

# Stop the Airport in Thurston County

## Fact Sheet – Wetlands

www.stoptheairport.com

### Definitions

**Wetlands** – Areas where water covers the soil, is present either at, or near the surface of the soil. This can occur all year or varying periods.

Wetlands are considered the “kidneys of the landscape” due to their filtering abilities.

**Mitigation** – Federal government allows mitigated (replaced) wetlands to counter the adverse environmental effects of developing land.

### New Airport Location

CACC recommends a six-mile circle for the new airport (*however, no final location has been determined*):

North - Pattison Lake (top left) and Lake St. Clair (just outside, top right).

West – Rich Road and East Olympia Elementary.

South – Offutt Lake (just outside, bottom left) and Fire Station 62.

East – Evergreen Valley and JBLM training grounds between Rainer and Lacey.

### Mitigation (Replacement)

Current Wetlands Acres ( <i>estimated acres</i> )	Mitigated/ Replacement Acres For Wetlands ( <i>acres</i> )	Comparisons of Cities to Mitigated/ Replacement ( <i>acres</i> )
300	1,200	Rainier or Tenino, WA
400	1,600	Yelm, WA

CACC states for each one acre of wetlands lost due to build of new airport, four acres will replace it.

The location of mitigated/replacement wetlands is unknown at this point.

*Would be established in Thurston County.*  
Cost of mitigation is not included in current budget.

CACC estimates Thurston has 325 – 400 acres of wetlands.

*Thurston County has a total of 465,280 acres.*

### CACC History

In April 2019, Washington State Legislature passed Substitute Senate Bill 5370, creating the Commercial Aviation Coordinating Commission (CACC).

Members were appointed by the Governor.

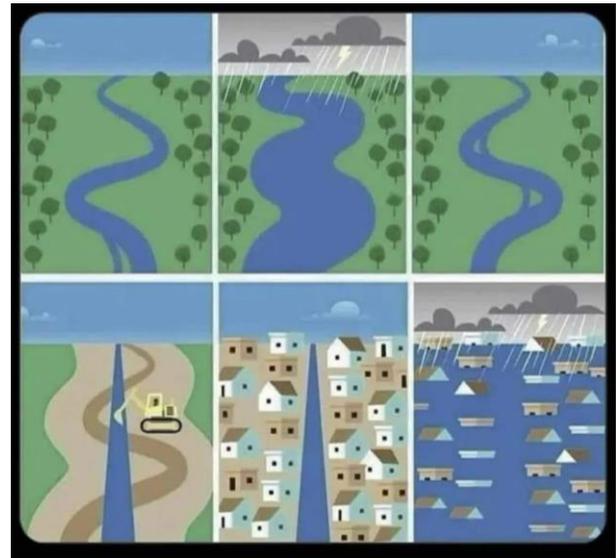
Their goal is to identify a location for a new primary commercial aviation facility in Washington.

### Importance of Wetlands

#### Flood Control

After floods, wetlands slowly release stored waters, reducing property damage downstream or inland.

Each acre of wetlands can store 1.5 million gallons of flood water.



#### Drainage

SEATAC Airport is responsible for 1,600 acres of drainage area that flows into three local streams and Puget Sound.

If built, the new airport would need to include storm water treatment plant to replace function of wetlands.

*This is not included in the current CACC plan or budget.*

#### Recreation

Wetlands are often places for hiking, fishing, bird watching, hunting, and photography.

New airport would remove Tempo, Sunwood, and Patterson lakes and affect Offutt and St Clair lakes.

#### Wildlife Habitat

Wetlands are biologically productive ecosystems, comparable to tropical rain forests or coral reefs.

Migrating waterfowl and other species rely on wetlands for resting, eating, and breeding.

*Thurston is home for endangered species Taylor’s Checkerspot Butterfly, Oregon Spotted Frog, Bull Trout, and Mazima Pocket Gophers.*

### How You Can Stop A New Airport Being Built

Visit [www.stoptheairport.com](http://www.stoptheairport.com) for ways to volunteer, advocate, and keep informed.