

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN
AIRPORT SYSTEM AMENDMENT
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

Puget Sound Council of Governments
December, 1987

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BACKGROUND

This document is a Nonproject Environmental Impact Statement, in accordance with SEPA rules WAC 197-11-402 and WAC 197-11-442.

The purpose of this document is to provide a description of potentially significant environmental impacts that may occur upon the implementation of regional airport alternatives within the Puget Sound region.

A project to update the currently adopted Regional Airport System Plan (RASP) was initiated in 1985 as a concurrent effort with updating the Regional Transportation Plan. As such, its planning horizon was extended from the year 2000 to 2020. The intent was to both broaden the scope of the Regional Airport System Plan and update the forecasts and inventory to 2020. The first phase of the project addressed the special issues related to helicopter, seaplane, and sport aviation facilities, and to privately owned airports. The second phase consisted of updating the demand/capacity analysis for air carrier and general aviation airport facilities. Alternatives for providing airport facilities out to the year 2020 and for mitigating the impacts of airport operations were formulated and evaluated to arrive at a recommended plan.

POLICY DIRECTION

The update of the RASP was coordinated through the Air Transportation Advisory Committee and under the policy direction of the PSCOG Standing Committee on Transportation and Subregional Councils.

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED ACTION

The proposed action is to amend the Regional Transportation Plan to include the recommendations for the air system element. The specific recommendations proposed at the conclusion of the RASP update are listed in the following chapter. These recommendations, when adopted by the Assembly, will constitute

formal policy which will guide the development and operation of a system of public use airports for the benefit of the Puget Sound region.

SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS

In this document, the Regional Airport System Plan alternatives were subjected to environmental and economic evaluation. The intent of the evaluation was to provide the information needed to support the selection of a proposed alternative. The focus is on an identification of potentially significant environmental impacts and a description of environmental issues that need to be addressed in subsequent alternatives analysis and project design phases.

The overall conclusions of the environmental impact evaluation, for the final set of alternatives, were as follows:

- All of the alternatives will generate significant impacts to the natural and human environments. Areas of concern and potential impacts have been identified. Many of these can be mitigated in the project design.
- Among the alternatives, the principal difference in impacts, both positive and negative, is whether they will be contained at existing airport locations or dispersed among existing and new airport locations.
- Based on the analysis, no alternative stands out as being clearly superior to the others. Further definition of the impacts at the site specific level will assist in the selection of a preferred alternative for the regional airport system.
- Extensive mitigating measures will be necessary for environmental protection and such measures will increase the cost of implementation.

OUTLINE OF THE REST OF THIS DOCUMENT

In the following chapter, the recommendations proposed as a part of the Regional Airport System Plan are given. These recommendations provide the impetus for this EIS document. Chapter II consists of background information and details the plan update process as well as a description of the components of the regional airport system. The public involvement program is described in Chapter III, a detailed description of the alternatives is given in Chapter IV, and a description of the affected environment is given in Chapter V. Environmental impacts of implementing the alternatives are considered in Chapters VI and VII. A summary and conclusions are presented in Chapter VIII.