

## **Resolution of the Aviation Advisory Board Regarding Back Country Airports**

WHEREAS, Backcountry airports on public lands provide a vital form of access for industrial, commercial and recreational use; and

WHEREAS, Backcountry airstrips are not part of the 258 regional or community airports managed by the Department of Transportation & Public Facilities.

WHEREAS, These airstrips often provide a staging area where larger aircraft transfer passengers and cargo to smaller aircraft that will land at unimproved off-field locations; and

WHEREAS, These airstrips also play a role in public safety by providing emergency landing areas in the event of unforecast weather or mechanical problems; and

WHEREAS, Backcountry airstrips are often poorly charted, or described in aeronautical publications used by pilots, making it difficult to get accurate information about them, and

WHEREAS, Many of these airstrips fall under the jurisdiction of the Department of Natural Resources, who lacks the mandate or expertise to manage these assets, and

WHEREAS, State statutes now provide protection from civil liability for agencies, individuals or organizations that construct, maintain or operate airstrips on a volunteer basis; and

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, That the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities should establish an office of Backcountry Airports, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, The office should undertake an inventory of historical airstrips on state land to define a network of airstrips for continued access to public lands.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, The office should transfer key airstrips from DNR to DOT&PF, along with suitable land for safety areas and airport infrastructure.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, The office should work with the aviation community and the public to define expectations for maintenance and to establish partnerships with aviation groups to assist in upkeep of the network.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, The office should coordinate with DNR to plan for future airstrips as part of the State's land management process.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, That the Department should provide necessary staff and support dedicated to supporting these activities.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Richard Wien, Aviation Advisory Board Chair

Date: \_\_\_\_\_