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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Yellowstone Airport sees 15 % increase in travelers

WEST YELLOWSTONE, MT — Yellowstone Airport at West Yellowstone, Montana has seen a 6.9 percent increase in travelers during the summer season with a 15 percent increase during the month of July. Last month, 1,338 people boarded flights at Yellowstone Airport, compared with 1,163 during July 2009.

"Utilization of available seats for revenue passengers on all flights in July are running at 87 percent," said airport manager, Tony Bean. The planes are not filled to capacity as each flight has an average of four seats that cannot be used because of considerations for altitude, heat, weather, and the performance characteristics of the Embraer Brasilia planes that service the airport.

Bean said that several factors —including an increased flow of visitors into Yellowstone National Park and a new airport marketing program— helped the numbers jump this summer. "We hope this pace continues through the fall," said Bean.

Yellowstone Airport offers the closest access to Yellowstone National Park, Big Sky, the Gallatin River Corridor, Ennis and Virginia City, and Island Park. SkyWest Airlines serves the region with three daily commercial flights via Salt Lake City from May 1 until mid-November when the airport shuts down due to weather conditions.

The airport offers rental cars and ground transportation, a full-service Fixed Base of Operation (FBO) with both general aviation and jet fueling services, and food service. The facility is owned and operated by the Montana Department of Transportation, Aeronautics Division. The International Air Transport Association (IATA) code for the airport is WYS.

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