

Ravalli County Commissioners Office

From: Wendy Beye <wbeye@bitterroot.net>
Sent: Sunday, June 15, 2014 4:59 PM
To: Ravalli County Commissioners Office
Subject: Ravalli County Airport Environmental Assessment, 2014

As a hangar owner at the Ravalli County Airport, and former flight instructor there for twenty years, I am commenting on the current Environment Assessment compiled by Robert Peccia and Associates for the airport.

Ravalli County Airport has been in need of repairs and upgrading for many years, and a great deal of time and money has been spent determining the best among a number of options. I support the alternative described in the EA: move the runway 1,550 feet north, and 400 feet east of the current runway. This would help alleviate noise concerns for the subdivisions directly south of the airport, and still give a sufficient noise buffer to the north, where less dense housing development exists, and at a lower elevation. The runway should be a minimum of 5,000 feet long to safely accommodate the size planes that currently use the airport, even on warm summer days when aircraft performance is less than optimum.

I now live in Roundup, Montana, and am pleased to say that the community, though much smaller than Hamilton, fully supports its airport. There is a mill levy in place to fund the local cost share for projects, which have recently included a 5,000 foot runway, a parallel taxiway, deer-proof fencing around the entire airport property, removal of a butte that intruded into the runway glide slope safety area, a re-surfaced aircraft parking area, improved radio-controlled lighting, and radio-accessible airport conditions reports. Musselshell County has only 4,780 residents, and there is little wealth in the area, but taxpayers support safety needs at their airport, and recognize its value to the community. That attitude no doubt began with support from their County Commissioners.

I hope you will proceed as quickly as possible with improvements outlined in the alternative chosen in the EA.

Thank you.

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