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**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON, D.C.**

Issued by the Department of Transportation
on the 1st day of February, 2000

Served: February 2, 2000

Essential Air Service at

WILLISTON, NORTH DAKOTA

under 49 U.S.C. 41731 *et seq.*

Docket OST-1999-5177-12

ORDER EXTENDING SERVICE OBLIGATION

Summary

By this Order, the Department of Transportation is extending Great Lakes' service obligation at Williston for another 30 days, through March 3, 2000.

Background

On March 2, 1999, Great Lakes Aviation, Ltd., d/b/a United Express (Great Lakes), filed 90-day notices of intent to suspend its subsidy-free essential air service at Williston, North Dakota, effective May 31, 1999. By Order 99-5-12, May 24, 1999, the Department prohibited Great Lakes from suspending service at the community for 30 days beyond the end of its 90-day notice period, through June 29, 1999, and requested proposals from carriers interested in providing replacement service. As required by 49 U.S.C. 41734, we have extended Great Lakes' service obligation for additional 30-day periods, the latest through February 2, 2000, by Order 99-12-31, December 29, 1999.

Great Lakes has submitted proposals, with subsidy requests, to provide three round trips each service day for two years at Williston. Great Lakes has also submitted a proposal to provide two round trips each service day without subsidy. Big Sky Transportation Co. has submitted a late-filed proposal to serve Williston with two round trips each service day on a subsidy-free basis. It is unlikely that this case will be completed before the end of the current 30-day hold-in period.

Decision

In accordance with 49 U.S.C. 41734(c), we will extend Great Lakes' service obligation at Williston for an additional 30 days, through March 3, 2000, or until replacement service actually begins, whichever occurs first.

This order is issued under authority delegated in 49 CFR 1.56a.

ACCORDINGLY,

1. We require Great Lakes Aviation, Ltd., d/b/a United Express, to maintain essential air service at Williston, North Dakota, as set forth in Appendix C of Order 99-5-12, for an additional 30-day period through March 3, 2000, or until a carrier capable of providing reliable replacement service actually begins service, whichever occurs first;¹
2. We direct Great Lakes Aviation, Ltd., d/b/a United Express, to retain all books, records, and other source and summary documentation to support claims for payment, and to preserve and maintain such documentation in a manner that readily permits its audit and examination by representatives of the Department. Such documentation shall be retained for seven years, or until the Department indicates that the records may be destroyed. Copies of flight logs for aircraft sold or disposed of must be retained. The carrier may forfeit its compensation for any claim that is not supported under the terms of this order;
3. Docket OST-1999-5177 will remain open until further order of the Department; and
4. We will serve a copy of this order on the Mayor and airport manager of Williston, North Dakota; the Department of Transportation of North Dakota; Big Sky Transportation Co.; and Great Lakes Aviation, Ltd., d/b/a United Express.

By:

A. BRADLEY MIMS

Deputy Assistant Secretary for Aviation
and International Affairs

(SEAL)

*An electronic version of this order is available on the World Wide Web at
<http://dms.dot.gov>*

¹ In accordance with 49 U.S.C. 41734(c), we will extend Great Lakes' service obligation for successive 30-day periods as necessary until replacement service actually begins.