AERONAUTICS BULLETIN

THE STATE OF MINNESOTA PROVIDES THIS TECHNICAL BULLETIN
IN THE INTEREST OF AVIATION SAFETY AND TO PROMOTE
AERONAUTICAL PROGRESS IN THE STATE AND THE NATION

Jay Hietpas, Interim Director Dan McDowell, Editor

OFFICE OF AERONAUTICS, ST. PAUL, MN 55107-1618
(651) 234-7182, TOLL FREE (800) 657-3922

www.mndot.gov

Business aircraft photos by Gary Chambers-UWP

By Dan McDowell

Most people have probably heard a joke about something being "the best kept secret" in the world. But does that "best kept secret" apply to your community's airport? If it does, then there is something you can do to change that fact and help your community learn about the importance and value of their airport!

First, the value of your airport should be clearly understood. Find out what it brings to your community, and who benefits by its presence. Know what it can mean directly and indirectly to your local, regional, and statewide economy. Learn how General Aviation (GA) and aviation in general provides benefits to every member of your community.

Your airport is essentially an open invitation to the world to visit your community. That provides the opportunity for increased local tourism, bringing in new businesses, economic growth and opportunities for improved services and culture within the community. It can mean increased job opportunities and a growing tax base that provides funds for local infrastructure improvements that may not have been previously possible in the immediate or near future.

In Minnesota, General Aviation has a $12.2 billion impact through the network of 135 publicly-owned GA airports. It provides more than $6.5 billion in labor income annually from 164,900 jobs within the state! But across the nation, GA contributes more than $150 billion to the national economy annually while also employing more than 1,265,000 people.

When pilots land at your airport, they often buy fuel and may need maintenance or other locally purchase services and flight products. They often buy food at local restaurants. They go to local tourist venues and shop in your community's mall and stores. They stay in local hotels and B&B's. They rent cars and buy supplies. The spend money in your community that would very likely not have come there if not for your airport. All the restaurants, shops, and hotels hire local people to staff their facility that tourists visit. This helps to provide for local economic growth and benefits everyone in the community.

Businesses from outside the community as well as from outside the state and even the nation are constantly seeking locations to improve their bottom line and access to their markets. They are looking for new locations that provide the best opportunities for them to develop, manufacture, and distribute new products and services.

Your community could very well be the one that any single, (or multiple), compa-

See WORD page 10

WORD

Continued from page 9

nies may find as the perfect site for them. That could bring new construction, new jobs that pay well, new products and services locally, as well as improved infrastructure and services throughout your community.

Business aviation as a fast growing part of GA is utilized by tens of thousands of companies across this Nation. They use GA because it provides a level of security, flexibility, efficiency and productivity that in most cases cannot be beaten or even matched by any other mode of transportation including the commercial airlines.

While spending more than $11 billion annually on scheduled air carrier flights, businesses are increasingly turning to GA to meet their travel demands. Currently, more than 85% of companies utilizing GA for business flying are successful small to mid-sized companies located throughout the country at or very near communities with active GA airports. They choose these locations for a variety of reasons including being closer to their suppliers and primary markets.

One of the main reasons they choose to be at or near an airport is because many of their markets have significantly reduced or no airline service at all. Therefore by being at or near a GA airport, they can utilize their aircraft quickly and efficiently to meet their customer's needs. It becomes and immediate win-win situation.

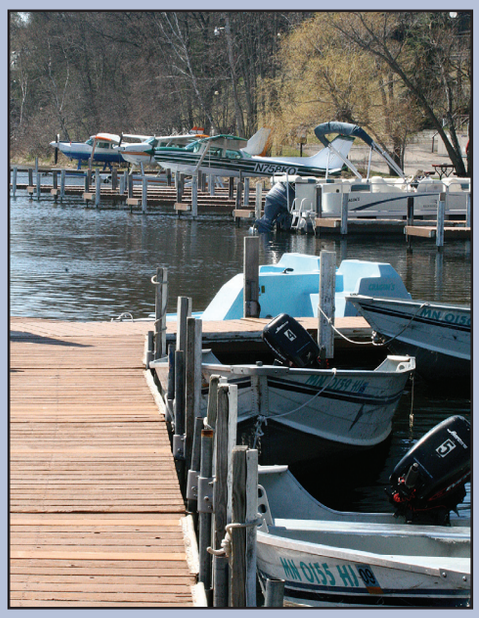
These businesses are competing in market places that demand efficiency, productivity, flexibility, and speed. Thus by utilizing business aviation at quality GA airports, businesses can reach multiple destinations in a single day. They can more effectively

See WORD, page 12

Seaplane pilot's perspective on preventing spread of invasive species

By Rachel Obermoller
AvRep / MnDot Office of Aeronautics

Recent years have brought about many changes for boaters in Minnesota with respect to preventing the spread of invasive species. While convincing the ducks, geese, and loons that use Minnesota lakes to change their practices might present challenges, seaplane pilots and other users play a role as well in preventing the spread of invasive species. From video clips of giant carp jumping out of rivers to new procedures to stop the spread of invasive species and restrictions on operations and usage, invasive species pose a real threat, and the implications of their spread have the potential to impact users of our lakes and rivers.



Some states have taken a tightly restrictive stance on seaplane operations to attempt to curb the spread of various non-native plants and animals. Other states are more permissive, yet that does not mean a risk does not exist for contamination. Seaplane pilots are a conscientious bunch, particularly when it comes to environmental issues and access to waterways in their aircraft. We enjoy relatively unrestricted access to usable waterways in Minnesota and many other Midwestern states. Through continued stewardship of these resources as well as responsible flying practices, seaplane pilots can help ensure this remains the case. So, what's a seaplane pilot to do when trying to prevent the spread of invasive species as well as undesirable species of plants and waterborne animals?

The first step for seaplane pilots is to know the waterways where you want to operate. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) maintains a website devoted to education about invasive species and preventing their advance throughout Minnesota as well as a list of known infested waterways. Know the lakes and rivers you will be using and whether they contain invasive species. Then, make decisions about whether you will use those bodies of water, and what precautions you will take. You can find these DNR resources at: http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/invasives/index_aquatic.html

The first choice when a waterway is infested with an invasive species is to avoid its use. If that option isn't realistic, there are other options available to prevent the spread of aquatic plants and animals. If your aircraft is of the amphibious variety, consider a brief stop at a land airport to clean off your floats and remove any evidence of contamination. You can also scrub your floats and any other areas of your aircraft that came into contact with water down with a handled brush you keep in the aircraft or your float compartment. This includes portions of the float or hull as well as water rudders and other components which lie at or below the water line. Even if you can't get the aircraft out of the water, doing this before you depart can loosen anything which might be attached and help prevent its transfer to other bodies of water. It should go without saying that when you pump your floats out, pump them into the body of water you have been using to prevent contamination between water bodies or pump them onto land where they will not drain into another water body.

Pilots should also remove any evidence of aquatic plants and animals attached to the floats or aircraft prior to departure. What about these items you might pick up between starting the engine and your takeoff run? One obvious measure is to avoid taxiing through areas where vegetation is present. Not only can weeds impair the use of water rudders, but in thick weeds, water rudders may lift out of the water and become significantly less effective. Avoid these areas whenever possible and cycle your rudders prior to departure to shed anything which might be attached. Once airborne, you can also lower and raise the water rudders while over the body of water you just departed to try to loosen and remove anything attached to them. If you are amphibious, you might consider cycling the gear as well, but make sure it goes back to the desired position.

As far as aircraft storage is concerned, the best storage option for minimizing the potential for transfer of undesired aquatic species is to store the aircraft on land. By removing it from the water, it is easier to find and remove anything attached to the aircraft. By allowing the aircraft to dry, items which require water to survive will in time die.

The DNR recommends removing or killing hard to see invasive species which might be harbored in or on boats by allowing them to dry at least five days on land before entering a new water body or spraying with hot, high pressure water. While this may not always be practical for the average seaplane, when possible do a thorough scrub of the floats, especially with hot or high pressure water. Allowing it to dry out of the water whenever possible, presents the best option for controlling invasive species.

Another decontamination method recommended by some to prevent the spread of invasive species involves using a bleach solution to kill anything which might be harbored inside of damp or wet float compartments. A five-part water to one-part bleach solution can be sprayed after any standing water has been removed to kill anything which might have taken up residence in your floats. YouTube also has a short yet comprehensive video about cleaning and decontaminating seaplanes, and can be found by searching for "Seaplane Inspection & Decontamination Training 2010" at www.youtube.com

Zebra mussels and milfoil are common names among those who use Minnesota's lakes and rivers, but the species the DNR watches for extends far beyond this and includes things like curly-leaf pondweed, spiny water flea, and multiple types of snails. The DNR website contains information about invasive species, how they are spread, what they look like and what to look for, and preventive measures. Knowledge is the first part of preventing the spread of invasive species.

The seaplane community has an important role to play in the stewardship of Minnesota's water resources. With some basic preventive measures and an eye towards preserving and protecting these resources, we can all help to maintain our lakes and rivers for future generations.

From the
Director's Desk

As the days get longer

The bitter cold and snowy conditions of January have given way to longer, warmer days and the promise of spring. We can already find spring and even summer clothes in the stores, and lawn mower ads on TV! Soon we'll be hearing the rumble of thunder and the hearty patter of spring rain.

Now is when many pilots who did not fly during the winter months will now begin getting ready to once again take to the air. I urge you to plan ahead and be sure to use your best safety practices, always, both on the ground and in the air.

I also want you to know that your Office of Aeronautics continues to work hard to help keep you informed and aware through our safety seminars, and technical bulletins. We also hold events with our aviation partners to help assure we are doing what we can to help make flying easier, better, and safer in Minnesota.

With that in mind, here are a few of our coming aviation learning/safety events:

- 2013 Minnesota Aviation Maintenance Technician's Conference - March 25 - 26, 2013
- 2013 Minnesota Airports Conference - April 17-19, 2013
- 2013 Minnesota Seaplane Pilot's Safety Seminar - May 3-5, 2013

Let's work together to make 2013 the safest year ever. Share your ideas, information and suggestions with us and each other. Plan well, before you fly. Stay alert when you fly. Have fun.

Enjoy the beauty of flight as we move toward spring and as the days get longer!

— Jay Hietpas
Interim Director, Office of Aeronautics

Word

Continued from page 9

and efficiently move personnel, equipment, parts and products quickly to a location just minutes away from where they are needed. This increases their speed of response to customers and also helps to provide a positive return for shareholders and the company's bottom line.

Today in the U.S., general aviation aircraft fly almost 24 million hours and carry 166 million passengers annually. Over two-thirds (or more than 16 million) of all the hours flown by general aviation aircraft are for business purposes. Businesses actively use GA because there are nearly 4,000 paved general aviation airports open to the public in the U.S. By contrast, scheduled air carriers serve fewer than 500 airports nationwide. It can be seen quite clearly why GA is so very important and valuable to businesses as well as to our communities.

A statement from the (Minnesota) Metropolitan Airports Commission website clearly recognizes the value of our airports as it reads, "Each airport is unique, but all provide valuable resources for the community, encouraging growth in commerce and jobs, providing green space and recreational opportunities, and boosting the local area economy."

Now is a great time to do your homework. Then make a plan and set goals to go out into your community and share the good news about the valuable asset your community's airport truly is. It's time to get the word out!