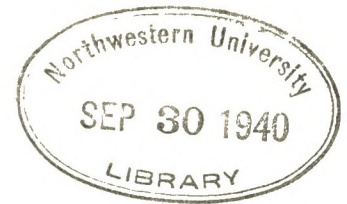


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FEDERAL WORKS AGENCY
WORK PROJECTS ADMINISTRATION



For Release to Newspapers
Sunday, September 29, 1940

HUNTER ANNOUNCES EXPANDED WPA AIRPORT PROGRAM

On the occasion of President Roosevelt's signaling in the first plane to land at the new Washington National Airport, an expanded program of WPA airport construction surpassing that of previous years was announced today by Howard O. Hunter, Acting Commissioner of Work Projects.

With the impetus of national defense preparations, he said, Presidential approval has been given in less than three months to 70 projects for construction, improvement or enlargement of airfields and airport facilities. The rate of approvals was nearly twice as great as in the preceding 12 months.

The new projects, approved between July 1 and September 21, represent estimated expenditures of \$21,500,000, of which \$5,825,000 is funds of State and local governments and in some instances of the War or Navy Departments.

Fifty-three pending applications for additional projects, calling for estimated expenditures of \$17,200,000, indicate that project approvals will continue at a high rate, Mr. Hunter said. A large number of future applications, moreover, are anticipated in view of a large amount of projected airport work which has been certified by the Army and Navy as important to national defense but for which applications have not been received.

In addition, Mr. Hunter noted, WPA funds have been transferred since July 1 to the War Department for 22 projects and to the Navy Department for 10 projects, all employing WPA workmen, in which aviation facilities are a greater or lesser part of the work.

When the National Airport at Washington goes into operation this winter as the second largest commercial field in the country, Mr. Hunter said, WPA will have done substantial work on every one of the nation's leading commercial airports, including the biggest and busiest, at Cleveland, and the leader in commercial traffic, La Guardia Field at New York.

WPA's contribution to commercial air service is apparent from its record of having built or improved 176 of the 195 regular airline stops. Among them are the top-ranking fields in number of commercial flights, at Chicago, Pittsburgh, Detroit, San Francisco, Boston and Buffalo, and the Los Angeles municipal field to which airliners now landing elsewhere will be shifted.

The new Washington airport represents the expenditure to the present of approximately \$1,400,000 by WPA in addition to the funds of other agencies. WPA employees have built two and a quarter miles of levees and revetments around the fill that makes possible this completely modern airport on the southern shore of the historic Potomac, just across from the heart of the Nation's Capital. Two miles of the Mount Vernon Memorial Highway, along the route George Washington rode as a young surveyor, were relocated in preparing the site. WPA workers also drained and graded the field, stabilized the base for five miles of runways and aided in the vast excavation operations.

In addition to operations at municipal airports, many of which are officially designated as important to defense, WPA workers are now doing basic work on the new Southeastern Army Air Base at Tampa and the new Southeastern Naval Air Base at Jacksonville, Fla. They are developing the new Northeastern Army Air Base at Chicopee Falls, Mass., and improving Lowry Field at Denver and the multiple aviation facilities of the Army in the San Antonio area of Texas.

McChord Field in Washington and March and Moffett Fields in California are among the principal sites in the WPA military aviation facility program on the West Coast. In Puerto Rico, Army and Navy fields have some of the largest of the aviation projects in progress.

The recent approvals include projects at all of these sites and at other places so located that new WPA airport projects, military and civil, form a pattern along the coasts and borders of the United States with concentrations in the strategic corners of the country.

"The importance of the expanded WPA airport program in the country's national defense efforts is evident from the fact that, even at the former rate of airport work, WPA has done more than four-fifths of all the airport construction of the last five years," Mr. Hunter said.

"We have constructed 200 fields where there were none before and improved or enlarged 375 others. On these and other sites more than 1,600 buildings have been built or improved and numerous other facilities provided. Besides the share of this work which has been done on military airports, still other Army and Navy aviation facilities have been provided from Hawaii to Puerto Rico with WPA funds transferred to the War and Navy Departments for the employment of WPA workers.

"This completed work, whether on civil or military fields, has provided bases and emergency and training fields for the thousands of planes and pilots the country is acquiring for its defense," Mr. Hunter continued.

"The new airport projects are integral parts of the national defense program. In order to assure the priority of the most essential, the War and Navy Departments have specifically certified nearly half of the recently-approved projects

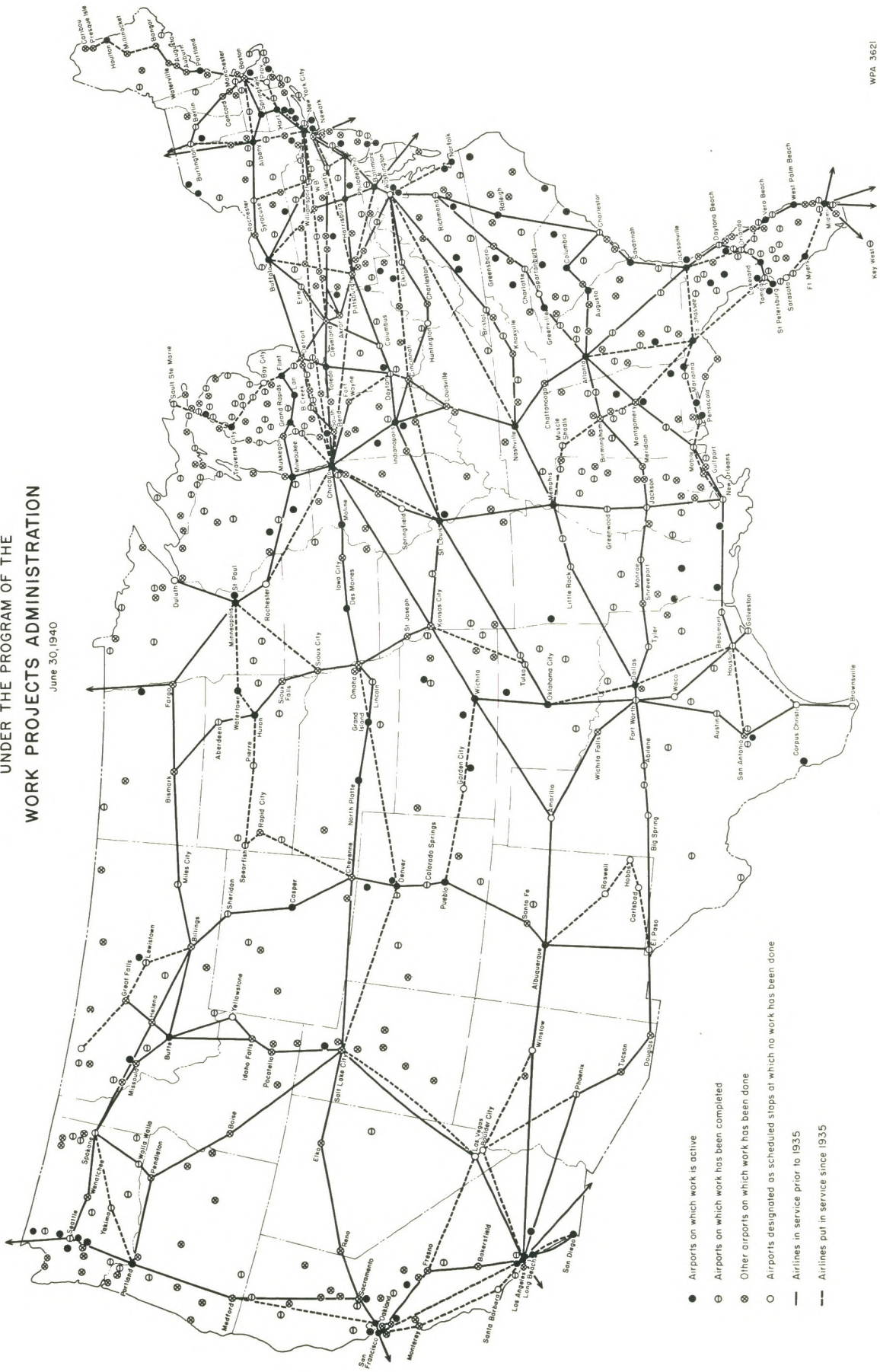
as important to national defense."

(Attached is a map showing civil and military airports constructed or improved by WPA through June, 1940, exclusive of those on which transferred WPA funds were used by other Federal agencies.)

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**AIRPORTS BEING CONSTRUCTED AND IMPROVED
UNDER THE PROGRAM OF THE
WORK PROJECTS ADMINISTRATION**

June 30, 1940



- Airports on which work is active
- ⊙ Airports on which work has been completed
- ⊗ Other airports on which work has been done
- Airports designated as scheduled stops at which no work has been done
- Airlines in service prior to 1935
- Airlines put in service since 1935