

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Yampa Valley Regional Airport Reports Record Breaking Winter Flight Season

STEAMBOAT SPRINGS, CO, March 25, 2022 — Yampa Valley Regional Airport is coming up on the end of the Winter Flight Season and reporting the highest number of travelers ever. December through February numbers are 200,241 passengers versus the previous high in 2007 of 154,960 passengers, a 29% increase.

Between mid-December and the end of March, YVRA hosts Winter Flight Season air service from six major airlines: United, Southwest, American, Delta, JetBlue and Alaska Airlines (listed in order of number passengers carried) and provides non-stop flights to 14 cities and 16 airports. Outside the Winter Flight Season, between April and mid-December YVRA has daily air service from United and Southwest Airlines to Denver.

“I used to get nervous when I saw we were nearing 3000 people coming through the airport in one day. Now, it’s not uncommon to see 5000 on a Saturday or a Sunday.” Says Kevin Booth, director of the Yampa Valley Regional Airport.

Booth reported in mid-January that they were seeing record breaking numbers, only to have that record broken each week for the next several weeks. These increased numbers have been accommodated with minimal changes to the terminal, however, there are numerous projects in the works between April and November of 2022.

- Aircraft de-ice project which will double de-ice capacity and speed commercial aircraft turn times
- Terminal Area Plan to outline detailed plans for terminal expansion and optimized terminal area operations
- General Aviation Development Plan to facilitate airport development in support of increased general aviation demand for hangars
- Construct a new employee parking lot to expand capacity for passenger long-term parking
- Construct rental car carwash and overflow parking lots (3 ea.) to improve rental car turn times and availability

Increased numbers can also mean increased challenges. Like many Yampa Valley employers, YVRA faced significant challenges with staffing; while passenger counts increased the demand for all airport related services. Food service, janitorial and ground transportation were all restricted by staffing shortfalls; efforts to work around the shortfalls were initiated in-season and will continue post-season.

Ground transportation was especially challenging this season and YVRA continues to work closely with all of the ground transportation providers to meet the increased demand for transportation between YVRA and Steamboat Springs. Unlike larger/metro-area airports YVRA does not have access to robust taxi, Uber and Lyft

services; instead passengers rely on shuttle bus services and for hire operators who work primarily from pre-arranged bookings.

Booth complements the staff on meeting these challenges, “I’m extremely proud of the YVRA staff and all of the airport tenant staffs; they performed exceptionally well in the face of these challenges.”

A recent challenge turned into a three-day event, inconveniencing an estimated 100 passengers. YVRA received handwritten notes of thanks and praise from more than 20 travelers that were part of that ordeal.

“Dear HDN Staff – Thank you for going above and beyond to ease the stress we experienced. We appreciate you.”

“Thank you all so much! I know it was difficult at times – but I sincerely appreciate ALL EVERYONE DID to make our situation more tolerable. God Bless all of you – HUGS”

“Thank you! We are very grateful for the staff and the town of Steamboat Springs to help make sure that we had transportation, accommodations and food – making sure this happened as well as organizing it. You all worked tirelessly to make sure we weren’t stranded with nowhere to go. We appreciate the hospitality greatly!”

Some notes even mentioned people by name: “John the policeman you are a gem. You got off your shift and did diaper runs for crying families and offered to help us adults with anything to help. And the ladies working the restaurant you are super. If it wasn’t for the airport staff and the police I don’t know how we’d get through it. I hope Delta recognizes your efforts!!”

Booth said, “It was great to hear positive feedback from this group. The notes provided a real boost for our whole staff.” Booth looks forward to the end of season BBQ where he can acknowledge and celebrate the YVRA employees and their hard work.

Yampa Valley Regional Airport is the transportation heartbeat of the Yampa Valley and the gateway of choice to Northwest Colorado. flySteamboat!

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