

Date: March 16, 2005

Re: Environmental Assessment – Lincoln Airport Special Use Permit

Dear Interested Individual:

The Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Lincoln Airport Special Use Permit Application has been completed and is available for public review and comment. The project is located on the Lincoln Ranger District, Helena National Forest. The project area is located one mile east of Lincoln, Montana in Lewis and Clark County, Northeast 1/4 of Section 19, Township 14 North, Range 8 West.

The Montana Department of Transportation has applied for a Special Use Permit to authorize the continued use of National Forest land for the operation of the Lincoln Airport. The proposed action is for the Helena National Forest to issue a Special Use Permit to the Montana Department of Transportation for the continued authorized use of National Forest lands for the operation of the Lincoln Airport. The Special Use Permit would be established for a period of thirty (30) years, expiring in the year 2035. A total of 39.63 acres of National Forest land would be authorized under the new Special Use Permit, an increase of 14.06 acres from the 25.57 acres included on special use permits to date. The permit would provide the Montana Department of Transportation the authorized use of National Forest land required for construction of improvements at Lincoln Airport and to allow for the continued operation of the airport facility at the existing location. This authorized use of land is needed to allow the Sponsor to bring the existing facility into compliance with current FAA standards for airport design, remove objects affecting navigable airspace, and upgrade facilities to safely accommodate small aircraft. An environmental analysis was completed in 2004 for the improvement activities; this EA analyzes the authorization of the special use permit application.

The Responsible Official is Amber Kamps, District Ranger, Lincoln Ranger District; office phone number (406) 362-4265; office fax number (406) 362-4253; address 1569 Highway 200, Lincoln, MT 59639 and office business hours 8:00 am to 4:30pm Monday through Friday, excluding holidays; email [akamps@fs.fed.us](mailto:akamps@fs.fed.us).

The Responsible Official will consider all public comments before making a decision. In submitting substantive comments, please provide specific facts along with supporting reasons you believe should be considered by the Responsible Official in reaching a decision. Comments received in response to this solicitation, including names and addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record and will be available as part of the project record.

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The EA is available for review at the Lincoln Ranger Station, 1569 Highway 200, Lincoln; Stelling Engineers, Inc., 614 Park Drive South, Great Falls; and the Montana Department of Transportation, Aeronautics Division, 2630 Airport Road, Helena. Electronic copies of the EA can be viewed at [www.stellinginc.com](http://www.stellinginc.com). Additional information regarding this action can be obtained from: Stelling Engineers, Inc., (406) 452-8600, [mail@stellinginc.com](mailto:mail@stellinginc.com). The purpose of this comment period is to provide an opportunity for the public to provide early and meaningful participation on a proposed action prior to a decision being made by the Responsible Official.

To be most effective, please provide comments specific to the proposed action. Comments may be submitted in writing, orally, or through electronic means. In order to retain your administrative appeal rights, you must provide timely substantive written, oral, or electronic comments during the 30-day comment period. Each individual or representative from each organization submitting substantive comments must either sign the comments or verify identity upon request.

Written comments must be postmarked by the Postal Service, e-mailed, faxed or otherwise submitted by 11:59 pm on the 30<sup>th</sup> calendar day following publication of the legal notice to the Special Use Applicant's Project Consultant. Comments can also be faxed to (406) 452-8700.

You may send or deliver comments to the Special Use Applicants Project Consultant:

Jeff Walla, P.E.  
Stelling Engineers, Inc.  
614 Park Drive South  
Great Falls, MT 59405  
Business Hours: 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM; Monday through Friday, except holidays.

Oral comments must be provided at the Special Use Applicant's Project Consultant's office during normal business hours via telephone (406) 452-8600 or in person, or at the scheduled Public Meeting that is designed to elicit public comments. The Public meeting will be held at 7:00 PM on Thursday, March 24, 2005 at the Lincoln Community Hall, 404 Main Street (Highway 200), Lincoln.

Electronic comments must be submitted in a format such as an email message, plain text (.txt), rich text format (.rtf), and Word (.doc) to [mail@stellinginc.com](mailto:mail@stellinginc.com). Comments must have an identifiable name attached or verification of identity will be required. A scanned signature may serve as verification on electronic comments.

If you have questions or wish to discuss any aspects of this proposal, you may contact me at (406) 452-8600. You may also write to me at the address provided above.

Thank you for your interest in this project.

Sincerely,

Jeff Walla, P.E.

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Stelling Engineers, Inc.