

# State gets federal money for airport improvements

by David Totten  
*Tundra* **TIMES**

The federal Department of Transportation granted \$14 million to the state to improve airports around Alaska.

Governor Tony Knowles announced a \$6 million grant for improvements on airports in the Lower Yukon on August 13. Six days later, \$8 million more arrived for more improvements.

"Airports and seaplane facilities are vital links in Alaska's transportation system," said Knowles, in a written statement. "These improvement projects will help assist families of the lower Yukon and southern Southeast and the regional economies they depend on."

The Transportation Department funds airport improvements through a federal levy on airplane tickets.

The money will fund more than a dozen projects around the state.

Ketchikan will use its \$3.6 million to repair its seaplane dock. The new dock will include an access bridge for pedestrians and vehicles and a seaplane haul-out. Work on the project will begin next month.

The Airport on St. George will use \$1 million to fill in a lake on the end of the runway, to discourage birds from roosting at the airport (see related story).

Nelson Lagoon on the Alaska Peninsula will extend its runway, taxiway and apron, as well as purchase new snow

removal equipment and an equipment building. The Nelson Lagoon project will cost \$2.4 million.

Nulato will spend \$1 million to counter an ongoing erosion problem.

Fort Yukon, Kaltag, St. Michael and Galbraith Lake will all acquire land for new airports.

Kake in Southeast Alaska will spend \$550,000 to clear obstructions at the end of runway 28 and install a precision-approach-path indicator.

The airport near Pilot Station on the Yukon River will get \$400,000 to add lights to the runway. The lights will make the airport more reliable during the winter. The airport will also buy land for

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future expansion. Pilot Station hopes to have the new facility in place by November. The airport is the only year-round transportation for the village of 532 people. St. Mary's will also add lights to its runway.

Several Yukon River villages will share a \$732,000 grant to rehabilitate storage buildings for snow removal equipment. Alakanuk, Anvik, Emmonak, Mountain Village, Pilot Station and Russian Mission will all add insulation and heating to their storage buildings to extend the life of the equipment. Another grant for \$530,000 will go to various other communities to replace snow removal equipment.

A study of future airport improvement projects will receive \$600,000 and various other Alaska communities will share \$500,000 for other projects.