



**Airport Legislation Hijacked Between Senate and Assembly**

Senate Bill 1118 is legislation to standardize Airport Land Use Commissions in counties around California. It is sponsored by AOPA and introduced through Senator Gloria Negrete McLeod.

After a three year effort by AOPA, the bill was introduced in its original form on January 24, 2008 and has since been amended five (5) times with each amendment reducing the bill's effectiveness.

**Airport Land Use Commissions (ALUC)**

Why is SB 1118 important? SB 1118 would standardize Airport Land Use Commissions in counties around California. Currently several counties, including Santa Cruz, have ALUC exemptions, while some of the others have non-standard makeup and operating methods. SB 1118 is designed to diminish that problem and to improve ALUC functions so that they can better "protect the public health, safety and welfare" by encouraging responsible land use planning around airports.

An ALUC does two things. First, it creates an airport land use compatibility plan to guide cities and counties as they develop resources surrounding airports to prevent creation of new noise and safety problems. Second, it receives notification of all projects that might affect airports within its jurisdiction, evaluates these projects in terms of responsible airport land use planning and then decides whether or not the projects meet the specified criteria. A local governing body may override an ALUC determination of incompatibility by a two-thirds majority vote; however, they must notify the Division of Aeronautics

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**CITY FILES LAWSUIT APPEAL: SUPPORTED NEEDED**

The Watsonville Pilots Association (WPA), the Friends of Buena Vista (FOBV), and the local Sierra Club were successful in litigation against the City of Watsonville. The Superior Court ruled that the City is in violation of State Aeronautics Law and certain California Environmental Qualities Act (CEQA) provisions. Since the City's general plan update was predicated on a council resolution inconsistent with airport land use planning precepts, the court ruled that the general plan and its made-to-fit Environmental Impact Report (EIR) are to be rescinded.

On June 24 the Watsonville city council voted to appeal. A ruling by the appeals court makes this a precedent setting case. The ruling will be applicable to future state-wide airport land use litigation in California. A ruling supporting State Aeronautics Law will help protect all airports in California.

The Watsonville Pilots Association once again needs the financial support of the aviation community in California. Supporting the appeal will be backing a case that has already won at the lower court level. The Caltrans Department of Aeronautics is involved supporting State Aeronautics Law and associated CEQA law (as relates to noise and safety around airports). The Department of Aeronautics supports the lower court ruling. Attorneys for Watsonville Pilots Association (et. al.) are cautious and conservative, but feel confident that the lower court decision will be upheld.

Contributions should be sent to:

Watsonville Pilots Association  
 P.O. Box 2074  
 Freedom, CA 95019-2074

Make checks payable to "WPA" and in the memo section write "legal fund." A favorable ruling at the appeals court will mean protection for not only Watsonville Airport (WVI), but all GA airports in California.

Dan Chauvet, Asst. Sec. Legal Affairs  
 Watsonville Pilots Association

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and the ALUC of this intent 45 days prior to approving the override. Presently there is no objective entity with airport planning expertise in Santa Cruz County to receive that notification.

**June 16<sup>th</sup> Amendment**

The last amendment to SB 1118 was June 16<sup>th</sup>, influenced by the lobbyists for the City of Watsonville. This amendment has both positive and negative aspects. One negative aspect would allow an ALUC to be established by the City of Watsonville instead of the usual county ALUC. However, on the positive side it improves on the present law (pre-SB 1118) regarding ALUC makeup.

Currently, the laws relating to ALUCs stipulate that the county must select two members with “aviation expertise” **or** the county can **substitute** elected officials in place of those having “aviation expertise.” This is not good. The June 16<sup>th</sup> amendment would provide for three persons to be selected by the City Council and three persons to be selected by the County Board of Supervisors with the stipulation that two of the persons selected by the Supervisors must have “aviation expertise.” The seventh member representing the public at-large is picked by the six members of the ALUC.

The city has addressed its concerns about county stacking by essentially limiting the Board of Supervisors’ to one person because of the restriction requiring them to pick two persons with “aviation expertise.” The concern **now** is that the City will fill **their** slots with three people who are anti-airport or whose interests create a “conflict of interest” on the ALUC in order to advance city development agendas.

Local members of the aviation community are concerned that a stacked ALUC will prepare a compatibility plan that will neither protect the airport nor the community that surrounds it. In that situation the ALUC will be using a flawed compatibility plan that does not prevent development encroachment, will pave the way to runway closure(s), restrict airport usability, and jeopardize people located in noise and safety zones.

An ALUC is not a panacea system. Some work well, some do not. At the present time the Superior Court decision in the case of Watsonville Pilots Association, et al provides an injunction on building. How long will this airport protection last?

Serious efforts are being made by people with in-depth aviation knowledge to change the June 16<sup>th</sup> amendment to allow a County-established ALUC. Another alternative is to roll the legislation back to the pre-June 16<sup>th</sup> version. There are valid reasons for the efforts to change the amendment which include spreading the cost of operating the ALUC over both the city and county and the fact that the amendment, as it stands, is bad planning. This bad planning is described in the Grand Jury Report, “*Watsonville Municipal Airport: Heading for a Crash?*” and in the Superior Court’s March 21, 2008 decision that the City violated the State Aeronautics Act in its General Plan 2030 and made-to-fit EIR. Another consideration is the City’s apparent mind-set. A quote from the August 9, 2004

Register-Pajaronian newspaper is illustrative, "...According to City Manager Carlos Palacios, the runway [8-26] may interfere with new housing developments at the future site of the Buena Vista annex." From these remarks it appears that future airport usability and protection are not part of his agenda. Remarks made more recently indicate he has not changed his mind. He stated that runway 8-26 will have to be closed sooner or later to accommodate housing. As city manager he is he is very influential with the City Council. The Watsonville Airport serves a wider area than just the City of Watsonville; it is a national, state and regional transportation resource. SB 1118 should establish checks and balances by a broader entity than a City Council.

Local aviation community members are working to try to resolve SB 1118 complications and AOPA has finally agreed to help.

Dan Chauvet, WPA

**June 25, 2008**

**Meeting Notes:**

WPA Meeting of June 28<sup>th</sup>, 2008 was sparsely attended. A Minute of Silence was observed for Dan White, WPA member and former EAA 119 president, who died in an ultralight accident June 21, 2008. The speaker of the evening was unable to attend so Mike McIntyre and Dan Chauvet discussed “Fuel Management” with the attendees and there were many stories and examples. Key among them were: flight planning, know your airplane’s fuel consumption, flight planning, don’t rely on the gauges, flight planning.

July 30, 2008 Safety Seminar from the National Weather Service  
"Using the Internet for your next Weather Briefing!"

**Save This Date**

WRAP Dinner—November 1, 2008

The annual Watsonville Regional Airport Promotion (WRAP) PAC dinner will be Saturday November 1 at 6:00 pm (1800 hours) at the Green Valley Grill. Please put on your schedule.

Dan Chauvet, WRAP Chairman

## Dan White

On June 21, 2008 we all lost a great friend and fellow pilot when Dan died in an accident while flying his tryke. According to friends and witnesses he was taking off from a ranch near Casa de Fruita to return to Watsonville when he hit some wires and crashed. He was transported by air-ambulance to a hospital in San Jose where he died.

I first met Dan at Watsonville Airport probably 10 years ago. Louise Minniear was teaching me to be an airport bum and Dan was one of the first people she introduced me to. Over the years he was always there to talk to and help out in whatever way he could. He and his buddy Jeff Roper flew many times for the 99s "Dime a Pound Rides" at open house. He was a font of information about all things airplane. He regaled me during an annual inspection about replacing the fuel tank in the 172 and all the additional stuff he found needed to be done at the same time. He always had a smile and a story.

One of my favourite stories about Dan and Jeff was the last time Dan Chauvet and I went to Oshkosh. On the way back with Jim Young in the Cessna 210 we were preparing to land in Mitchell, South Dakota when we heard a familiar voice on the frequency. It was Dan welcoming us to Mitchell, he and Jeff had just landed on their way home from Oshkosh, too. As a former president of EAA 119 and doer of anything that needed to be done, he leaves a big hole in our airport family.

There will be a get-together to celebrate the life of our friend Dan White on Tuesday, August 5<sup>th</sup> at Tom Hoyt Park beginning at 5:30. Bring your favorite pot-luck dish to share.

*Sarah Chauvet*

## AOPA PRESIDENT PHIL BOYER TO RETIRE

Phil Boyer will step down as AOPA president at the end of the year. When Boyer took the controls in 1991 (only the third president in AOPA's 69-year history), the GA industry was in crisis, beaten down by product liability lawsuits. He helped pass the General Aviation Revitalization Act, which turned around aircraft manufacturing. He also championed civilian use of GPS and WAAS, and later ADS-B, to benefit general aviation.

Boyer upgraded AOPA management and member service resulting in 40-percent membership growth, despite declining pilot numbers. His new ventures funded novel GA

Advocacy and member benefits, while holding AOPA dues to \$39. "I've made no secret in the aviation community that I had a retirement plan. But before stepping down, I wanted to make sure I was leaving the world-class AOPA organization run by the best management team to continue our leadership in GA advocacy, information, and education," said Boyer. "At the end of this year, I will be able to 'get my life back' and fully enjoy the GA flying that AOPA fights so hard to preserve."

### CRAIG FULLER TO SUCCEED BOYER

The chairman of the AOPA Board of Trustees, William C. Trimble III, announced June 30 that AOPA member and 40-year pilot Craig L. Fuller had been selected to succeed Phil Boyer as AOPA president, effective Jan. 1, 2009.

## Fuel Vendor Change

*(from July 8, 2008 letter to Airport tenants from Don French, Watsonville Airport Manager)*

The Airport will be switching fuel vendors from Chevron to AirBP on August 15<sup>th</sup> 2008. AirBP will provide a quality fuel at less cost. We have negotiated a wholesale cost savings of five cents a gallon. Further, users of AirBP Visa cards will receive a 5% rebate and the Airport will not be charged a processing fee; the typical processing fee is 2.5%. By passing on the reduced purchase price per gallon and the savings on the processing fee we can lower the price at the pumps by 19¢ gallon and with an additional .27¢ rebate from AirBP Visa, at today's price per gallon of \$5.54, the savings would be 41¢ per gallon.

## COMING EVENTS

July 28-Aug 3 EAA Oshkosh  
Aug 8-10 Abbotsford, BC Int'l Airshow  
Sept 10-14 Reno Air Races  
Sept 20 WVI Open House  
Sept 27-28 Salinas Air Show  
Nov 6-8 AOPA Expo in San Jose, CA

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## Fuel Prices Locally

	100LL	SS	FS	
WVI		5.54	5.87	
CVH		5.65	5.95	Hollister
OAR		5.19	n/a	Marina
SNS		5.83	6.11	
E16		5.75	5.95	SoCounty

From airnav.com ss=self serve fs=full serve  
*Del Monte Self Serve at MRY is reporting  
100LL at 4.80, from the truck 5.85 for residents  
6.15 for transients.*

July 14, 2008

## WPA Officers

Mike McIntyre	President
John Cowan	Vice-Pres
Charlene McIntyre	Secretary
Sarah Chauvet	Treasurer
Hal Zamora	Sec. Legal Affairs
Dan Chauvet	Assist. Sec. Leg. Aff.

## Committee Heads

Dan Chauvet	WAAG
Richard Lippi	Web Site
Randy Pesce	Field Security
Cecily Randolph	Newsletter Editor
Rayvon Williams	AOPA/Wings
John Cowan	Public Relations
Brian Moffet	Video & Media

Airport Manager Don French

Feedback wpanews@yahoo.com

## **WPA Airport Legal Fund**

Please help WVI with your Tax deductible Contribution. Write check to "WPA" or Watsonville Pilots Association. On the memo line note "legal fund" Mail to:  
WPA  
PO Box 2074,  
Freedom, CA 95019  
Thank you for your support

WPA  
PO Box 2074  
Freedom, CA 95019



## NEXT MEETING

7:00 PM Wednesday July 30  
At the EAA-WAEC Building  
60 Aviation Way, Watsonville Airport  
**SAFETY SEMINAR—**  
**INTERNET WEATHER BRIEFING**