the operators want to keep it going. They look forward to questions and input on noise sensitive areas.

Bob Jacobson (Wings of Alaska), Fixed-Wing Aircraft Presentation

Wings of Alaska has been operating on the waterfront for the past seventeen years and has been the primary operator there for the past seven years. Juneau's downtown waterfront has been a hub for Aerodrome activity since the mid 1920s, supporting a variety of industries throughout the region. Activity has occurred daily on a year-round basis, and aircraft previously used were much louder than aircraft used now. Until 1993 there were two to four carriers operating from the waterfront along the Gastineau Channel. Flightseeing became a popular activity in the 1970s, and noise became an issue for those who chose to work and live along the waterfront. To help eliminate the problems, Wings of Alaska has taken the following actions:

- Eliminated all two-bladed propellers on Cessna 206 and deHavilland Beaver.
- Limited hours of operation.
- Reduced the number of Cessna 206, the main noise culprit, from approximately 12 in the early 1990s to just two in 1999.
- Changed the aircraft fleet make-up to reduce the number of takeoffs and landings.
- Eliminated one departure to Taku Lodge.
- Adjusted takeoff and arrival routes and modified routes and altitudes.

There are some other important points that are not well-known. While cruise ship passengers have grown from 194,000 in 1989 to 592,000 in 1999 (an increase of 300 percent), float plane noise has actually declined. Passenger boardings have only grown 7 percent from the waterfront. That is less than 1 percent growth per year in the ten-year period. And through (1) Voluntary Compliance Measures, (2) use of larger aircraft, (3) limiting our own growth, and (4) attempting to fly neighborly, aircraft revenue departures have decreased 21 percent. The average number of revenue departures in 1999 was 45 per day. On the busiest days, we had 75 departures on August 11th and 72 departures on July 13th.

One misconception is that aviation companies do not pay their fair share of taxes. Congress prohibits states or local jurisdictions from imposing sales taxes on air commerce because air carriers pay federal excise taxes on fuel and transportation. These federal excise taxes are then returned to local jurisdictions, including the CBJ through entitlements. In total, Wings pays the following taxes that benefit the community: sales tax (non-transportation portion of the trip), fuel flowage tax, state aviation fuel tax, property tax, and federal excise taxes.

Other benefits to the community include year-round employment of 50 residents with a payroll of \$1.5 million that circulates throughout the local economy. And every year Wings of Alaska provides essential services to 30,000 nontourism-related passengers in the region who travel to and from Juneau. The business during the visitor season subsidizes year-round business and helps keep it affordable. It cannot be done without tourism. We are sincerely trying to be good neighbors.

In the future Wings of Alaska will continue to take the following actions:

- Listen and accept feedback.
- Work with the Flight Standards District Office to adjust routes and altitudes.
- Limit growth (balancing visitor demand with essential air services we provide throughout the region).
- Adhere to the voluntary guidelines established in the 1989 and 1994 noise committees and by the 1998 Tourism Advisory Committee.
- Encourage transient air carriers to adhere to the voluntary guidelines.
- Study the feasibility of the new and improved technology and implement it when possible.

Question and Answer Session

Major Topics

1. Airspace Control
2. USFS Environmental Impact Statement
3. Noise Ordinances
4. Quiet Technology
5. Operator Recommendations
6. Taxes on Flightseeing Operations

1. Airspace Control

Creating Special Airspace

Uncontrolled Airspace

Rulemaking

Flight Paths

Question: Can the FAA work with communities to create a special air space where unique regulations can be imposed on an area?

Response

Steve Turner, Air Traffic Control Tower: The special air space created for the Grand Canyon was over National Park Service Land. We are talking about National Forest Land in Juneau's situation. Creating special air space similar to what happened in the Grand Canyon would not accomplish what the community wants because aircraft would still be taking off in the channel.

Clarence Goward, FAA, Regional Office: There are some things that have been done in other places. The process that usually works best is when the operators, users, and public come together to figure out what can work. The FAA needs to be involved in the process to help determine whether or not procedures and solutions are viable. For example, the FAA must consider the safety implications of a proposed action and the ability to efficiently move aircraft. It must also determine whether an action is discriminatory or whether it has an adverse impact on interstate or foreign commerce. After the local authorities/entities have done the appropriate homework including a noise analysis, the FAA can advise what the next step would be. The environmental process would have to be implemented, as well.

Question: What can be done about uncontrolled airspace? Can the FAA or the CBJ control the airspace in the channel?

Response

Clarence Goward, FAA: There are federal regulations that control activity in uncontrolled airspace, but you cannot change them without rulemaking action. A proposal would have to be made and evaluated in the rulemaking process. The Grand Canyon example is an instance of congressionally mandated implementation of special rules. If that were to happen here, the FAA would have to do it. It has taken over ten years to secure congressional action for the Grand Canyon, and the rules are still not fully implemented. Otherwise, there is little the FAA can do. We primarily address noise issues at the source by regulating aircraft noise emissions.

Question: Is there another way to initiate the rulemaking process other than by congressional mandate? Can a city initiate the process?

Response

Clarence Goward, FAA: Yes there are other ways. A community can initiate the process by submitting a proposal to the FAA, asking it to consider restrictions. The FAA regulations deal primarily with safety issues, and the proposal would only be the start of a lengthy process at best. I do not know if the effort would be fruitful because the FAA would be opening itself up to having to set up air space for every sensitive neighborhood.

Question: Are there specific flight paths the operators must use when flying to the glacier? If there are, can all of the concerned groups come to an agreement on routes that would lessen the impact? Could the FAA play a role to make sure that could be done?

Response

Clarence Goward, FAA: Yes, there are routes that are recommended by the Flight Standards District Office. The Flight Tower has agreements to use specific routes, and the public, users, and airport can make agreements on routes through Letters of Agreement. These are also voluntary agreements. The VFR (Visual Flight Rule) user is under FAR guidelines and not subject to the agreement.

Question: Would federal rulemaking be required to enforce the agreement?

Response

Clarence Goward, FAA: Yes.

Comment:

Rick Iannolino. I work out of my home, and the noise makes it difficult to work. The planes shake the windows. Each time they move their path around, it disturbs people. Fleets of planes should not be right over neighborhoods.

Response

Bob Jacobson, Wings of Alaska: We try to adjust routes based on citizen complaints. When we move the flight paths to accommodate one caller, the phones start ringing off the hook from other residents. People who live on Thane Road ask us to fly on the Douglas side of the channel. The people who live on the Douglas side ask us to fly on the Thane side. Quieter technology is the only thing that will really make a difference.

Question: You say that seven years ago Wings started working in channel and you changed your planes. I live in West Juneau, and your ten passenger planes are not quieter than the other ones. You say you have averaged 45 to 70 flights per day this past summer. The planes take off over bridge and then turn and go back, so we actually get four times the number of flights because of this pattern.

Response

Bob Jacobsen, Wings of Alaska: Generally the wind blows into Juneau from the southeast. We did have a nice June and July, and about 30 percent of the time, the wind would blow from the west. That necessitated that the planes turn near houses. When the wind is blowing and we are operating, we have to depart that way. I am sensitive to your concerns, and the pilots that are here will hear them.

Question: Can the CBJ tell the FAA what it wants to have in the airport?

Response

Jim Hettwer, FAA: Decibel levels can determine what can fly in and out of an airport.

2. USFS Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

Release Date

Noise Study

Local Survey

Purpose of USFS Study

Health Issues

Site Specific Research

Permit Levels and Number of Requests

Question: What is the schedule for the EIS?

Response

Pete Griffin, USFS: A draft should be out by the end of November. Everyone on our mailing list will receive notice, and anyone can pick up a copy at our office.

Question: When I looked at the preliminary noise study, it seems your consultants used a user irritability index based on California neighborhoods. We are used to much quieter levels here. Does the Forest Service plan to do a local survey to develop an index based on the people who actually use our trails?

Response

Pete Griffin, USFS: We are not planning on doing a local survey, but we are using input we have received from people in Juneau. There will not be a local irritability index.

Question: If the Forest Service cannot regulate noise, why did you do the study?

Response

Pete Griffin, USFS: We did it to measure the decibel levels to see if the levels were dangerous.

Question: In your noise study you said something about health problems. What specifically were you talking about?

Response

Pete Griffin, USFS: The consultants who prepared the study determined that the decibel levels do not cause health problems.

Cheryl Easterwood, CDD: In my research, I learned that 55 dB is an annoyance level and at 70 dB there are health impacts.

Question: Does the Forest Service do site-specific research?

Response

Pete Griffin, USFS: The Sand Dimas Technology and Equipment Development Center (USFS) contracted with Acentech, a private firm. I don't know if their research station can do this type of site-specific research.

Question: What alternatives are the Forest Service considering in terms of permit applications? Why isn't the Forest Service looking at reducing the number of flights or to restricting them to working hours so that the impact is not on people when they are out?

Response

Pete Griffin, USFS: We formulated preliminary alternatives for San Dimas to use for comparisons and we are looking at some mitigating measures that would be applied to the alternatives developed for the EIS. The proposed action would hold permits at the current level. We have not developed an alternative that reduces the number of landings, but I can see that this may be important. We are still exploring the legal authority to do this.

Question: In the 1998 Community Opinion Survey conducted by the McDowell Group, 81 percent of 500 households indicated they wanted flights reduced or held to 1998 levels. The Forest Service has produced a chart showing that operators have requested permits for 41,000 landings. How can the operators reconcile the request with the survey? Do you intend to scale back requests?

Response

Tim Perry, ERA Helicopters: We have to project out for five years. The numbers may not be realistic, but we do plan on business increasing. There is demand for this service. We will work within whatever the Forest Service determines. I think the helicopter community would consider a cap, but not decreasing the number of flights. We are trying to work with Forest Service to provide better services. The land belongs to everyone, and people elsewhere should have the opportunity to enjoy Juneau.

Question: If this is such a great experience, is it feasible to charge visitors more? The additional money could be used to make up for less flights and go toward implementing quiet technology.

Response

Tim Perry, ERA Helicopters: We need to find solutions, but the federal agencies are limited. You can only request voluntary compliance. We are looking for other routes and looking for input so quality of life is not impacted so much. We need heliports and help from the city.

3. Noise Ordinances

Standards

CBJ Noise Study/Ordinance

Legal Perspective

Question: What are the most stringent noise standards?

Response

Kathleen Morse, Tourism Advisory Committee: The information is not available for this meeting, and we will continue to research the question.

Question: I found a discrepancy between their conclusions regarding annoying noise levels and the conclusions of the CBJ's consultants. Are the consultants who conducted the noise study noise consultants?

Response

Pete Griffin, USFS: I think they are specifically noise consultants.

Question: The CBJ does not have a noise ordinance. Is it going to do a comprehensive noise study that is understandable and then look at doing a noise ordinance?

Response

Dave Palmer, City Manager: An ordinance is a means to implement a policy, and we have to decide what policy would be implemented. We are currently collecting other city policies to review. Most of them are curfew-based. I do not think people need a noise study to tell them it is too noisy at their homes, but we should have a baseline study in sensitive areas. After that we can look at ordinances.

Cheryl Easterwood, CDD: An ad hoc Noise Committee studied noise and released its report in 1994. At that time, the committee recommended that the city do a comprehensive study to determine noise levels from downtown float plane and flightseeing activity, analyze the noise levels according to national standards, and establish a five-year growth projection for noise. The Assembly considered and adopted some of the committee's recommendations and did not adopt others. The City Manager at the time did not believe that such a noise study needed to be done. I think there are opportunities to control noise. A noise study must be done first. The city could implement controls, but we need analysis first. The study would cost at least \$50,000. We must have the data first. But keep in mind noise ordinances do not address the noise of aircraft in flight. The airport area is controlled more easily, but not the noise in general areas. Aircraft taking off and landing can be regulated.

Clarence Goward, FAA: The FAA does not regulate noise in route. The FAA's role is not to regulate noise through any type of laws.

Question: What is the CBJ legal perspective on a noise ordinance or curfew?

Response

John Hartle, CBJ Law: We have a noise ordinance that addresses disturbing the peace. It applies to noise from sources such as a party or construction after 11 p.m. Other communities have more comprehensive noise ordinances. I don't know whether or not the city could adopt an ordinance that would make the aircraft fleet that we have today obsolete.

Question: If the Assembly were to pass a noise ordinance, can they target float planes and helicopters, or would the ordinance have to be more general?

Response:

Cheryl Easterwood. Noise limits could be established in the ordinance that would probably address noise. The ordinance does not target the source, it targets the noise. Again, we cannot control the noise of planes in flight.

Question: But would the ordinance specifically target float planes? If you want to take a step at the airport, wouldn't you have to include everybody?

Response

Cheryl Easterwood, CDD: It depends on what type of action and the type of aircraft you are looking at. The CBJ can adopt restrictions for Stage Two aircraft through *FAR Regulations, Part 161*. This would apply to helicopters, but not necessarily at all airports.

4. Quiet Technology

Availability

Tax incentives

Question: What is the status of quiet technology?

Response

Tim Perry, ERA Helicopters: The EC120 is the cutting edge of quieter technology, and McDonnell Douglas has a helicopter with quiet technology available. The tail rotor emits the most noise. However, the technology needs to be implemented in larger aircraft. Currently, quieter aircraft only carry four people. The best ones we have are being used now. Quiet technology is still a ways down the road and currently is not cost effective.

Cheryl Easterwood, CDD: The Grand Canyon is phasing out noisy helicopters. The quieter helicopters produce 73 decibels compared to 85 decibels. That is a significant reduction in noise. The impediment to implementation is cost because they are priced at \$3.6 million each, about three times the cost of an average helicopter.

Question: What about tax incentives?

Response

Dave Palmer, City Manager: Alternative helicopter technology is not useful for tourists right now. If the technology was available, we could establish an incentive where you would not pay taxes the first year and then pay only 20 percent the following year or something like that. Maybe the Forest Service could offer a certain number of landings for quiet helicopters and less permits for noisy ones.

4. Satellite Heliports

USFS land

Zoning

Time Frame

Question: What are the opportunities associated with developing satellite heliports?

Response

Pete Griffin, USFS: Putting a satellite heliport on USFS land is an interesting idea. There are some places that it might be possible. I am not anxious to get into developing a satellite heliport on Forest

Service Land, but I will say it would be easier to do if everyone wants to do it and if there is consensus that this is the best place for it. If only one segment wants this to happen, the idea will not go anywhere. I would support looking into it. You folks would need to tell me where.

Cheryl Easterwood, CDD: Heliports are not allowed in remote areas, and we would need to amend the zoning ordinance. One thing to keep in mind is that in Hawaii, they did a study and found they would not be able to close existing heliports and that creating the satellite sites would double their number. This idea was dropped. Another thing the CBJ should consider is whether or not it wants to be the proprietor of satellite heliports.

Question: What is the time frame for developing a satellite heliport?

Tim Perry, ERA Helicopters: With an Environmental Impact Statement and the city process, it could take three to five years.

5. Operator Recommendations

Question: Are the operators working on a list of recommendations?

Response: The operators have prepared a draft list of ideas that was not available to distribute at this meeting. Susan Favro asked the operators if they could get the draft prepared to the point that it could be distributed to the public. She said the TAC could help them distribute the document.

Question: Are the operators considering limiting flights, limiting flight hours, or establishing no-fly days?

Response

Tim Perry, ERA Helicopters: If we limit the number of landings, the price will go up. As far as limiting the hours or a no-fly day, the cruise ship schedule dictates our hours.

Question: If the number of flights is dependent on the cruise ships, couldn't it could work the other way where the operators would take a firm stand and have the cruise ships rearrange their schedule?

No Response Recorded

Question: The helicopter industry has to go through the Forest Service for permits. Is there a similar process for Wings?

Response

Bob Jacobson, Wings of Alaska: No.

6. Taxes on Flightseeing Operations

Question: Why should flightseeing companies have a sales tax exemption?

Response

Bob Jacobson, Wings of Alaska: We pay federal excise taxes, and federal statute prohibits the CBJ from charging sales tax on air commerce.