



**Media Contact:**

Chris Pomeroy, Airport Manager  
Friedman Memorial Airport  
208-788-9003

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Friedman Memorial Airport to explore land acquisition**

*Additional 385 acres would protect airport approach and departure areas and ensure land use compatibility*

**HAILEY, ID – June 1, 2020**—The Friedman Memorial Airport Authority Board (FMAA) in partnership with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), today, announced the intention to explore the purchase of approximately 385 acres of undeveloped land to protect existing airport approach and departure areas and help ensure future land use compatibility for both airport users and the community. This project is expected to be funded by a grant from the FAA’s Airport Improvement Program.

The property, located south of the airport, and west of Highway 75, extending down to the city limits of Bellevue, is part of the Eccles Flying Hat Ranch.

“We are in the initial phase of the project,” said Jacob Greenberg, Chairman of the Friedman Memorial Airport Authority Board. “This is an extremely big undertaking and we want to make sure we consider all aspects, have complete transparency, and give due consideration to the needs of the airport, its users, visitors and importantly, the community.”

Airport officials emphasize that the airport is not looking to purchase land for expansion, but rather for the purpose of preserving approach and departure areas for the airport by protecting the land, in its current condition.

“We are not looking to expand the runway,” said Greenberg. “In fact, the specific purpose and need in the Environmental Assessment will make that perfectly clear. The airport, based on a mutual decision and in partnership with the FAA, hopes to preserve the property as it is, and prevent the potential future introduction of safety hazards and incompatible land use”. He further added, “This is an important point to emphasize and is supported by the City of Hailey council members, appointed FMAA Board members, as well as the Blaine County Commissioners.”

-more-

A small portion of the property adjacent to the Atlantic Aviation facility will be evaluated as part of the Environmental Assessment for future potential aircraft parking and hangars consistent with the current Airport Board adopted airport master plan and FAA approved Airport Layout Plan. The Board may consider at a future time whether the necessity has been established to develop this small portion of the land.

“Before moving forward, it’s important we look closely and thoroughly at any potential impacts this project may have,” said Airport Manager, Chris Pomeroy. “The FAA is expected to award Friedman Memorial Airport with a grant this summer to cover the cost of a federally required Environmental Assessment. We are grateful for their support as well as their guidance on this very important endeavor.”

“It is important to note that the inclusion of this portion of the property as part of the Environmental Assessment is for environmental analysis only. It is more efficient and cost effective to include this environmental analysis now as part of the larger assessment. Any future aeronautical development in this area must be deemed necessary by aviation demand and approved by FMAA,” added Greenberg.”

The ranch includes several structures that may be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Pomeroy says the airport has no plans to remove, destroy or significantly modify any of the historical structures.

“We understand the community’s connection with the Flying Hat Ranch,” said Pomeroy. “We value its cultural significance, too, which is why we intend to keep the property vacant and preserve its current zoning for agricultural use.”

Details of the proposed project will be discussed at the Friedman Memorial Airport Authority Board meeting on June 2, 2020 at 5:30pm. In accordance with COVID-19 protocol, the meeting will be held online at: <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/796855781> Access Code: 796-855-781

The community and all interested parties are encouraged to attend.

Documents and ongoing information about this project will be available online at: [iflysun.com/land-acquisition](http://iflysun.com/land-acquisition)