



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 71

[Docket No. FAA-2021-0803; Airspace Docket No. 19-AAL-58]

RIN 2120-AA66

Proposed Amendment of United States Area Navigation Route (RNAV) T-222; Bethel, AK

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

SUMMARY: This action proposes to amend United States Area Navigation (RNAV) route T-222 in the vicinity of Bethel, AK in support of a large and comprehensive T-route modernization project for the state of Alaska.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before [INSERT DATE 45 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER.]

ADDRESSES: Send comments on this proposal to the U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, Washington, DC 20590; telephone: 1(800) 647-5527, or (202) 366-9826. You must identify FAA Docket No. FAA-2021-0803; Airspace Docket No. 19-AAL-58 at the beginning of your comments. You may also submit comments through the Internet at <https://www.regulations.gov>.

FAA Order JO 7400.11F, Airspace Designations and Reporting Points, and subsequent amendments can be viewed online at https://www.faa.gov/air_traffic/publications/. For further information, you can contact the Rules and Regulations Group, Federal Aviation Administration, 800 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC, 20591; telephone: (202) 267-8783. The Order is also available for inspection at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). For information on the availability of the Order at NARA, email: fr.inspection@nara.gov or go to <https://www.archives.gov/federal-register/cfr/ibr-locations.html>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Christopher McMullin, Rules and Regulations Group, Office of Policy, Federal Aviation Administration, 800 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20591; telephone: (202) 267-8783.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Authority for this Rulemaking

The FAA's authority to issue rules regarding aviation safety is found in Title 49 of the United States Code. Subtitle I, Section 106 describes the authority of the FAA Administrator. Subtitle VII, Aviation Programs, describes in more detail the scope of the agency's authority. This rulemaking is promulgated under the authority described in Subtitle VII, Part A, Subpart I, Section 40103. Under that section, the FAA is charged with prescribing regulations to assign the use of the airspace necessary to ensure the safety of aircraft and the efficient use of airspace. This regulation is within the scope of that authority as it would expand the availability of RNAV routing in Alaska and improve the efficient flow of air traffic within the National Airspace System (NAS) by lessening the dependency on ground based navigation.

Comments Invited

Interested parties are invited to participate in this proposed rulemaking by submitting such written data, views, or arguments as they may desire. Comments that provide the factual basis supporting the views and suggestions presented are particularly helpful in developing reasoned regulatory decisions on the proposal. Comments are specifically invited on the overall regulatory, aeronautical, economic, environmental, and energy-related aspects of the proposal.

Communications should identify both docket numbers (FAA Docket No. FAA-2021-0803; Airspace Docket No. 19-AAL-58) and be submitted in triplicate to the Docket Management Facility (see "ADDRESSES" section for address and phone number). You may also submit comments through the Internet at <https://www.regulations.gov>.

Commenters wishing the FAA to acknowledge receipt of their comments on this action must submit with those comments a self-addressed, stamped postcard on which the following statement is made: “Comments to FAA Docket No. FAA-2021-0803; Airspace Docket No. 19-AAL-58.” The postcard will be date/time stamped and returned to the commenter.

All communications received on or before the specified comment closing date will be considered before taking action on the proposed rule. The proposal contained in this action may be changed in light of comments received. All comments submitted will be available for examination in the public docket both before and after the comment closing date. A report summarizing each substantive public contact with FAA personnel concerned with this rulemaking will be filed in the docket.

Availability of NPRM

An electronic copy of this document may be downloaded through the Internet at <https://www.regulations.gov>. Recently published rulemaking documents can also be accessed through the FAA’s web page at https://www.faa.gov/air_traffic/publications/airspace_amendments/.

You may review the public docket containing the proposal, any comments received and any final disposition in person in the Dockets Office (see “ADDRESSES” section for address and phone number) between 9:00 am and 5:00 pm, Monday through Friday, except federal holidays. An informal docket may also be examined during normal business hours at the office of the Western Service Center, Operations Support Group, Federal Aviation Administration, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA 98198.

Availability and Summary of Documents for Incorporation by Reference

This document proposes to amend FAA Order JO 7400.11F, Airspace Designations and Reporting Points, dated August 10, 2021, and effective September 15, 2021. The Order is publicly available as listed in the ADDRESSES section of this document. The Order lists Class A, B, C, D, and E airspace areas, air traffic service routes, and reporting points.

Background

In 2003, Congress enacted the Vision 100-Century of Aviation Reauthorization Act (Pub L., 108-176), which established a joint planning and development office in the FAA to manage the work related to the Next Generation Air Transportation System (NextGen). Today, NextGen is an ongoing FAA-led modernization of the nation's air transportation system to make flying safer, more efficient, and more predictable.

In support of NextGen, this proposal is part of a larger and comprehensive T-route modernization project in the state of Alaska. The project mission statement states: "To modernize Alaska's Air Traffic Service route structure using satellite based navigation Development of new T-routes and optimization of existing T-routes will enhance safety, increase efficiency and access, and will provide enroute continuity that is not subject to the restrictions associated with ground based airway navigation." As part of this project, the FAA evaluated the existing Colored Airway structure for: (a) direct replacement (i.e., overlay) with a T-route that offers a similar or lower Minimum Enroute Altitude (MEA) or Global Navigation Satellite System Minimum Enroute Altitude (GNSS MEA); (b) the replacement of the colored airway with a T-route in an optimized but similar geographic area, while retaining similar or lower MEA; or (c) removal with no route structure (T-route) restored in that area because the value was determined to be insignificant.

The aviation industry/users have indicated a desire for the FAA to transition the Alaskan enroute navigation structure away from dependency on Non-Directional Beacons (NDB), and move to develop and improve the RNAV route structure. Given these facts, the FAA proposes to amend two segments of RNAV route T-222. The amendments would reroute the segment between the Bethel (BET), AK, VHF omnidirectional range beacon and tactical air navigation system (VORTAC) to the UTICE, AK, waypoint (WP), and cancel the segment between the BAERE, AK, WP and the Saint Paul Island (SPY), AK, NDB. The proposed amendment of

these segments would provide for lower MEAs while also ensuring that the appropriate route criteria is met along the entire route.

The Proposal

The FAA is proposing an amendment to 14 CFR part 71 to amend RNAV route T-222 in the vicinity of Bethel, AK in support of a large and comprehensive T-route modernization project for the state of Alaska. The proposed route changes are described below.

T-222: T-222 currently extends from the BAERE, AK, WP to the Fairbanks (FAI), AK, VORTAC. The FAA proposes to reroute the segment between BET and the UTICE, AK, WP by adding five additional WPs (CABOT, WOGAX, IKUFU, JILSI, and CYCAS) in the vicinity of Aniak, AK. The additional WPs will allow for a lower GNSS MEA that would more closely match the current colored airway, R-39, and would serve as an acceptable alternative. The RUFVY WP, which was in the original legal description, would be removed due to it not being a turn point. Additionally, the FAA proposes to cancel the segment between BAERE WP and SPY, due to changes in route criteria that would require a raising of the GNSS MEA due to terrain near BAERE WP and limitation of two-way VHF communications for the over-water portion to SPY. Loss of this segment would be mitigated by utilizing VOR Federal airway V-480 that parallels the existing route. The rest of the route would remain unchanged.

United States Area Navigation Routes are published in paragraph 6011 of FAA Order JO 7400.11F dated August 10, 2021 and effective September 15, 2021, which is incorporated by reference in 14 CFR 71.1. The RNAV route listed in this document would be published subsequently in the Order.

FAA Order JO 7400.11, Airspace Designations and Reporting Points, is published yearly and effective on September 15.

Regulatory Notices and Analyses

The FAA has determined that this proposed regulation only involves an established body of technical regulations for which frequent and routine amendments are necessary to keep them

operationally current. It, therefore: (1) is not a "significant regulatory action" under Executive Order 12866; (2) is not a "significant rule" under Department of Transportation (DOT) Regulatory Policies and Procedures (44 FR 11034; February 26, 1979); and (3) does not warrant preparation of a regulatory evaluation as the anticipated impact is so minimal. Since this is a routine matter that will only affect air traffic procedures and air navigation, it is certified that this proposed rule, when promulgated, will not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities under the criteria of the Regulatory Flexibility Act.

Environmental Review

This proposal will be subject to an environmental analysis in accordance with FAA Order 1050.1F, "Environmental Impacts: Policies and Procedures" prior to any FAA final regulatory action.

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 71

Airspace, Incorporation by reference, Navigation (air).

The Proposed Amendment

In consideration of the foregoing, the Federal Aviation Administration proposes to amend 14 CFR part 71 as follows:

PART 71--DESIGNATION OF CLASS A, B, C, D, AND E AIRSPACE AREAS; AIR TRAFFIC SERVICE ROUTES; AND REPORTING POINTS

1. The authority citation for part 71 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 106(f), 106(g); 40103, 40113, 40120; E.O. 10854, 24 FR 9565, 3 CFR, 1959-1963 Comp., p. 389.

§71.1 [Amended]

2. The incorporation by reference in 14 CFR 71.1 of FAA Order JO 7400.11F, Airspace Designations and Reporting Points, dated August 10, 2021, and effective September 15, 2021, is amended as follows:

Paragraph 6011 United States Area Navigation Routes

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T-222 ST PAUL ISLAND, AK to FAIRBANKS, AK [Amended]

ST PAUL ISLAND, AK (SPY)	NDB	(lat. 57°09'25.20"N., long. 170°13'58.77"W.)
BETHEL, AK (BET)	VORTAC	(lat. 60°47'05.41"N., long. 161°49'27.59"W.)
CABOT, AK	WP	(lat. 61°12'01.32"N., long. 160°45'20.93"W.)
WOGAX, AK	WP	(lat. 61°29'41.04"N., long. 160°06'19.41"W.)
IKUFU, AK	WP	(lat. 61°40'34.53"N., long. 159°52'35.43"W.)
JILSI, AK	WP	(lat. 61°46'52.14"N., long. 159°31'07.72"W.)
CYCAS, AK	WP	(lat. 61°52'23.15"N., long. 159°13'52.38"W.)
UTICE, AK	WP	(lat. 62°18'35.36"N., long. 157°37'56.78"W.)

MC GRATH, AK (MCG)	VORTAC	(lat. 62°57'03.72"N., long. 155°36'40.97"W.)
NENANA, AK (ENN)	VORTAC	(lat. 64°35'24.04"N., long. 149°04'22.34"W.)
FAIRBANKS, AK (FAI)	VORTAC	(lat. 64°48'00.25"N., long. 148°00'43.11"W.)

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Issued in Washington, DC, on September 17, 2021.

Michael R. Beckles,
Acting Manager, Rules and Regulations Group.

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