NORTH DAKOTA AVIATION ASSOCIATION

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# QUARTERLY

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North Dakota Aviation Association

FLY-ND SUMMIT

August 5-6, 2025 • Devils Lake, ND

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*Supermarine Spitfire MK959, piloted by Warren Pietsch, and Hawker Hurricane Mk XII, piloted by Bernie Vasquez, on the right wing.*

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## From the Editor

Welcome to the summer issue of the Fly-ND Quarterly! As you relax and enjoy the longest days of the year, we hope you enjoy all the news, history, and stories shared in the pages of this issue. We strive to have a variety of topics for every reader to enjoy:

- Page five: Enjoy the next generation of aviators on a third grade airport field trip.
- Page eight: Celebrate the launch of a new aviation maintenance program in Fargo, ND.
- Page 16: Help us to honor the legacy of our 50th North Dakota Aviation Hall of Fame inductee, Cindy Schreiber-Beck, who recently passed away.
- Page 19: Reminisce with a 93-year-old veteran pilot, who travelled far to reconnect with the bomber he flew.

And of course, there are so many upcoming events! Mark your calendar for the 2025 Fly-ND Summit (formerly known as Summerfest) which will take place August 5-6 in Devils Lake, ND. You won't want to miss it.

*Wishing you clear skies and unlimited visibility, Nicolette*

*Statements of fact and opinion are the responsibility of authors alone and do not imply an opinion on the part of officers and members of the NDAA or Fly-ND Quarterly staff. If you've received more than one copy of this newsletter, please share it with a friend. Email admin@fly-nd.com to update your address.*





**Tanner Overland, Chairman**
*North Dakota Aviation Association*
*chairman@fly-nd.com*

# CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

Hello again! Another North Dakota summer is upon us—hopefully your Independence Day was filled with sunshine, family, fireworks, and, of course, plenty of good barbeque. Summer is always a special time in our state, and if you're anything like me, your calendar's filling up fast with events, fly-ins, and weekend getaways. I'm already gearing up for another trip to Oshkosh for EAA AirVenture 2025—hopefully I see you there!

July first marked the annual board transition for the North Dakota Aviation Association. We would like to thank Jake Werner for his time on the board and welcome our newest board member, Mitch Lutze-Morris! Mitch is the Chief Inspector at Fargo Jet Center and brings with him a love for aviation and a sharp eye for aviation maintenance. We're lucky to have him onboard!

Mark your calendars for August 5-6 and join us at Woodland Resort in Devils Lake, ND, for the 2025 Fly-ND Summit (formerly known as Summerfest.) Whether you're an avid angler, weekend golfer, or just in it for the good company and lake views, there will be something for everyone. On August 6, we will host our joint meeting with NDAA and AAND, as well as our summer business meetings, which are open to all. For details and registration, please visit our website.

Speaking of the website, have you checked out our refreshed North Dakota Aviation Association website? Visit www.fly-nd.com to explore our modern, new design and updated content - an excellent way to stay connected.

If you're looking to stay in the loop this summer, be sure to check out the North Dakota Aeronautics Commission's Event Calendar at aero.nd.gov/events. From pancake breakfasts to airport open houses, there's something happening nearly every weekend.

If you're looking for one more great event to wrap up your summer, please join us at Williston Basin International Airport on Saturday, August 16, for a special Make-A-Wish Fundraiser and Fly-In Movie event! Make-A-Wish North Dakota, Williston Basin International Airport, Overland Aviation, and Sun Country Airlines are teaming up for our first-ever Plane Pull – where up to 20 teams will see how fast they can pull a Boeing 737! For more information, visit the Williston Airport's Facebook page.

On a more somber note, we remember and honor the legacy of Cindy Schreiber-Beck, our 50th inductee into the North Dakota Aviation Hall of Fame, who passed away in May. Cindy's impact on our aviation community was immeasurable, and we now have a meaningful opportunity to continue her legacy through the Cindy Schreiber-Beck Memorial Scholarship Fund. To learn more or make a contribution, please visit our website.

As we soak in the rest of summer, I hope you'll find time to get out and enjoy everything that makes North Dakota aviation so special. There's no better place to be this time of year than in the skies over our great state. Here's to clear skies and a summer full of stories worth sharing. See you out there!





**Reneé Murrish, Manager**
*North Dakota Aviation Association*
*701-226-1640 | manager@fly-nd.com*

FROM THE *Manager*

# The Sky is Not the Limit: What Aviation Teaches Us About Possibility

From the first shaky flights of the Wright brothers to today's supersonic jets and cutting-edge electric aircraft, aviation has always been a testament to human courage, curiosity, and relentless innovation. It's easy to take for granted the roar of engines overhead or the simple magic of boarding a plane and stepping off hours later in a different part of the world. But behind every flight is a story of daring dreams turned into reality — and a reminder that, sometimes, the impossible just needs a runway.

Aviation invites us to look up and remember that progress is built on overcoming fear, challenging limits, and trusting in teamwork. It's not just about machines that fly — it's about people who believed they could. Pilots, engineers, mechanics, air traffic controllers, and countless others work together in harmony, proving that great things happen when people share a common goal.

Perhaps the greatest lesson aviation offers is this: every takeoff requires leaving the ground behind. Progress demands courage — the courage to lift off, even when you can't see the destination yet. In our own lives, we all have runways — moments where we can choose to stay where it's comfortable or push the throttle forward and trust the wings we've built.

So next time you see a plane trace a white line across the sky, remember: the sky is not the limit — it's only the beginning.

Excitingly, the North Dakota Aviation Association has launched our new website and as we are becoming wizards, we are appreciating the grace you are showing us as we go through this process; we are excited for what this new website will do for us long term. The 2025 Fly-ND Summit registration is now OPEN; once again it be held in Devils Lake at the Woodland Resort on August 5-6, 2025. As always, if you have any questions or need direction, please reach out to me at 701-226-1640 or manager@fly-nd.com; I would love to help you out.

*Let's kick the tires and light the fires! Reneé*



# Third Grade Field Trip Adventures

Three local third grade classes recently had the opportunity to tour Overland Aviation and Mountrail-Williams Electric Cooperative at the Williston Basin International Airport. This exciting field trip gave students hands-on, curriculum-based learning about aviation and electricity – bringing classroom lessons to life!






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*North Dakota Aeronautics Commission*
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DIRECTOR'S Chair

# 2025 Legislative Session Results: A Historic Investment in North Dakota's Aviation System

The 69th North Dakota Legislative Assembly recently concluded with a landmark commitment to strengthening the state's aviation sector. This session produced historic and transformative state investments in airport infrastructure, aviation education, aerospace medicine, and uncrewed aircraft system (UAS) technologies. Several key pieces of legislation were passed that will significantly benefit airports, aviation professionals, and the flying public across the state and I am excited to share the following highlights:

## SB 2006 – ND Aeronautics Commission Budget Bill

The Legislature approved the Commission's budget request to continue operations and assist with strategic aviation initiatives for the 2025–2027 biennium. Most notably, the bill authorizes a historic $125 million for state airport infrastructure investments across the state over this period:

- $10 million in special funds received from aviation fuel and excise taxes and an additional $475,000 in general funds for airport development.
- $20 million from state oil revenues for the "Operation Prairie Dog" airport infrastructure fund (AIF) with carryover authority through June 30, 2029.
- $90 million from the state's strategic investment and improvement fund (SIIF) to assist with generational airport projects that include Fargo's commercial terminal expansion, Grand Fork's primary runway reconstruction, and Dickinson's new commercial terminal building.
- $4.2 million for Dickinson Airport via the newly created Hub City Debt Relief Fund, providing additional support for the completion of its new terminal building.
- $400,000 in special funds was also allocated to aviation education grants, enabling continued outreach and educational programming for aviation across the state.

## SB 2323 – Hub City Debt Relief Program

This new law creates a Hub City Debt Relief Program, allocating $21 million per biennium to Williston, Minot, and Dickinson to help offset infrastructure-related debt incurred between July 1, 2012, and December 31, 2025, due to oil industry growth. Aviation-related impacts include:

- Williston and Minot, helping reduce debt loads from the major airport development projects completed over the past decade.
- Dickinson, which (as stated within SB 2006) will directly receive $4.2 million in the 2025–2027 biennium to support its airport terminal improvements.

## SB 2012 – Department of Transportation Budget Bill

Of particular significance to aviation, this bill restructured the state's oil and gas revenue distribution system, eliminating $430 million in allocations that previously took priority over the Airport Infrastructure Fund (AIF). As a result, the AIF is now expected to be fully funded for the upcoming biennium—substantially reinforcing North Dakota's long-term airport funding mechanism, which can provide up to $20 million for airport infrastructure every two years

## HB 1612 – North Dakota Center for Aerospace Medicine

This legislation formally establishes the North Dakota Center for Aerospace Medicine at the UND John D. Odegard School of Aerospace Sciences. The Center will:

- Expand rural access to aviation medical examiners and aeromedical services.
- Advance nationwide aeromedical research and initiatives.
- Provide the center with a $250,000 one-time state appropriation, with authority to accept an additional $250,000 from federal or private sources.

## SB 2018 – Department of Commerce Budget Bill

Key investments in uncrewed aircraft system (UAS) technologies were made through this legislation including:

- $9 million to replace state-owned uncrewed aircraft that do not comply with federal security requirements.
- $15 million to continue the development and operation of VANTIS, North Dakota's beyond visual line of sight (BVLOS) UAS network.
- $2.5 million for infrastructure support at Grand Sky UAS Park.
- Authorization for the Northern Plains UAS Test Site (NPUASTS) to enter into agreements with public, private, and non-profit entities to support VANTIS operations.

## HB 1038 – State Radar Data Pathfinder Program

This legislation provided $11 million for the implementation of a state radar data integration program. The initiative will:

- Allow North Dakota to become the first state to receive unfiltered federal radar feed data and allow our state to integrate this data with the VANTIS UAS system.

- The Northern Plains UAS test site will develop security protocols that meet FAA and national security standards, and these cooperative efforts will enhance beyond visual line of site operational capabilities in North Dakota.

## Looking Ahead

This past legislative session delivered one of the most substantial commitments to advancing aviation in North Dakota's history. The Aeronautics Commission is grateful for the strong support of Governor Kelly Armstrong and the North Dakota Legislative Assembly. In the upcoming biennium, we look forward to working alongside our partners across the state to put these critical investments to work—strengthening airports, supporting aviation professionals, fostering innovation, and enhancing connectivity for communities across North Dakota.



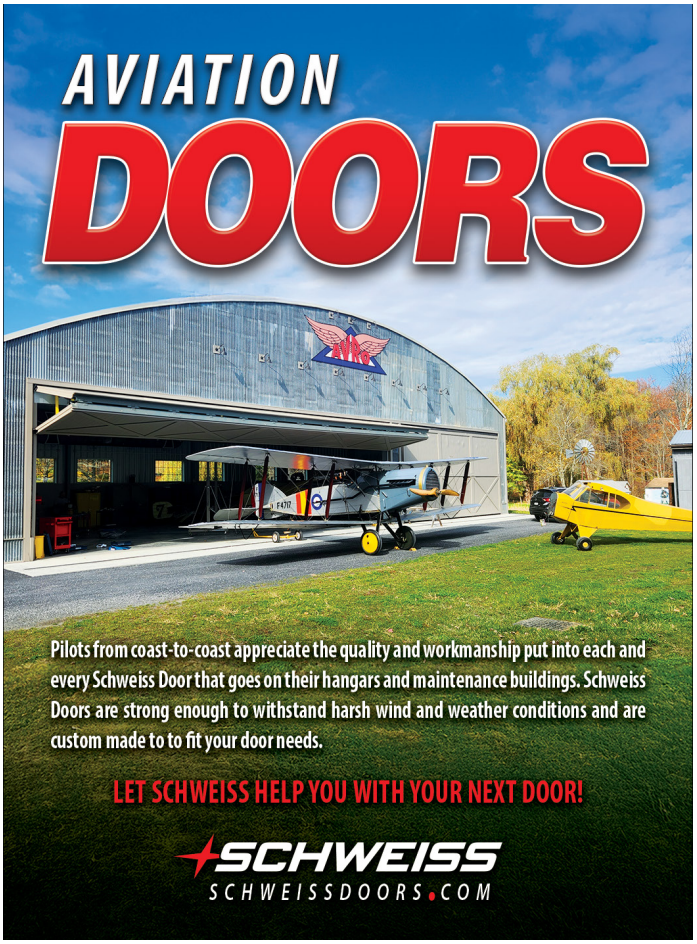
*HB 1612 Bill Signing – Established the North Dakota Center for Aerospace Medicine*

FLY-ND QUARTERLY

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# Return to the Hangar: NDSCS Sets August 2025 Launch for its Aviation Maintenance Technology Program

When the first group of twenty students walks into North Dakota State College of Science's (NDSCS) Fargo hangar on August 25, 2025, they will be starting more than an Airframe and Powerplant certificate. They will be reviving a North Dakota aviation legacy that took off nearly a century ago and helping to solve one of the industry's most pressing workforce shortages.



## A program cleared for take-off

On June 25, 2025, the Federal Aviation Administration presented NDSCS with its coveted Part 147 Air Agency Certificate, officially authorizing the college to train and test future Airframe & Powerplant (A&P) technicians. "We are honored to receive this certification, and we're excited to begin preparing students for high-demand careers in aviation maintenance," said Terry Marohl, NDSCS Dean of Transportation, during the hangar-side ceremony that capped a year-long application and inspection process. Program coordinator Nathan Cowan called the moment "a direct, affordable pathway into one of the fastest-growing careers in aviation."

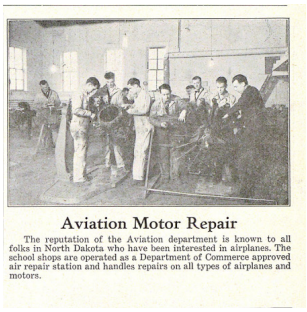
With the certificate in hand, NDSCS now offers the only FAA-certified Aviation Maintenance Technology (AMT) program in North Dakota. The program's inaugural cohort is limited to 25 students, a deliberately small number that allows every learner to rotate seamlessly between lecture space at the college's 19th Avenue North center and the purpose-built teaching hangar at Hector International Airport.

## Why the timing matters

Industry demand for certified technicians is reaching a critical pitch. Boeing's 2023 Pilot & Technician Outlook predicted a need for 716,000 new maintenance technicians worldwide over the next two decades, which is more than 35,000 per year. Darren Hall, Vice President at Fargo Jet Center, underscores the urgency closer to home, saying "A third of today's national maintenance workforce is already over age 62, and retirements are outpacing new entrants," he told local media. (1)

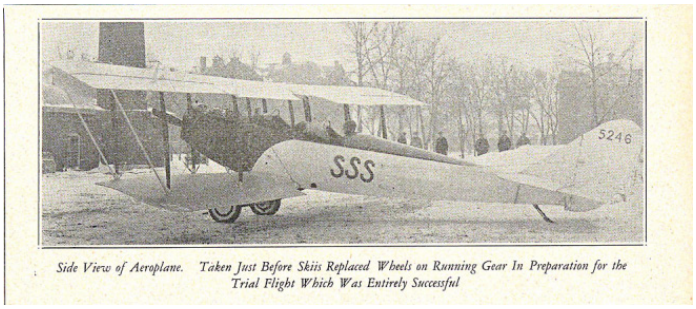
That supply-and-demand gap has pushed entry-level wages for A&P-certified technicians into the $65,000-$75,000 range, with seasoned AMTs routinely topping six figures, an attractive proposition for students weighing the cost of college against future earning power.

## Built on nearly 100 years of know-how


Aviation Motor Repair

The reputation of the Aviation department is known to all folks in North Dakota who have been interested in airplanes. The school shops are operated as a Department of Commerce approved air repair station and handles repairs on all types of airplanes and motors.

Although the 2025 launch feels new, NDSCS's aviation roots run deep. In 1928, the Wahpeton campus opened an "Aeronautic Ground Work" course that tasked ten pioneering students with restoring a wrecked biplane; their handiwork flew again the following February. By 1931, the college had earned designation as North Dakota's first government-approved air-repair depot, and in 1935 students and faculty debuted "The Wildcat," a 560-pound, 150-mph low-wing monoplane that became a statewide sensation.



*Side View of Aeroplane. Taken Just Before Skiis Replaced Wheels on Running Gear In Preparation for the Trial Flight Which Was Entirely Successful*

The original program helped train 3,500 Navy personnel during World War II and (when it began in 1928) was one of only five such schools nationwide before budget pressures forced its closure in the 1950s. Re-establishing the AMT track after a 70-year hiatus, says Marohl, "honors our pioneering past while answering a 21st-century workforce call." (1)

## A public-private lift

Restarting an FAA program from scratch is neither quick nor inexpensive. NDSCS secured more than $1.1 million in combined federal, state and industry support, including grants from the FAA and the North Dakota Aeronautics Commission. Donated equipment is arriving from Fargo Jet Center, Weather Modification International, Lycoming, and Pratt & Whitney Canada, among others.

The Fargo Jet Center partnership is especially consequential; its technicians helped shape the curriculum, and its hangar provides students with live-aircraft access that many college programs can only simulate. "Having a business aviation facility next door means our students practice on the same turbine engines and composite structures they'll see after graduation," Cowan notes.

## Learning by doing

The two-year Associate in Applied Science curriculum blends traditional classroom work with hands-on practical assignments. Coursework covers everything from aircraft electrical systems and hydraulics to sheet-metal repair, welding and nondestructive inspection. Students will tear down piston engines, balance turbine compressors, interpret aeronautical drawings and fabricate structural repairs to FAA standards before sitting for their three written, oral and practical exams.

Because the program is competency-based, students complete the FAA airframe and powerplant tests before graduation, eliminating the costly gap that often separates new grads from licensure. “Our goal is that each Wildcat walks across the stage with an A&P card already in hand,” Cowan says.

## Looking beyond launch

College leaders are already sketching Phase II. Plans call for optional certificates in Avionics, Non-Destructive Inspection (NDI) and Advanced Composites—specialties airlines now recruit globally. Pipeline initiatives with local high schools and veteran transition programs are also in development.

The broader vision extends to regional economic development. With Fargo positioned as a fast-growing aerospace hub—home to unmanned-aircraft innovators, a major FBO network and strong cargo traffic—having an on-site talent engine could help attract new maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) operations to North Dakota.




## “A green light to start changing lives”

For Marohl, the return of aviation maintenance to NDSCS is equal parts nostalgia and necessity. “Receiving our FAA Part 147 certification is not just a milestone—it’s a green light to start changing lives.”

Prospective students have already begun reserving seats in the August cohort, and administrators expect the 20-student cap to fill quickly. Program details are available at NDSCS.edu/Aviation

*1 Wallevand, K. (2025, April 10). NDSCS bringing back Aviation Maintenance Tech program.*

*Inforum.com, Retrieved from https://www.inforum.com/news/north-dakota/ndscs-bringing-back-aviation-maintenance-tech-program*






## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

**Tuesday | August 5, 2025**
3:00pm | Registration at Woodland Resort
3:30pm - 9:00pm | Enjoy an activity

- *Fishing* | Come out and enjoy an afternoon on Devils Lake. Fishing experience is not needed. If you do not have any tackle, no worries, we have you covered. Meet your boat captain at the bait shop. If you would like to be a boat captain, let us know on your registration.
- *Golfing* | 18 hole round of golf at Creel Bay Golf Course ($54 per person, paid on location)

***Please note: registration is required to enjoy these activities***
9:00pm | Social | Pizza and beverages at Proz Lakeside at the Cove

**Wednesday | August 6, 2025**
8:00 - 10:00am | Joint NDAA & AAND Meeting
10:00am - 1:00pm | AAND Meeting
1:00 - 2:30pm | Fish fry and awards at Bobbers

## TICKETS

$75 | NDAA Member | Includes meals and meetings | *$100 after 11:55 pm July 31*

$100 | Non-NDAA Member | Includes meals and meetings | *$125 after 11:55 am July 31*

$1,500 | Fly-ND Summit Lunch Sponsor

$2,500 | Fly-ND Summit Social Sponsor

$3,000 | Fly-ND Summit Sponsor

**For registration, lodging, and more information, scan or click on the QR code.**

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**Mike McHugh**, Aviation Education Coordinator
*North Dakota Aeronautics Commission*
*701-328-9650 | mmchugh@nd.gov*

# For the Love of Flying

One of the greatest ways to improve your flying skills is to practice, practice, practice. The Passport program awards offered by the North Dakota Aeronautics Commission recognizes pilots for landing at airports throughout the state.

| Participation Levels and Awards | Airports | Air Museums | FAAST Seminars |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Gold** *Leather Jacket* | 89/89 | 2 | 3 |
| Level verified by NDAC (employee signature) | | | |
| **Silver** *Flight Bag* | 60/89 | 1 | 2 |
| Level verified by NDAC (employee signature) | | | |
| **Bronze** *Legacy Shirt* | 30/89 | 0 | 1 |
| Level verified by NDAC (employee signature) | | | |

To date, 114 pilots have received a leather jacket for accomplishing the feat of flying to all 89 public use airports in the state. I have the opportunity to listen to the stories of these pilots, as they journey through the state looking for the stamp at each airport. Nearly every pilot comments about the growth in their flying skills, as they fly in a variety of environments throughout our state. I would like to take this opportunity to encourage you to start - or continue - gathering stamps.

To get started, you may pick up a passport book at an airport or contact our office and we will get one in the mail directly to you. If you are participating in the program, we enjoy hearing from you; if you have difficulty finding a stamp or are unable to land at an airport, we encourage you to contact our office and we will mail a stamp from our office to include in your book. Also, if you notice areas for improvement (for instance, if a windsock is faded or missing) at an airport, our office will work with that airport so they are aware of the issue.

In addition to airport stamps, participants must visit the two North Dakota air museums and attend FAA safety seminars. For a listing of FAA safety seminars, visit: www.faasafety.gov, these seminars do not need to be completed in North Dakota.




I hope that we can add your name to the list of completers of the Passport Program. Stamping your passport book is sure to be fun and improve your flying skills.

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*Fargo Jet Center*
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*Shae Helling*
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*Zoe Graham*
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*NDAA Board Member*



*Ryan O'Rear*
*Williston Basin International Airport*
*NDAA Board Member*



*Justin Weninger*
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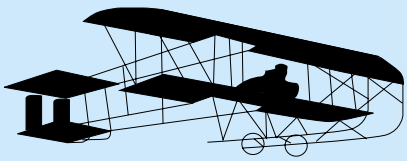


*Kyle Wanner*
*NDAC Director*
*Non-Board Leadership*



*Mike McHugh*
*NDAC Education Coordinator*
*Non-Board Leadership*

North Dakota Aviation



HALL OF FAME

**Want to learn more about HOF inductees Tom Clifford and John Odegard?**

Scan or click on the QR code to watch their *Taking Flight* video!

# NDAC Releases New Statewide Airport Pavement Condition Study

The North Dakota Aeronautics Commission (NDAC), in collaboration with Mead & Hunt, Applied Pavement Technology, and Marr Arnold Planning, has released the results of the 2024 Statewide Pavement Condition Index (PCI) Study. Conducted every three years, the study provides a comprehensive evaluation of pavement conditions at 72 paved airports across North Dakota.

A PCI survey consists of dividing pavement sections into a series of sample units, selecting systematically random sample units for inspection, and collecting the distress data within the sample units to determine overall pavement deterioration. Pavement deterioration is based on quantifying the different distress types, the severities, and the amount of distress present in the samples for each section. This information is then used to formulate a composite index numerical value that represents the overall pavement condition. This value will range from 0 (failed) to 100 (excellent).

The PCI study is a vital tool for monitoring the condition of the state's airport infrastructure and for guiding strategic investment decisions. North Dakota's airport system currently includes 60.7 million square feet of pavement, with 35.2 million square feet at commercial service airports and 25.5 million square feet at general aviation airports.

"This report reflects the strong stewardship of our airport sponsors and the success of coordinated planning between local, state, and federal partners," said Kyle Wanner, Executive Director of the North Dakota Aeronautics Commission. "Preserving our airport infrastructure is essential to supporting economic development, emergency response, and statewide connectivity."

## Key Highlights from the 2024 Study

**System Performance is Holding Steady:** The overall airport pavement network in North Dakota received a PCI rating of 77, identical to the rating from the 2021 study, indicating that the system is being well-maintained over time.

**Majority of Pavements in Good or Excellent Condition:** 43% of airport pavements were rated "excellent," while 23% were rated "good."

**Investment Needs Identified:** Approximately $290 million in funding would be needed over the next five years to complete all identified pavement rehabilitation and reconstruction projects. This data will help prioritize resources to ensure cost-effective maintenance and repairs.

The NDAC uses PCI results to inform long-term planning, optimize available funding, and guide preservation strategies. This helps ensure that North Dakota's public-use airports continue to operate safely and efficiently—supporting statewide mobility and economic vitality.

To explore detailed pavement condition data and individual airport information, please visit the Airport Pavement Management System online portal found on the ND Aeronautics Commission website at aero.nd.gov

## North Dakota Airports – Statewide Historical Pavement Conditions

| Branch Use | Area -Weighted Average Condition (PCI) | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 2009 | 2012 | 2015 | 2018 | 2021 | 2024 |
| Entire System | 76 | 77 | 76 | 79 | 77 | **77** |
| Runways | 78 | 81 | 79 | 82 | 79 | **81** |
| Taxiways | 76 | 77 | 73 | 79 | 78 | **77** |
| Aprons | 72 | 69 | 72 | 73 | 71 | **71** |
| Hangar Taxiways | 64 | 64 | 72 | 76 | 75 | **76** |
| **Total Pavement (millions sq ft)** | 52.1 | 51.9 | 55.3 | 56.9 | 59.5 | **60.7** |

*North Dakota has been able to successfully maintain our airport pavements over time while also increasing the amount of pavement in the system as our communities and airports have grown. Additional funding resources and targeted investments have been key to this success.*







# Powder River Training Complex (PRTC) – Proposed Changes

The Department of the Air Force (DAF) has issued a Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to evaluate proposed modifications to the Powder River Training Complex (PRTC) airspace. The EIS will assess the potential social, economic, and environmental impacts of changes intended to optimize the airspace for military readiness and national defense.

Specifically, the EIS will analyze improvements to the PRTC airspace structure to address current limitations in daily training operations for aircrews from Ellsworth and Minot Air Force Bases. It will also consider enhancements to support an increased capacity for Large Force Exercises (LFEs), which could include the use of higher altitudes and expanded activation windows.

Aviation stakeholders are encouraged to review the proposed alternatives and provide input on potential impacts to civilian and commercial airspace users.

Additional details and ongoing updates can be found at: www.PRTCairspaceEIS.com

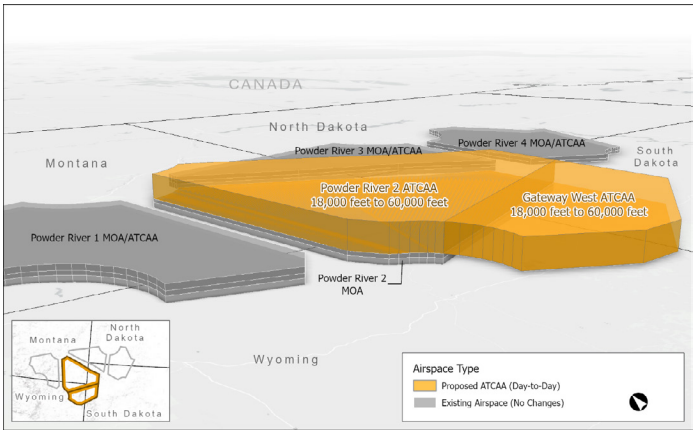
The proposed alternatives under consideration for the Powder River Training Complex are outlined below:

## Alternative 1

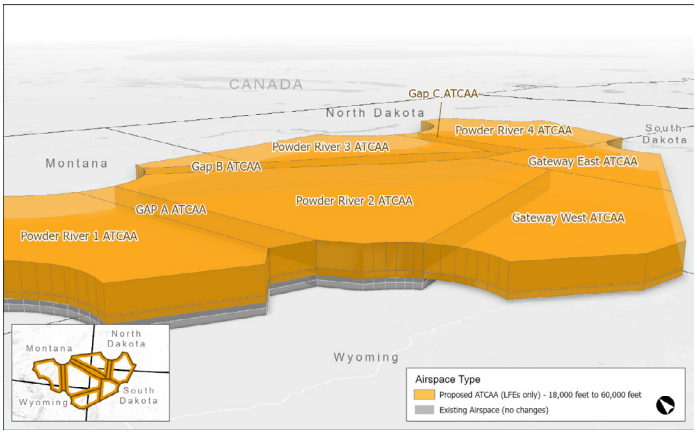
Under Alternative 1, the ceiling of the two primary airspace segments used for day-to-day training would be raised to improve the high-altitude training capability. This alternative also includes an administrative change to the published times of use to align with how the complex is currently used for day-to-day training. Lastly, under this alternative the ceiling of all the PRTC airspace would be raised during LFEs and the total LFE days would be increased.

Specifically, Alternative 1 includes:

- Actions to improve day-to-day operations:
  - Raise the ceiling of Powder River 2 and Gateway West ATCAAs from 26,000 feet to 60,000 feet.
  - Change times of use to 7:00 am to 12:30 am Monday to Thursday, 7:00 am to 6:00 pm Friday, and other times by Notice to Airmen (NOTAM.)
  - These changes to day-to-day training won't change the annual total operations in the complex, but the aircraft activity would occur at higher altitudes:
    - Approximately 90 percent of training time would be in Powder River 2 and Gateway West ATCAAs.
    - Approximately 90 percent of training time in all of PRTC is above 18,000 feet.
- Actions to improve training capability of LFEs:
  - Raise the ceiling of all PRTC from 26,000 feet to 60,000 feet.
  - Increase the total days allowed annually from 10 days to 30 days.
  - Increase duration allowed for individual LFE events from 3 days to 12 days (no weekend flying.)
  - The additional LFE days could increase annual total operations in the complex up to 4,974 sorties from 3,234 sorties.
    - Approximately 90 percent of LFE training time is above 18,000 feet.




*Changes for Day-to-Day Training (Monday through Friday)*



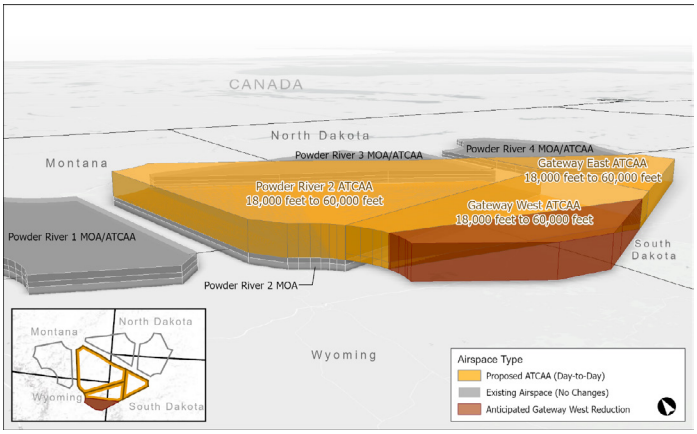

*Changes for LFE Training (up to 30 days per year)*

## Alternative 2

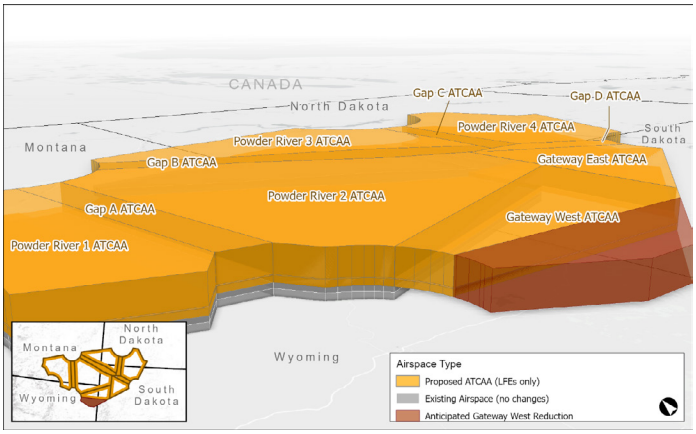
Under Alternative 2, the ceiling of three airspace segments would be raised to improve the high-altitude training capability of day-to-day training and the lateral dimensions of two ATCAAs would be reduced. Other changes would be the same as Alternative 1 and include an administrative change to the published times of use for day-to-day training, raising the ceiling of the entire complex during LFEs, and increasing the total LFE days.

Specifically, Alternative 2 includes:

- Actions to improve day-to-day operations:
  - Reduce dimensions of Gateway East ATCAA and allow day-to-day use (currently only allowed for LFEs.)
  - Reduce dimensions of Gateway West ATCAA (exact reduction would be determined between the Air Force and Federal Aviation Administration outside of this EIS process.)
  - Raise the ceiling of the Powder River 2, Gateway East, and Gateway West ATCAAs from 26,000 feet to 60,000 feet.
  - Change times of use for PRTC to 7:00 am to 12:30 am Monday to Thursday, 7:00 am to 6:00 pm Friday, and other times by NOTAM (same as Alternative 1.)
  - These changes won't impact the annual total operations in the complex, but the aircraft activity would occur in a new area on a day-to-day basis and occur at higher altitudes.
    - Approximately 90 percent of training time would be in Powder River 2, Gateway East, and Gateway West ATCAAs.
    - Approximately 90 percent of training time in all of PRTC is above 18,000 feet.
- Actions to improve training capability of LFEs:
  - Incorporate reduced dimensions to Gateway East and West ATCAAs.
  - Raise the ceiling of all PRTC from 26,000 feet to 60,000 feet (same as Alternative 1.)
  - Increase the total days allowed annually from 10 days to 30 days (same as Alternative 1.)
  - Increase duration allowed for individual LFE events from 3 days to 12 days (no weekend flying) (same as Alternative 1.)
  - The additional LFE days could increase annual total operations in the complex up to 4,974 sorties from 3,234 sorties (same as Alternative 1.)
    - Approximately 90 percent of LFE training time is above 18,000 feet.




*Changes for Day-to-Day Training (Monday through Friday)*




*Changes for LFE Training (up to 30 days per year)*

## No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, the day-to-day operations and LFEs would continue in the PRTC as they do currently. The DAF would continue to have limited training airspace vertically for the B-1 and B-52 and limit the integration opportunities with 5th generation aircraft. The altitude limitations would continue to decrease the value of LFEs in PRTC for most combat aircraft and discourage them from attending an LFE. The continuation of inefficient training threatens aircrew survivability and mission readiness.

## Public Meetings

The Air Force is hosting three Virtual Public Meetings and several in-person public meetings during the scoping period to provide information to interested parties and to solicit comments from the public on the proposed action and alternatives. Please attend a meeting to meet with Air Force representatives and ask questions. If you do not wish to attend a meeting in person you may participate in one of the virtual meetings.

**In-Person Public Meeting Schedule (North Dakota)**

*Bowman, ND | July 31 | 5:00-7:00 p.m. | Bowman County Fairgrounds – West Wing*

*Elgin, ND | August 1 | 5:00-7:00 p.m. | Elgin Community Center*

*Virtual Meeting #1 | August 19 | 5:00-6:00 p.m. *MDT | Webinar ID: 161 438 7092*

*Virtual Meeting #2 | August 20 | 5:00-6:00 p.m. *MDT | Webinar ID: 160 316 4597*

*Virtual Meeting #3 | August 21 | 5:00-6:00 p.m. *MDT | Webinar ID: 161 156 9211*

## Provide Comments

We encourage you to submit your comments and concerns directly to the U.S. Air Force through their project website at www.PRTCairspaceEIS.com by September 9th.

In addition, the North Dakota Aeronautics Commission is seeking feedback on how the proposed changes may impact North Dakota airports and airspace users. Please share your input with us by August 20th by calling 701-328-9650 or emailing ndaero@nd.gov.

# A Different View

By Ron Wilson

Big game in North Dakota were surveyed from the air for the first time nearly 85 years ago, and that process of getting an aerial count on mule deer, white-tailed deer, pronghorn and other large mammals remains a vital management tool decades later.

The North Dakota Game and Fish Department's aerial approach doesn't end with helping to manage the state's natural resources either but extends to safeguarding the recreating public and enforcing game and fish laws.

"With a small number of game wardens in North Dakota, having a warden pilot available, having eyes in the sky, is a huge benefit in protecting our resources in the state," said Scott Winkelman, enforcement division chief, in reference to Mike Linden, Department game warden pilot. "The plane and the pilot are also extremely beneficial in search and rescue operations and in other law enforcement matters."

While Linden, who worked in law enforcement in Colorado for 31 years and has been flying longer than that, must spend some of his time on the ground enforcing game and fish laws, he leans hardest to his time in the air if given a choice.

"During hunting season, for example, I fly a lot to assist wardens on the ground by identifying the location of hunters across the landscape," Linden said. "It's helpful to them because from the air I can see so much more, a lot wider area than somebody on the ground might see from any single vantage point.

"One of the things that I'll see because of my vantage point is off-trail use, ATVs traveling off-trail during the deer season," he added. "Another thing that I see at night is folks shining or spotlighting, which is something a game warden on the ground wouldn't see unless they were in the right place at the right time."

Jeff Faught has been flying for the Department's wildlife division for nearly a quarter century. From whitetail deer surveys in winter to the pronghorn survey in western North Dakota in summer, Faught is the one behind the controls, with a biologist buckled in behind him.







"Our aerial wildlife surveys are essential to the Game and Fish Department's survey program," said Bill Haase, Department assistant wildlife division chief. "Oftentimes, it's the only effective way to survey these species."

"During the spring and fall mule deer surveys, for instance, we have survey study areas... most of them have been done since the 1950s and we fly the same patterns every year," Faught said. "The biologist gets in with me early in the morning while the deer are out, and we fly every square inch of these areas, mostly around in circles, up and down the drainages, and we count what we see. In the spring, we count total numbers. In the fall, we count bucks, does and fawns."

Faught flies an American Champion Scout, a 2019 model built in Wisconsin, that's built for off airport, slow flight operations. The tandem seating, the biologist behind the pilot as mentioned before, allows Faught and his passenger to both see out the left and right sides of the plane.

"Being able to do an aerial survey gives you a perspective of what's happening on the ground that you just cannot get from the ground," Faught said. "For instance, doing the deer surveys from the ground is nearly impossible. From what I understand, in the early 1950s, Game and Fish personnel did it by horseback, and I can't imagine how difficult that would have been to even get real numbers, much less having to deal with the physical part of doing the job."



*Jeff Faught flies over the Missouri River south of town.*

While Linden has the room in his airplane, he generally flies without an observer on board, but he keeps in touch with those on the ground through the plane's radio.

"Flying is something I've always enjoyed doing, and if you like the outdoors and like visiting remote areas and some of the beautiful parts of North Dakota that I think a lot of people don't know about, what more could I ask for?" Linden said. "I wouldn't say it's really all that dangerous. In North Dakota, there are a million places to land, but at night, that worries me a little bit especially if you're out west over the badlands and you lose an engine, you have very limited options. And those options, if you don't see them, you don't know they're there."



*Mike Linden, Department game warden pilot, worked in law enforcement in Colorado for 31 years and has been flying for about 40 years.*

Faught is also essential in helping researchers track collared animals — from wild turkeys in the river drainages in central North Dakota to elk in the badlands — to learn, among other things, the comings, goings and habitat use of the marked critters.

"The antennas on the plane are for tracking those animals with transmitters," Faught said. "There's a left antenna and a right antenna, so when I dial in that frequency, I can listen and when I hear it, then I can switch to separate left from right and locate exactly where that animal is at."

Faught calls the aircraft his office. It's where he's most comfortable.

"And I got the best view in the Department from my office. The perspective from my office is pretty incredible to see what's going on and I've seen some pretty interesting things," he said. "People think that this is a cushy job and it's just all fun, but any career job has challenges. Aviation is something I've always enjoyed and loved to do, so I'm dedicated to it ... is very important to me."Whether he's flying a creel survey for the Department's fisheries division over the Missouri River System or directing game wardens on the ground to suspicious goings on, Linden believes he has a dream job.

"I think you can talk to just about any of the law enforcement folks and they'll tell you the variety, the not knowing what the day will bring next, is one of the things they like about the job," he said. "Every day is a new day, and you have no idea what you're going to be encountering next."

*Reprinted with permission from North Dakota Game and Fish.*




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*by Adam Kurtz*
*Reprinted with permission from UND Today*

# A Force to be reckoned with

## UND's Frozen Force air racing team celebrates first-place victory in 2025 Air Race Classic




*Members of the UND Frozen Force pose with their airplace shortly after returning to Grand Forks after winning the 2025 Air Race Classic. Photo by Adam Kurtz/UND Today.*

For the first time, the UND Frozen Force flying team has won the Intercollegiate Air Race Classic, an annual, multi-stop competition for female pilots.

More than 40 different teams took part in the race, with 18 competing within the intercollegiate division. This year, the race originated in Fairhope, Ala., and concluded in Spokane, Wash. – a distance spanning 2,400 nautical miles.

The race changes flight courses each year. The race concluded on June 20, and the racers made their way back to UND on June 24.

The 2025 Frozen Force Team includes Helena Lind, pilot; Charlotte Fuller, co-pilot; Caroline Kelley, navigator; and Aubrey Baril, ground coordinator. The team is coached by Katia Peters, senior lead instructor, and Antonia Wagener, assistant chief flight instructor.

Last week, the team returned to Grand Forks International Airport to a welcoming party of fellow students, faculty and staff. Additionally, two Grand Forks Fire Department engines based at the airport gave the pilots a ceremonial water cannon salute as they taxied to UND's flight operations hangar.

Peters, no stranger to the race herself, wasn't shy about her feelings for the team.

"As the coach, it feels great," Peters said. "I'm super proud of them because I know how hard they worked, and how much they wanted it. I did the race in 2022, so I know the circumstances of the race and what it takes to do. I'm just so proud of them because they put in the work and they deserve it."

Charlotte Fuller had much the same to say, and expressed her pride for the team and her thanks for all who assisted in the race.

"We're so grateful for everyone who helped us, and we had the most fun," she said. "We already won before we won, but it feels great to have our results show how we did."

Pilot Helena Lind agreed:

"When you have a good crew, it kind of makes it all go by a little bit easier and a little bit more fun," she said.

According to the Air Race Classic website, women's competitive air racing dates to 1929. The nonprofit Air Race Classic Inc. holds the race each year. According to the organization's website, it is dedicated to:

- Encouraging and educating current and future women pilots.
- Increasing public awareness of general aviation.
- Demonstrating women's roles in aviation.
- Preserving and promoting the tradition of pioneering women in aviation.

More information about the Frozen Force can be found on the team's website. Additional information about the International Air Race Classic, a map of the race course for 2025, and team and historical information can be found on the organization's website.

And now that the team is back home from the race, which is as much an endurance contest as race since teams can decide the number stops they put in a day, it might just be time to relax.

"I want to see my friends, and I'm really excited to go home and see my family," Lind said.

Also on the team was Caroline Kelley, who served as navigator on the flight. Kelley helped yet another UND aviation team win the Federal Aviation Administration's 2024 Data Challenge.

That Challenge, by the way, is a way for the FAA to listen to the next generation of aviation, computer science and engineering professionals, as they offer solutions to help the organization adapt to advances in computing and technology. UND's team took first place for developing an AI-powered method to help air traffic controllers identify certain attitudes that pilots may exhibit when faced with stressful situations.



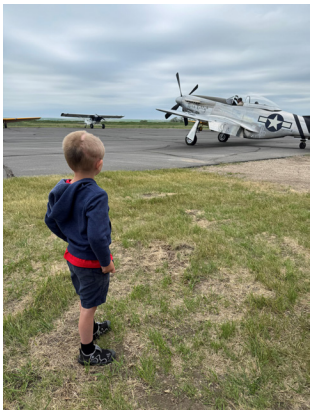
**Grant Erwin**, *Airport Planner*
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# Open Skies, Open Doors: The Heart of Airport Growth

Public airports serve as vital infrastructure, connecting communities to the broader world through transportation, business, and emergency services. Their value, however, is often underrecognized by the very communities they serve. Strong community relationships should not be treated as an optional bonus; they are an essential relationship.

Whether you're managing a small municipal field or a busy commercial hub, how your airport is perceived by the public can shape everything from funding opportunities to long-term development. That is where consistent community outreach and public awareness efforts come in.

Hosting events like open houses, school tours, and local fly-ins give people a chance to see the airport through a new lens. These events break down barriers, spark curiosity, and remind the public that their local airport is more than just a runway; it's a community resource. Fly-in events in particular have a unique way of drawing in both aviation



enthusiasts and newcomers. They're an opportunity to showcase aircraft, connect pilots with locals, and create memorable, hands-on experiences that leave a lasting impression. Many airports often collaborate with other public entities, bringing in local law enforcement, fire stations, and emergency response crews to assist with food or other fun events. When people are informed about safety procedures, sustainability initiatives, and the airport's role in medical response and air ambulance operations, they are more likely to engage constructively rather than oppose unknown airport activities.

*Continued on page 17*



# Eternal FLIGHT



## Cindy Schreiber-Beck

Cynthia Kay Schreiber-Beck, 70, of Wahpeton, passed away unexpectedly on Sunday, May 18, 2025. She was born on December 13, 1954, in Breckenridge, MN, to Robert and Eldora (Eckley) Schreiber.

Cindy was raised on a farm near Foxhome, MN, and attended Campbell Public Schools. She played drums in the band, was a cheerleader for the Campbell Camels, and a member of the homecoming court. She was also active in the Wilkin County "Riverside Rockets" 4-H Club and a card-carrying member of the National High School Rodeo Association. From a young age, Cindy had a deep love for animals especially horses and dogs. She spent much of her free time in the barn, caring for her animals with patience and pride, and was the only one of the four Schreiber siblings allowed to bring pets into the house something she wore as a badge of honor.

After graduating from Campbell High School, Cindy earned a degree in Speech and Language Pathology from Moorhead State University and taught primarily in public schools across Minnesota. In 1982, she married Gerry Beck, and together they founded Tri-State Aviation in Wahpeton, ND. Under their leadership, the company became an industry innovator perfecting the Super-Boom and developing the first EPA-approved taxi-through loading facility. In 1985, Cindy and Gerry welcomed their daughter, Whitney, and soon became devoted supporters of Wahpeton activities and athletics especially Three Rivers Gymnastics and the high school gymnastics team. Through years of meets and practices, they built lasting friendships with fellow gym parents relationships that extended well beyond Whitney's time in the gym and remained deeply meaningful throughout Cindy's life.

Following Gerry's passing in 2007, Cindy showed incredible strength and resilience, continuing to lead Tri-State Aviation and successfully transitioning the business to new ownership in 2017, ensuring its legacy for future generations.

Beyond her entrepreneurial spirit, Cindy was a steadfast advocate for agricultural aviation. For nearly four decades, she served as Executive Director of the North Dakota Agricultural Aviation Association (NDAAA), tirelessly promoting the industry at both the state and national levels. Whether convening with policymakers or organizing key conferences, her leadership was invaluable especially during challenging times such as the aviation shutdown following September 11, 2001.

Cindy was also a passionate advocate for education in North Dakota. She believed deeply in the power of education to shape communities and open doors, particularly in rural areas. As a legislator and community leader, she championed policies to support teachers, expand access to resources, and improve outcomes for students. Her dedication to strengthening public education was evident in her work on the House Education Committee, where she consistently pushed for thoughtful, future-focused solutions to benefit students across the state.

Her influence extended further through her service as a commissioner on the North Dakota Aeronautics Commission and her active roles in the National Agricultural Aviation Association and Women of the NAAA. She was committed to educating the next generation about agricultural aviation, earning the Most Active Woman Award from NAAA in 1989 for her exemplary efforts.

From 1997 to 2022, Cindy served as a commissioner on the North Dakota Aeronautics Commission, where her expertise helped shape aviation policy across the state. In 2013, she was a member of the Governor's task force that successfully advocated for North Dakota to become one of the nation's Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) test sites.

Beginning in 2015, Cindy proudly represented her community in the North Dakota House of Representatives, serving on the Education and Agriculture Committees. Her legislative work remained focused on aviation, innovation, agriculture, and education ensuring her values continued to guide state policy.

In 2019, Cindy embraced a new challenge at Ellingson Companies, stepping into a sales role with the same drive and dedication that had always defined her. Even while serving in office, she didn't miss a beat quickly earning the trust of clients and making a meaningful impact across the region. With her deep understanding of agriculture and infrastructure, she guided farmers through complex systems affecting their land. As a legislator, she championed reforms to North Dakota's drainage laws, advocating for smarter water solutions that improved farmers' lives while protecting the land for future generations. Through it all, she remained focused on what mattered most serving her community and strengthening the industries that keep North Dakota thriving.

### The Cindy Schreiber-Beck Scholarship

*Cindy's unwavering dedication to aviation and her community earned her a well-deserved place in the North Dakota Aviation Hall of Fame. In honor of her enduring legacy, the Cindy Schreiber-Beck Memorial Scholarship has been established through the North Dakota Community Foundation. This endowed fund will provide scholarships to support future leaders in aviation, agriculture, and public service fields that defined Cindy's life and work.*

**To contribute to the scholarship fund, click or scan this QR code.**

**To watch Cindy's Hall of Fame video, click or scan this QR code.**



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# Open Skies, Open Doors: The Heart of Airport Growth Cont.

Outreach and awareness also help clear up common misunderstandings. Concerns about security, safety, or usability often come from a lack of information. Security fences and gates feel restrictive and can portray an unwelcome feeling. By inviting the community in, this highlights the airport as a public space; open for everyone to come and experience the great world of aviation. When aviation accidents circulate as big news events, the public often question how safe aircraft and airports are. Attending a fly-in, hearing the radio chatter, and watching aircraft in the pattern can ease those hesitations and restore confidence in our pilots and their skills.

On top of this, outreach provides a space for two-way communication. Listening to community input, even informally at an event or over a cup of coffee during an airfield tour, can reveal valuable perspectives and foster stronger support for airport initiatives. When people feel heard and informed, they're far more likely to back airport growth or improvements.



*Fifth grade students from across North Dakota view aircraft, airport equipment, and learn about aviation at the 2023 Bismarck Aero Center Career Day.*

At the end of the day, airports that prioritize outreach and public education don't just raise awareness—they build allies. A connected, informed community is more likely to advocate for its airport, and that kind of support can make all the difference when it really counts.

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# ND Aeronautics Commission Awards $81.6 Million for Airport Infrastructure Grants

The North Dakota Aeronautics Commission has finalized and approved $81.6 million in state infrastructure grant allocations for public airports across North Dakota. These investments will support critical maintenance and development projects at both commercial service and general aviation airports, enhancing the safety, efficiency, and long-term viability of the state's aviation network.

These investments also come at a time where the state has seen thirteen consecutive months of record-breaking airline passenger records.

These state grants also serve to match and leverage significant federal funding that has been made available through programs such as the Airport Infrastructure Program (AIP), Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act - Airport Infrastructure Grants (AIG), and the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act - Airport Terminal Program (ATP).

"This funding demonstrates North Dakota's ongoing commitment to maintaining a strong and resilient aviation system that serves our businesses, citizens, and visitors," said Kyle Wanner, Director of the North Dakota Aeronautics Commission. "By strategically aligning state and federal resources, we are helping communities address critical infrastructure needs while also planning for future growth. These investments will enhance safety, expand economic opportunities, and ensure that our airports remain vital gateways for commerce and connectivity—both today and for generations to come."

Of the total allocation, $78.1 million will support major infrastructure projects at North Dakota's commercial service airports, while $3.5 million has been awarded for projects at general aviation airports. In total, 182 individual projects at 61 public-use airports have received funding in this state grant round.

"This marks a historic moment for North Dakota's aviation system. With deep gratitude to our dedicated aeronautics staff, airport managers, state legislators, and governors—both Governor Burgum and Governor Armstrong—we celebrate the strength of our public-use airports through the award of $81.6 million in infrastructure grants. These investments position our state to support continued growth in air cargo, agricultural aviation, pilot training, emergency services, and commercial air travel. By strategically



leveraging state funds with federal allocations from the FAA, we are committed to enhancing airport facilities that serve the citizens of North Dakota. Thank you to everyone who continues to champion aviation across our great state," stated Kim Kenville, Chair of the North Dakota Aeronautics Commission.

### Major Funding Sources

$70.3 million comes from a direct appropriation of Strategic Investment and Improvements Fund (SIIF) dollars through Senate Bill 2006 which was approved by the 69th Legislative Assembly and signed into law by Governor Armstrong. These funds are being directed toward generational airport projects at the Fargo, Grand Forks, and Dickinson airports.

$5.9 million is provided through the Airport Infrastructure Fund, created under the

2019 "Operation Prairie Dog" legislation which utilizes oil and gas tax revenues to support the long-term development and maintenance of North Dakota's 89 public-use airports.

$5.4 million is drawn from the Aeronautics Commission's Special Fund, which is primarily supported by state aviation fuel and aircraft sales tax revenues.

### Highlights of Commercial Service Airport Projects:

- Expansion of the commercial terminal at the Fargo – Hector International Airport
- New commercial terminal construction at the Dickinson – Theodore Roosevelt Regional Airport
- Primary runway reconstruction at the Grand Forks International Airport
- Taxiway reconstruction at the Bismarck Municipal Airport
- Installation of airfield utilities at the Minot International Airport

### Highlights of General Aviation Airport Projects:

- Primary Runway rehabilitations at the Cavalier, Cooperstown, and Standing Rock Municipal Airports
- Pavement seal coats at the Cando, Hettinger, Hazen, West Fargo, and Tioga Municipal Airports
- Taxiway construction at the Langdon and Washurn Municipal Airports
- Drainage improvements at the Mohall Municipal Airport
- Terminal building construction at the Northwood Municipal Airport
- Apron construction at the Stanley Municipal Airport
- Taxiway lighting installation at the Wahpeton Municipal Airport
- FAA weather camera installations at the Casselton, Cavalier, Kindred, Maddock, Mayville, Rugby, and Valley City Municipal Airports
- Fuel system construction at the Ashley Municipal Airport

These grant awards reflect the state's commitment to maintaining a safe, reliable, and modern aviation system that supports both local communities and North Dakota's role in the worldwide economy. A full listing of all of the airport grants and dollar amounts can also be found in the news section on the North Dakota Aeronautics Commission website.



*The ND Aeronautics Commission held it's annual public grant meeting on June 5th in the Bismarck Airport commercial terminal. Pictured above are members of the Aeronautics Commission, staff members, and commercial service airport managers who were in attendance at the meeting.*




*Aritcle and photos by Senior Airman Kendra A. Ransum.*
*Reprinted with permission from the Minot Air Force Base*
*5th Bomb Wing Public Affairs*

# 93-year-old retired veteran pilot revisits the B-52

Nearly six decades after his last flight, retired U.S. Air Force Maj. Gary Lee stood on the flightline at Minot Air Force Base, marshaling in the modern iteration of the aircraft he once piloted: the B-52 Stratofortress.

Lee, 93, traveled from his home in South Carolina to visit Minot AFB on June 2025, to reconnect with the legendary bomber he flew during his two-decade career in the U.S. Air Force, which spanned from 1955 to 1975. Over the course of that time, he piloted several variants of strategic bombers, including the B-47 and B-52D, E and F models.

"The last time I flew was the summer of 1967," Lee said. "Back then, I was flying as an aircraft commander, we had a lot of deployments. We once had 18 airplanes and 18 crews on alert 24/7 for one Bomb Wing. It was kind of hectic."

During his visit, Lee was given a guided tour to see the base's B-52H aircraft, the current model operated by the 5th Bomb Wing. For the veteran pilot, the experience was both nostalgic and enlightening.

Lee's early career began with the B-47 Stratojet as a copilot, where promotion opportunities were limited due to the presence of seasoned World War II veterans who dominated the ranks of Strategic Air Command.

"It was hard to get upgraded in those days," Lee recalled. "But at the Bomb Wing I was in, they finally got one quota to upgrade, and they gave that to me. I thought, 'Wow. I didn't know the wing commander liked me that much.'"

Even in his copilot days, Lee juggled several roles. "I was also the [electronic countermeasure] operator, the tail gunner and the assistant navigator. Every now and then, they let me land an airplane, and I'd take it."

Ultimately, it was the B-52 that became his favorite to fly. When the B-47s were phased out, Lee was one of the select few in his Wing chosen to transition to the newer bombers. That legacy still soars today, as the B-52 continues to evolve with modern upgrades while remaining the backbone of America's long-range bomber fleet.

"I'm very pleased I came," he said. "I found out a little bit about the B-52H model that I didn't know and it was all positive. I'd do it again, mainly because I'm back on an Air Force base with Air Force people and they haven't changed in the last 50 years, which is wonderful to know. It resumes my faith in my fellow man."



*Gary Lee, a retired U.S. Air Force pilot, poses for a photo in front of a B-52H Stratofortress at Minot Air Force Base, North Dakota.*



*Gary Lee (right), marshals in a B-52H Stratofortress at Minot Air Force Base, North Dakota.*



*Gary Lee watches a B-52H Stratofortress fly over Minot Air Force Base, North Dakota*



*Gary Lee poses for a photo with aircrew from the 69th Bomb Squadron in front of a B-52H Stratofortress at Minot Air Force Base, North Dakota.*

# 2025 North Dakota Legislative Session = Success for North Dakota Airports

*By Ryan Riesinger*

*President, Airport Association of North Dakota | Executive Director, Grand Forks Regional Airport Authority*

When we entered the 2025 North Dakota State Legislative Session the Airport Association of North Dakota had a high priority goal of securing funding for three "generational" projects in Dickinson, Fargo, and Grand Forks, and in so doing, freeing up the $20 million of prairie dog funding for other airport projects throughout the State. I'm here to report that the legislative session was a great success on these fronts, and more!

Throughout 2024, the team met with Governor Burgum's staff, then Governor-elect Armstrong, and leadership from both the State Senate and House. These efforts led to the full request of $120 million being included in the Governor's Budget. While this was great news, our work had just begun.

During the session, largely due to the groundwork done previously, we found we had advocates in the legislature working on our behalf, getting the word out to other committee members, and becoming champions for our projects. After years of making the case that airports are important infrastructure for our State, it was certainly a very welcome sight to see.

At the very end of the session, we were ultimately able to secure $90 million in funding for the three generational projects, with $25 million to Dickinson (plus $4.2 million for debt relief), $45 million to Fargo, and $20 million to Grand Forks – this is an all-time record allocation for airports in a legislative session! It was a great team effort that has created the template for future legislative strategy.

In addition to funding the generational projects, SB 2323 creates a new fund to allocate part of the oil tax revenues to Williston, Dickinson, and Minot for debt relief on infrastructure from the last oil boom, including the major airport projects in Minot and Williston. Further, lawmakers removed $430 million in funding from buckets that were positioned ahead of the Airport Infrastructure Fund – including the elimination of the $400 million Strategic Investment and Improvement Fund (SIIF) bucket that previously proceeded it. All of these were significant wins for airports.

Special thanks to all of our legislators who gave such great support during the session!



# North Dakota teacher named 2025 A. Scott Crossfield Aerospace Educator of the Year



The National Aviation Hall of Fame (NAHF) is proud to announce that Thomas M. Sando, aviation instructor at Williston High School and the Williston Basin CTE Center in Williston, North Dakota, has been selected as this year's A. Scott Crossfield Aerospace Educator of the Year.

Sando has developed a dynamic classroom that includes hands-on projects, field trips to industry-leading facilities, and mentorship that guides students toward careers in aviation. For example, his creation of a rotating module that can be used across schools in the Williston region has expanded aerospace education access, engaging students from multiple school districts. His grant applications have led to many awards, including an $80,000 award from the Robert E. Herman Foundation. He also has organized educational field trips to the University of North Dakota's aviation program, the Grand Forks air traffic control tower, and the Cirrus Aircraft Factory.

Supporting workforce development, Sando has taken students to the Fly-ND Career Expo and worked over 35 hours at the Pilot Proficiency Center at AirVenture Oshkosh.

"Thomas has transformed aerospace education within our community," writes his nominator and colleague Katie Brew, "sparking a passion for STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) and aviation careers in students across northwest North Dakota. Thomas's innovative approach to aerospace education is evident in every aspect of his program."

Says Sando, "Aerospace education is more than a subject. It is a gateway to curiosity, innovation, and opportunity. Watching my students grow, develop new skills, and pursue their dreams is the most rewarding aspect of my work. I am proud to contribute to shaping the next generation of aviation professionals and to share my passion for this dynamic field with students, colleagues, and the community."

Sando will be honored at the President's Reception on September 18, 2025, as part of the NAHF 61st Enshrinement Dinner and Ceremony in Wichita, Kansas.







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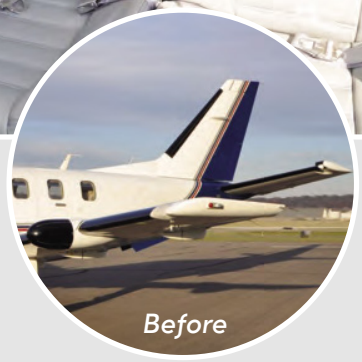













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# CALENDAR of EVENTS

*Check out the online calendar for details on these events: aero.nd.gov/events*

### August 2025

**Stanley Fly-IN**
AUG 02 | 16:00-21:00 | Stanley Airport (08D)
**Kindred Fly-In & Drive In**
AUG 09 | 07:00-10:00 | Kindred Airport (K74)
**Kulm Airport Fly-In**
AUG 09 | 07:00-10:00 | Kulm Airport (D03)
**Plane Pull & Fly-In Movie**
AUG 16 | 10:00-14:00 | XWA Overland Aviation

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### September 2025

**Harvey Annual Fly-In**
SEP 13 | 08:00-11:00 | Harvey (5H4)
**Enderling Sunfest Fly-In Breakfast**
SEP 21 | 08:00-12:00 | Enderlin Airport (5N4)

### October 2025

**Props & Hops Fundraiser**
OCT 02 | 18:30-21:00 | Mandan Aero Center (Y19)
**Fly-ND Career Expo**
OCT 09 | Minot, ND
**UAS Summit & Expo**
OCT 14-15 | Grand Forks, ND