



Photo by Kenji Sugahara, Director of Oregon Department of Aviation

POTB Receives Congressional Funding To Replace Automated Weather Observing System

The Port of Tillamook Bay (POTB) was the recent recipient of congressional funding to replace its Automated Weather Observing Station (AWOS) at Tillamook Airport. The AWOS is a fully configurable airport weather system that provides continuous, real-time information and reports on airport weather conditions. Data transmitted by the AWOS includes rainfall, wind direction and speed, temperature, dew point, density altitude, visibility, and runway surface conditions among other things.

“It’s a critical piece of infrastructure for pilot safety coming into Tillamook Airport, as well as weather data reporting,” said Port of Tillamook Bay General Manager Michele Bradley. “However, it was getting extremely outdated and parts were becoming hard to find.”

Bradley said the Port was still a few years out from receiving funding through the FAA to update the system, but was concerned the equipment would hold up, so the Port decided to shift gears and apply for federal funding to replace the system instead.



In order from left to right: Geoff Vaughn (Precision Approach Engineering), Kenji Sugahara (Director of Oregon Department of Aviation), Betsy Emery (Senator Merkley's Staff), Michele Bradley (General Manager of The Port of Tillamook Bay), and Alex Thomas (Program Director of Oregon Department of Aviation)

The Port applied for, and was granted, federal funding for an in-place replacement with an FAA-approved AWOS, thanks in great part to Senators Jeff Merkley and Ron Wyden.

“Collecting continuous, real-time information about atmospheric changes and current weather conditions is crucial to ensure communities are safe,” said Senator Jeff Merkley, a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee that helped secure \$500,000 to replace this system. “This new Automated Weather Observing System will help to ensure safe aviation and real-time notifications of impending weather events.”

“The Port was thrilled to get this project going and for the assistance of both Senator Merkley’s and Wyden’s staff,” Bradley added. “Their help was invaluable in the application process. We are always looking to improve our regional airport, and the AWOS project will assist with airport growth and development.”

“The new weather observation system at the Tillamook Airport will help keep Oregon Coast residents and visitors safe,” U.S. Senator Ron Wyden said. “State-of-the-art weather monitoring is a must to protect our coastal communities, and I’m gratified this \$500,000 federal investment I fought for will support this essential piece of infrastructure.”

Project match funding was provided through a grant from the Oregon Department of Aviation’s (ODAV) Critical Oregon Airport Relief program. ODAV Director Kenji Sugahara notes that “installing the AWOS system at Tillamook Airport significantly enhances safety by providing real-time, accurate weather information. This is an investment in our shared skies and the spirit of Oregon aviation.”

To ensure there wasn’t any lag in AWOS data, the FAA approved a new site location for the upgraded system, allowing the old system to be decommissioned after the new one was already set up and running.

Precision Approach Engineering assisted with the environmental and engineering processes and managed the construction of the new AWOS. Kunert Electric, LLC installed the new equipment.

More information about the Tillamook Airport can be found at www.potb.org.