



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Aviation
Administration**

Air Traffic Organization
Western Service Center

1601 Lind Ave SW.
Renton, WA 9805

March 27, 2015

Mr. Chad Makovsky
Assistant Aviation Director
Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport
3400 E. Sky Harbor International Airport, Suite 3300
Phoenix, AZ 85034

Reference: Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Assessment
for the Phoenix Metroplex Project

Dear Mr. Makovsky:

This notification letter is to inform you that the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) intends to prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA) to consider the potential environmental impacts of the implementation of the Phoenix Metroplex (PHX Metroplex) Project. Attachment 1 is a copy of the Notice that will be published in major newspapers in the Phoenix and Tucson area that notifies the general public of the FAA's intent to prepare an EA.

A "Metroplex" is multiple airports in and around a busy metropolitan area. The PHX Metroplex Project would improve the efficiency of the Phoenix Metroplex airspace by optimizing aircraft arrival and departure procedures at a number of airports, including:

- Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport (PHX)
- Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport (IWA)
- Scottsdale Airport (SDL)
- Phoenix Deer Valley Airport (DVT)
- Tucson International Airport (TUS)

The project may involve changes in aircraft flight paths and/or altitudes in certain areas, but would not require any ground disturbance or increase the number of aircraft operations within the Phoenix Metroplex airspace area.

To evaluate potential environmental impacts of the PHX Metroplex Project, the FAA has established a General Study Area to evaluate potential impacts of changes in aircraft routing that are proposed to occur below 10,000 feet above ground level (AGL). Enclosed is a graphic depicting the General Study Area for the environmental review process.

The FAA has begun preparation of the EA and intends to issue the Draft in mid-2016. We welcome your input as we prepare the EA and we are sending this early notification letter for the following reasons:

1. To advise you of the initiation of the EA study;
2. To provide you an opportunity to provide any background information that you may have regarding the study area established for this EA; and
3. To provide you an opportunity to advise the FAA of any issues, concerns, policies or regulations that you may have regarding the environmental analysis that will be undertaken in the EA.

The FAA intends to hold public workshop(s) following publication of the Draft EA. The public workshops will be conducted to provide an opportunity for the public to learn about the project and to submit comments. The FAA will provide public notice of the public workshop(s) and the availability of the Draft EA at a future date. The FAA plans to hold separate consultations with the appropriate Tribal Governments and their designated Tribal Historic Preservation Office in accordance with Executive Order 13175. The appropriate Tribal Governments and their designated Tribal Historic Preservation Office will be determined after the General Study Area is finalized.

FAA is currently working on additional details related to this project, and will be coordinating with the appropriate agencies and tribes in the near future. If you desire to provide comments and/or have any questions about the information provided, please provide them by letter or email, before Monday, April 27, 2015, at the following address:

Attn: Marina Landis
Environmental Specialist
Western Service Area - Operations Support Group, AJV-W22
Federal Aviation Administration
1601 Lind Ave., SW
Renton, WA 98057
Telephone: (425) 203-4561
Email: 9-ANM-Phoenix-Metroplex-Project@faa.gov

Attachment – Public Notice and General Study Area graphic

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
Federal Aviation Administration**

Notice of the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) intention to prepare a Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Phoenix Metroplex Project (PHX Metroplex).

SUMMARY: The FAA is issuing this notice to advise the public it intends to prepare a Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) for the PHX Metroplex Project, which involves flight procedure optimization for Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport (PHX), Phoenix Deer Valley Airport (DVT), Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport (IWA), Scottsdale Airport (SDL), and Tucson International Airport (TUS). The EA will be conducted pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and its implementing Regulations found at Title 40, Code of Federal Regulations, Sections 1500-1508.

The purpose of the proposed PHX Metroplex Project is to improve the efficiency of the controlled airspace (a generic term referring to airspace where air traffic control service is provided) using more current navigation technology called Area Navigation (RNAV). The FAA has not made any decisions about the final content of the EA.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Air traffic procedures operating in the airspace around PHX, DVT, IWA, SDL, and TUS will be evaluated in the draft EA. The current RNAV and conventional procedures, which are intended to provide an orderly flow of traffic in and out of a busy metropolitan area, are not fully optimized due to existing airspace configuration. RNAV-based procedures can direct pilots along more direct routes with predictable location and altitude information. A predictable procedure would involve less communication between an air traffic controller and a pilot; therefore reducing workload for both individuals. Optimizing RNAV procedures as well as developing additional new RNAV procedures for the PHX Metroplex would enhance efficient use of the airspace.

Proposed Action

The EA is expected to evaluate at least two alternatives: the No Action and the proposed PHX Metroplex alternative (the Proposed Action). The FAA has not finalized the proposed PHX Metroplex Project at this time. The proposed PHX Metroplex as it is currently being configured consists of optimizing aircraft routes within the controlled airspace into and out of the PHX Metroplex. The primary components of the proposed PHX Metroplex would include:

- **ESTABLISHING UPDATED DEPARTURE ROUTES AND/OR FIXES FROM THE EA STUDY AIRPORTS.**
Aircraft departing from the Study Airports would transition to the high altitude routes using optimized routes based on RNAV technology.
- **ESTABLISHING UPDATED ARRIVAL ROUTES AND/OR FIXES INTO THE EA STUDY AIRPORTS.**
Aircraft bound for the Study Airports would use optimized procedures to transition from a high altitude route to an existing approach route.

Implementation of the proposed PHX Metroplex Project is not anticipated to increase the number of aircraft operations at PHX, DVT, IWA, SDL, or TUS or involve physical construction of any facilities.

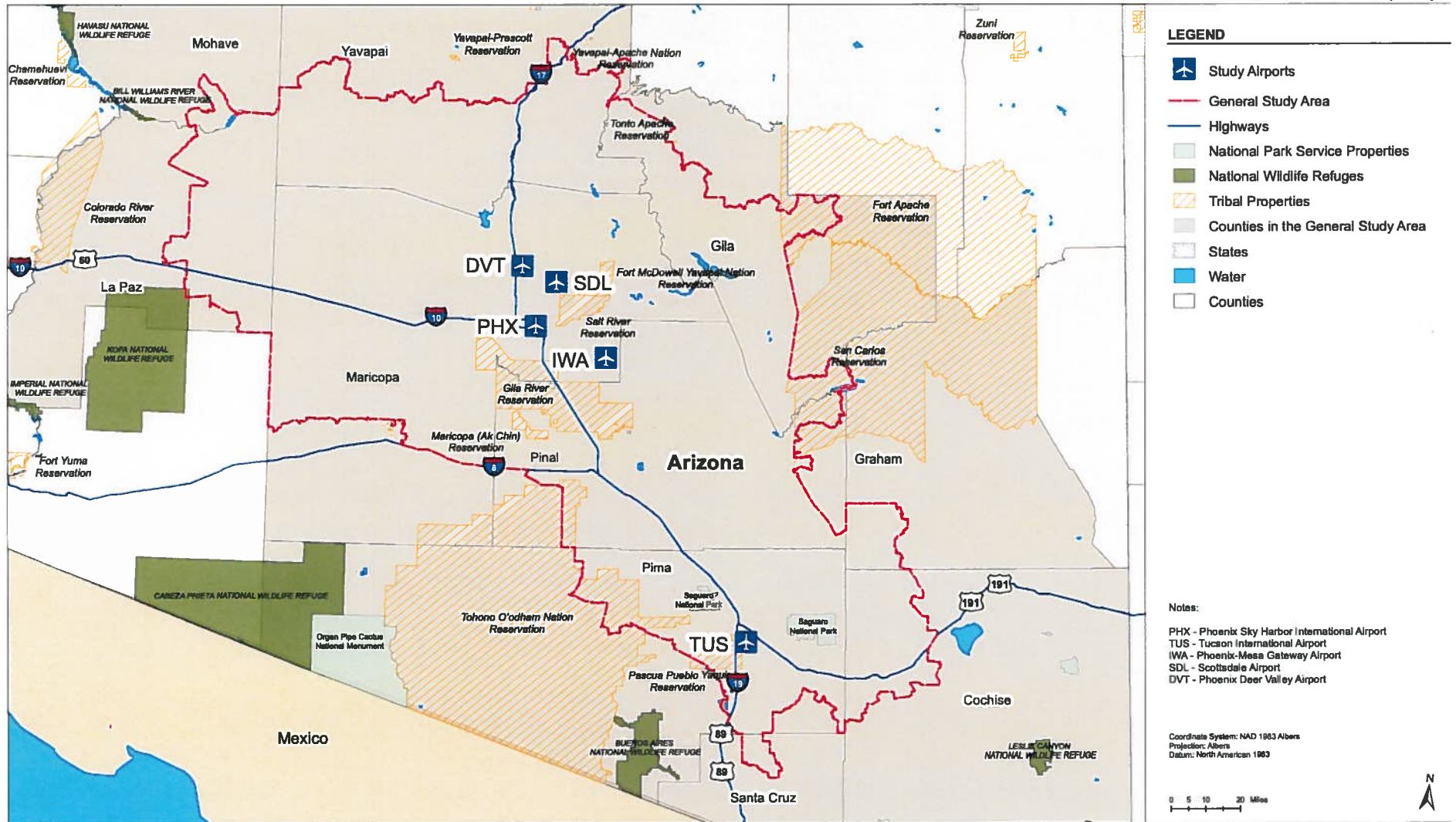
General Study Area

Using radar data for the Study Airports, the FAA has identified a General Study Area in which changes to aircraft routing would occur as a result of the Proposed Action.

The General Study Area will be used to evaluate and compare the potential impacts of the Proposed Action and a No Action Alternative. For both the Proposed Action and the No Action alternative, this evaluation will consider where departing aircraft are anticipated to be at altitudes below 10,000 feet above ground level (AGL) and arriving aircraft at altitudes below 7,000 feet AGL. The FAA may also consider traffic flying over tribal lands, national parks or national wildlife refuges below 18,000 feet AGL to evaluate and compare the potential impacts of the Proposed Action and the No Action alternative.

PUBLIC WORKSHOPS: The FAA intends to hold public workshop(s) following publication of the Draft EA. If the decision is to hold public workshop(s), the FAA will provide public notice of the public workshop(s) and the availability of the Draft EA at a future date.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Federal Aviation Administration, Air Traffic Organization (ATO), Western Service Center, Attn: PHX Metroplex Environmental, 1601 Lind Ave., SW, Renton, WA 98057; email at 9-ANM-Phoenix-Metroplex-Project@faa.gov; or facsimile at 425-203-4505.



Sources: 2014 TIGER/Line Shapefile (machine-readable data files) / prepared by the U.S. Census Bureau, 2014 (U.S. states, counties, tribal properties, roads); Earth Data Analysis Center, University of New Mexico, 2014 (National Park Service boundaries); U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Geospatial Services, 2014 (National Wildlife Refuges); U.S. Geological Survey, National Atlas, 2014 (water, national boundaries); ESR, Inc., 2013 (airports); ATAC Corporation, 2015 (General Study Area boundary: 18,000' Crossing Boundary). Prepared by ATAC Corporation, February 2015.

Exhibit 1

General Study Area