The Long-Awaited Runway Extension Project is Underway

After years of planning for the runway improvement project, construction at the Detroit Lakes – Becker County Airport is finally underway! The improvements will be constructed over the next few years and Runway 13/31 will ultimately be transformed from a 4500-foot by 75-foot runway with a partial parallel taxiway to a 5200-foot by 100-foot runway with a full parallel taxiway.

In addition, this project will:

- Upgrade airport lighting and navigational aids to modern, state-of-the-art equipment with power-reducing technology to reduce energy consumption.

- Enhance the south end of the runway by installing a new approach lighting system to provide improved capabilities for all weather conditions.

Once these improvements are commissioned, the airport will be reclassified as a key system airport by the Minnesota Department of Transportation Office of Aeronautics.

After the environmental assessment was approved in August of 2016, the long-awaited airport development project was underway with design starting in late 2016 and the first phase of the construction bid in the spring of 2017. Construction began last October and ended for the season in December and resumed late last month. A one-day runway closure occurred on June 4, 2018; no other closures are planned during Phase I. The primary objective of this phase of construction involves placing 100,000 cubic yards of fill on the south end of the airport where Runway 13/31 and the parallel taxiway will be extended. In addition to the grading work, there will also be some drainage improvements and utility relocations around the airport occurring later this summer. Phase I construction is scheduled to be complete by the end of July of 2018.

Phase II of the project will be bid on June 15th, 2018 with construction starting when federal funding is made available in September 2018. This phase will complete the runway/taxiway extension work on
the south end as well as include obstruction removal necessary to provide a clear approach to the extended south end of the runway. Phase II will include grading, paving and landscaping for the extensions in preparation for the new extended/widened runway anticipated to be opened in late 2020. Phase III of the construction will be designed this winter with an anticipated bid date of June 2019. More information on future construction phases will be included in future newsletters.

**Runway 13/31 construction is proceeding on schedule and is anticipated to be opened in late 2020.**

**PROJECT ENHANCEMENTS:**

- Runway 13/31 Visual Approach Slope Indicators (VASIs) replaced with new Precision Approach Path Indicators (PAPIs)
- New Approach Lighting System – Medium Approach Lighting System with Runway Alignment Indicator Lights (MALSR)
- Relocated/Upgraded Automated Weather Observation System (AWOS)
- New Runway and Taxiway Edge and Threshold Lighting
- Widened Runway – from 75 feet to 100 feet
- Full Parallel Taxiway
- Extended Runway 13/31 and Parallel Taxiway to 5200 feet
- New State-of-the-Art, Energy-Saving Lighting Control System located in new Climate-Controlled Electrical Facility

**Frequently Asked Questions**

**QUESTION:** HOW IS THE PROJECT BEING FUNDED?

**ANSWER:** The project is mainly funded through federal grants through the Airport Improvement Program. Funding through this program generally includes up to 90 percent of the cost with the remaining 10 percent split between MnDOT, the City of Detroit Lakes and Becker County.

**QUESTION:** HOW WERE THE WETLAND IMPACTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROJECT MITIGATED?

**ANSWER:** As part of the wetland permitting process, credits were purchased through the local wetland banks to compensate for the wetlands impacted by the project.

**QUESTION:** HOW WILL THE PROJECT HELP REDUCE THE POTENTIAL FOR WILDLIFE HAZARDS AT THE AIRPORT?

**ANSWER:** As part of the project, the existing open water treatment ponds located on the south end of the airport will be drained and filled, which will reduce the potential for waterfowl issues on the south approach.

If you have questions you would like answered in a future edition of this construction update newsletter, please send them to DTLQuestions@meadhunt.com.