

MarkAir cuts rural service

MarkAir cut service to a number of rural Alaska communities last week, and spokesmen attributed the schedule changes to escalating jet fuel prices.

The decrease in scheduled flights will reduce the number of flying hours and conserve fuel for the airline, according to MarkAir spokesmen. The move is designed to modify increases

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in passenger fares and freight rates caused by rising fuel costs.

"We have taken a hard look at our schedule and tried to adjust it in a way that causes the least amount of impact on our customers and does not reduce our quality of service," said MarkAir President Michael Cerkovnik.

The new schedule means one less flight per week into Barrow, Fairbanks, Prudhoe Bay, St. Mary's, Aniak, Unalakleet, Sand Point and Port Heiden. Service to Galena has decreased to three flights and McGrath to four flights a week.

The Kodiak schedule decreases from five to four flights per day, Monday through Saturday, and three flights on Sunday.

Although the price of crude oil has fluctuated downward in recent weeks, there has been no significant decrease in jet fuel prices, according to MarkAir.