



## PIERCE COUNTY

Office of the County Council

Office of the County Executive



October 11, 2022

David Fleckenstein  
Commercial Aviation Coordinating Commission Chair  
Washington State Department of Transportation

Re: Airport Site Selection Study - Greenfield Site Evaluation

Dear Chair Fleckenstein,

Pierce County is writing to express its strong objection to the inclusion of greenfield sites Pierce County Central and Pierce County East on the short list of new primary airport locations. Development of either of these greenfield sites faces significant infrastructure and environmental barriers, as well as other challenges, and Pierce County requests that these sites be eliminated from further consideration.

Both greenfield sites are in the rural area, approximately five miles outside Pierce County's Urban Growth Area, and do not have the infrastructure capable of supporting an airport. For 30 years Pierce County has complied with the requirements of the Growth Management Act and limited its infrastructure investments primarily to the Urban Growth Area consistent with state law. The transportation, sewer, and water infrastructure necessary to support the contemplated airport simply does not exist and there are no plans to provide this infrastructure in the future. Both sites are also outside the boundaries of the Public Transportation Benefit Area and no transit service is available or planned for the sites. Providing the required infrastructure is likely cost prohibitive and brings with it concerns regarding development and growth outside the Urban Growth Area.

The two greenfield sites also face serious environmental challenges. For example, both sites sit on top of the Central Pierce County Aquifer and are critical aquifer recharge areas. This aquifer is the main source of drinking water for many Pierce County communities. Both sites are also in the Nisqually River Watershed and WRIA 11 with both the Mashel River and Muck Creek providing critical salmon habitats. Locating the proposed facilities in these areas has the potential to adversely affect aquifer recharge and to generate pollutants that could compromise groundwater quality. The proposed use also has the potential to generate pollutants that could adversely affect local salmon populations including those with a federal status of "threatened". Other serious environmental challenges with both sites also exist.

Given the challenges inherent with either Pierce County Central or Pierce County East sites, we respectfully request that both sites be removed from further consideration as locations for a future primary airport.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Derek Young".

Derek Young  
Pierce County Council Chair

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Bruce Dammeier".

Bruce Dammeier  
Pierce County Executive



Dave Morell  
Councilmember, District 1



Paul Herrera  
Councilmember, District 2



Amy Cruver  
Councilmember, District 3



Ryan Mello  
Councilmember, District 4



Marty Campbell  
Councilmember, District 5



Jani Hitchen  
Councilmember, District 6