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Comments: I've worked as an Aviation Planner and Engineer for the past 20 years in Alaska providing expert guidance on airport related projects while employed by the Federal Aviation Administration, Airports Division, funded by the Airport Improvement Program (AIP)... and recently retired! During my Federal career, I've issued more than 2,000 airspace determinations, and signed hundreds of favorable determination letters for new airports. In addition, I've worked with Denali National Park & Preserve, Wrangell St. Elias National Park & Preserve, and other National Parks in Alaska creating safe access within these public domains for the public and land managers. The resource managers recognize their staff also use these facilities. Within the past 10-15 years, these land managers now recognize the importance of airports (portals) and the role they play within their jurisdiction.

I personally use some of the airports in Alaska, lands managed by the Federal Government for recreation. I'll land on gravel bars, mountain tops, or airports with cabins or other improvements for an overnight stay. Or, perhaps I'll go for a hike, run on a goat trails, or stop and admire the surrounding beauty. I've also used these landing facilities for weather divers, or a place to stay on the way to a work meeting.

These aviation assets are important to the community, so important that individuals and organizations volunteer their resources and time to maintain runways, to include rock tossing, brush cutting, tree removal, filling in ditches, setting tie-downs, etc. to create safe, reliable access for all to enjoy.

Maintaining these transportation infrastructure investments is a vital asset for the Custer Gallatin National Forest. In addition to recreation, these airports will be used for resource management, Public Safety, emergencies, firefighting, and a portal to access the area if ground transportation is not an option.

Information about airport design can be found in Advisory Circular 150/5300-13, Airport Design. I've used this document as a resource for runways well less than 1,000 feet long, and all the way up to runways that exceed 12,000 feet. In addition, local aviation groups can be a great resource for understanding what attributes are important for an aviation facility.

Please consider including airports as one of several transportation and recreation alternatives, for the public and you as a resource manager.