

Glenda Wiles

From: Matt Guzik <matt.guzik@taraiti.com>
Sent: Saturday, July 5, 2014 8:28 PM
To: dan@rpa-hln.com; Glenda Wiles; David R. Hedditch
Subject: Airport Expansion

To who it may concern,

My wife and I are currently living in New Zealand however we still hangar our plane "Candy", a 1969 Cessna 182 at Ravalli County Airport. Our love for aviation started there approximately 5 years ago when we first began taking flying lessons together. "Date night" is what it was. Something we both enjoyed and are passionate about.

I must say we are extremely disappointed in the politics and misinformation that is going around regarding the airport expansion. This airport must be expanded otherwise it will no longer exist.

I longer safer runway welcomes people to the valley including members of the Stock Farm Club who tax base is critical to Hamilton, Corvallis, and Ravalli County's Economy. As the past General Manager of the club I can assure you that increasing the runway length will add safety as well as additional members to the club and Ravalli County. Meaning additional tax dollars into the community.

Currently, the length of the runway affects the aircraft that divert for weather or heat. Other the years, many aircraft are able to land at Hamilton but lack runway length to takeoff at gross weight. The result are aircraft that land in Hamilton, but then don't remain to purchase fuel, go into town, stay overnight and utilize and support our other businesses in Hamilton and surrounding areas. The increase to 5200 feet would allow for these aircraft to land, purchase fuel and other local goods and services by mitigating the diversion of planes to Missoula. Size of aircraft landing in Hamilton will NOT increase! The current size of the runway already allows up to a maximum size of aircraft capable of landing here. The increased size of runway will not increase this standard, but it will allow for 100 percent of the aircraft already landing at Hamilton to land within their operating safety range. In Ravalli County,

There is so much misinformation floating around regarding this airport improvement. The facts are that Ravalli County has the BUSIEST General Aviation Airport in Montana. It is in the bottom tier when it comes to maintenance and safety standards. I'm embarrassed when I land in Deer Lodge, Polson and Ronan just to name a few whom have embraced aviation and were not afraid of a few local, vocal loco's.

The Bitterroot Valley is a beautiful valley. One that Linda hope to return to. One that attracts all types of people like us. (But without the airport for us to share our passion for flying I'm afraid that we'll be forced to settle elsewhere. This airport should be embraced and allowed to thrive here. It is a benefit to all in some way and will improve viability of our community and valley.

It is time that the commissioners and the citizens of this community have the courage to stand up for what is right and best for the county as a whole. We, as citizens and especially our Commissioners have a responsibility to support, strengthen and protect the assets of our community.

I have reviewed this EA (Environmental Assessment) and find no quantifiable reason not to accept the expansion and move forward with the preferred option 4 and I support without **any reservation** the expansion and improvement of Ravalli County Airport.

Regards,

Matthew Guzik, CCM

Past General Manager of the Stock Farm Club & Pilot