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## Now Arriving: Southwest Airlines Announces Flight Schedule from GFIA

On February 4, Southwest Airlines, the world's largest low-fare air service provider, officially announced that Grand Rapids, MI is the next AirTran city to be converted to Southwest service. The new service will kick-off on August 11, 2013. In addition to converting existing routes flown to Baltimore/Washington International and Orlando International, Southwest is also initiating nonstop service to Denver International and Lambert - St. Louis International, strengthening West Michigan's connection to three of Southwest Airlines' top ten busiest hubs.



"These service enhancements essentially provide business and leisure travelers with access to the entire Southwest network," says Brian Ryks, executive director of GFIA. "The result of the new Southwest service will be more flight options, to and from more locations, at more competitive prices. Bottom line: This will make it easier for travelers to get where they want to go."

Southwest Airlines and AirTran Airways serve a combined 97 destinations in 41 American states and six neighboring international countries. "As we bring Southwest into Grand Rapids we're not simply swapping airlines, we're adding new cities, we're bringing in larger airplanes and flying more flights," said Ron Ricks, Executive Vice President for the Dallas-based carrier. The larger aircraft size is great news for West Michigan; the additional seats alone on six flights per day provides an increase of nearly 1,100 seats per week departing GFIA.

Executive Director, Brian Ryks says, "This new service from Southwest Airlines is a fantastic next step in helping us achieve an air service balance of both legacy and low cost carriers. West Michigan travelers have embraced the AirTran service, and that support was certainly a key element in this new service arriving at GFIA."

Tickets are available now at southwest.com and swabiz.com for travel between August 11, 2013 and September 27, 2013.

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**"Bottom line: This will make it easier for travelers to get where they want to go."**

**Brian Ryks, A.A.E.  
Executive Director, GFIA**

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## A Capitol Idea: United Airlines to begin nonstop service to Washington, DC

Beginning Wednesday, May 1, United Airlines is expanding its daily nonstop destinations to include Washington Dulles International Airport, Washington DC (IAD). This twice-daily service, to be operated by ExpressJet under the United Express banner, will be the sixth nonstop destination for United from Gerald R. Ford International Airport, and it will bring to 22 the total number of nonstop destinations available from Gerald R. Ford International Airport.

Scheduled weekday departures from GFIA will be at 9:15 am and 2:30 pm, with scheduled arrivals back at GFIA at 2:05 pm and 8:23 pm. The route will be operated with 50-seat Embraer regional jet aircraft.

United currently serves West Michigan to hubs at Chicago O'Hare, Cleveland, Denver, Houston and New York - Newark. Rounding out the list of nonstop destinations from GFIA are: Atlanta, Baltimore, Cincinnati, Dallas/Fort Worth, Detroit, Fort Lauderdale,



**capitol idea**  
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# Long-Term Stormwater/Deicing Runoff Management and Natural Treatment System

The Gerald R. Ford International Airport (GFIA) is permitted by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) under the Clean Water Act to discharge stormwater containing deicing materials. MDEQ has required GFIA to develop a long-term stormwater/deicing runoff management system to eliminate stormwater discharges from reaching an unnamed tributary of the Thornapple River because small amounts of these deicing materials can serve as a food source, which could potentially promote bacterial growth in the tributary.

In August 2011, GFIA completed a study, identifying the possible solutions to satisfy the State's permitting goal and route impacted stormwater away from the tributary. GFIA also created a Stakeholder Advisory Committee to allow interested parties, including neighbors, airport tenants, local governments, watershed groups, and the business community, to engage in developing a solution. That study resulted in a recommendation to improve the stormwater management system as illustrated in Figure 1, including:

- Continuing to collect and recycle aircraft deicing runoff and implement best management practices (BMPs) for deicing operations.
- Consolidating deicing areas into a single drainage system to divert it away from the affected tributary during the deicing season.
- The system will be designed to direct typical flows to the tributary during the non-deicing season.
- Building a pre-treatment system to remove sediment and trash from stormwater drainage.
- Installing natural treatment system (NTS) cells to biologically treat deicing-related stormwater. Figure 2 is a drawing of a typical NTS unit.
- Building a pipe to release treated stormwater from the NTS facility to a submerged Thornapple River diffuser.

GFIA initiated its design process in September 2012. MDEQ is modifying GFIA's permit to include the new drainage, treatment and release requirements for treated stormwater into the Thornapple River. This project also requires the FAA to approve an Environmental Assessment, which GFIA will submit in early 2013. GFIA hopes to begin construction of the project in late 2013, and with an anticipated completion date in late 2015.

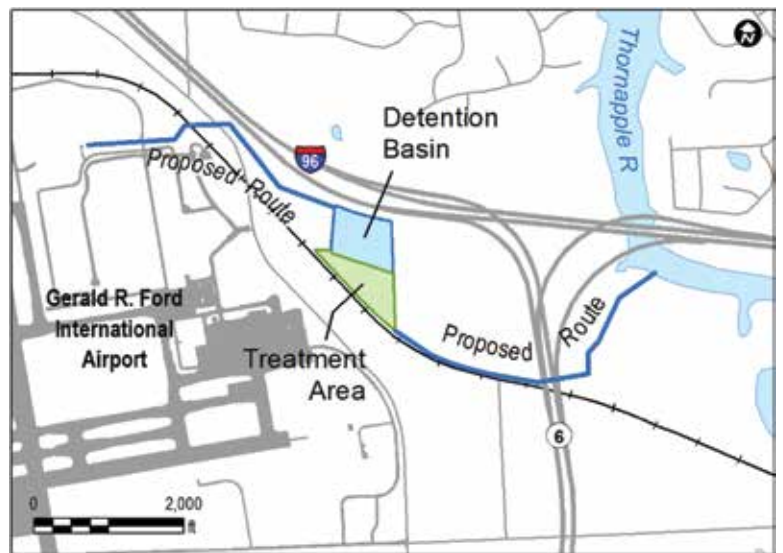


Figure 1. Map of proposed new stormwater management system route.

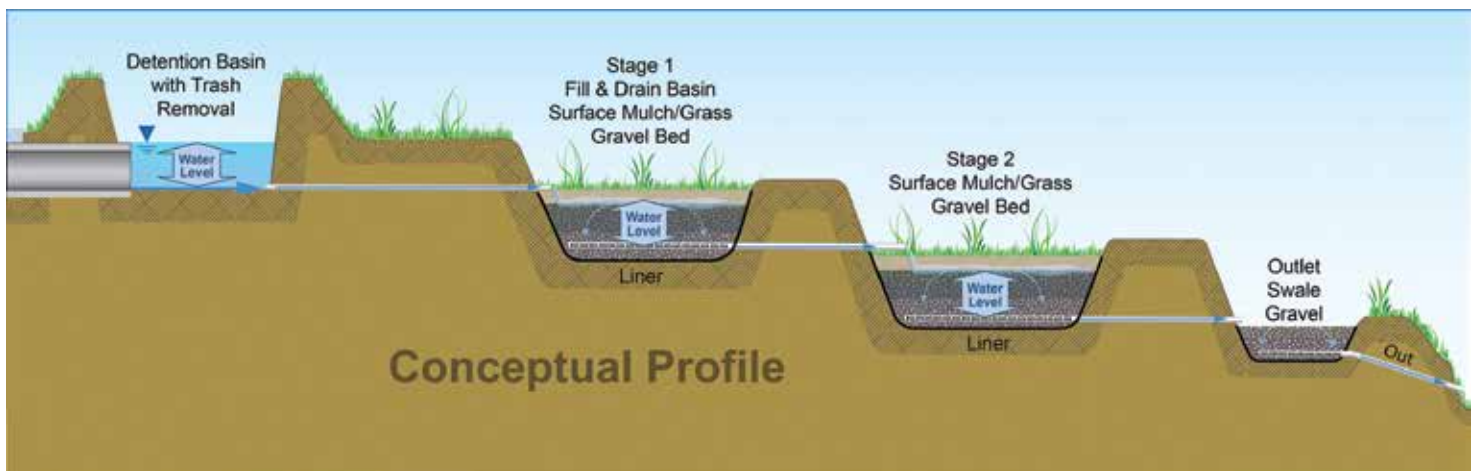


Figure 2. Profile view of a typical natural treatment system (NTS).

## Sounds of the Season

From December 3 through 7, the airport's Grand Hall was transformed into a holiday concert venue for 18 area junior and senior high school vocal groups, including five new choirs. Coincidentally, this was also the 18th annual Airport Holiday Music Festival, a tradition that has become a favorite of airport employees and patrons alike.

From the 12-voice ensemble of The Potter's House High School Vocal Ensemble to the 215-voice Jenison Schools 5th & 6th grade choirs, these student groups filled the air with a wide variety of musical stylings from Latin arias to classic carols to some new twists on old seasonal favorites. In fact, the holiday spirit was so transforming that one group of travelers commented, "We were just talking about how it doesn't feel like Christmas because there isn't any snow here yet. Now, we are completely in the holiday spirit!"

The audience isn't the only one having fun either. The students and directors love coming to the airport to perform. "Some years we've had a large audience, others rather small, but the students have a great time performing out here. It's probably our most-anticipated performance of the season," remarked one of our veteran directors.

The Department of Aeronautics would like to thank the following schools for sharing their talented students with us this year:

- Caledonia High School
- City and Creston High Schools
- East Kentwood High School
- Grandville High School\*
- Jenison Elementary Schools\*
- Legacy Christian School
- Moline Christian School
- Northpointe Christian Middle and High Schools
- Ottawa Hills High School
- The Potter's House Middle and High Schools
- Unity Christian Schools\*
- Walker Charter Academy
- West Michigan Aviation Academy\*
- Wyoming High School\*

*\* indicates a new choir for the 2012 Festival*



**The Northpointe Christian High School Symphonic Choir, under the direction of Lisa Spangler, is a perennial favorite at the Airport Holiday Music Festival.**

## Airport Board Welcomes Newest Member, Elects New Chair

With the retirement of citizen member Joe Tomaselli, the Gerald R. Ford International Airport Board needed not only to have a new citizen member appointed by the Kent County Board of Commissioners, they also had to elect a new Chair – a position held by Tomaselli since 2011.

At their January 24 meeting, the Board of Commissioners appointed Birgit Klohs as the newest citizen member of the Airport Board. Birgit is the President and CEO of The Right Place, Inc., a regional non-profit economic development organization. The Commission also reappointed Commissioner Dick Vander Molen to another three-year term. Rounding out the Airport Board are citizen members Floyd Wilson, Jr., Terri Lynn Land, and David Slikkers and County Commissioners Ted Vonk and Roger Morgan. At its January 30 organizational meeting, the Airport Board elected Commissioner Roger Morgan as chairman and Commissioner Dick VanderMolen as vice chairman for 2013.

Policy and general oversight of GFIA are the responsibility of the Gerald R. Ford International Airport Board, a seven-member body appointed by the Kent County Board of Commissioners. The Airport Board comprises three Kent County commissioners and three Kent County citizen members, and one citizen member from a county other than Kent in the West Michigan combined statistical area, each serving staggered three-year terms.



**Richard VanderMolen**



**Roger Morgan**



**Birgit Klohs**

## News In Brief

- » Rob Benstein, Public Safety & Operations Director, has been elected Chair of the Airports Council International - North America (ACI-NA) Public Safety & Security Committee.
- » The Department of Aeronautics' Comprehensive Annual Financial Report has once again been awarded the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting. This Certificate is the highest form of recognition in governmental accounting and financial reporting, and its attainment represents a significant accomplishment by a government unit and its management. This is the 19th consecutive year that the Department has received this honor.
- » The next three meetings of the Gerald R. Ford International Airport Board will be held February 27, March 27, and April 24, 2013 at 8:30 am. All meetings will be held in the International Room at the passenger terminal building unless otherwise posted on our website at [www.FlyFord.org](http://www.FlyFord.org) and are open to the public.

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Fort Myers, Las Vegas, Minneapolis, New York - LaGuardia, Orlando International, Orlando - Sanford, Phoenix - Mesa, Saint Petersburg - Clearwater, Tampa International, and Toronto.

Airport Executive Director, Brian Ryks, states, "We are very pleased to be a part of United Airline's expanding network. The addition of service to Washington - Dulles International not only offers our West Michigan flyers a nonstop flight to our nation's capital, it also provides excellent domestic and international connections through another major hub airport."

Tickets are available now for travel on or after May 1, 2013.

## Parking Rates Largely Unchanged for 2013

Parking rates at Gerald R. Ford International Airport are as follows:

### Short-term Parking:

\$2 first hour  
\$1 per additional ½ hour  
\$24 daily maximum

### Long-term Garage Parking:

\$2 per hour  
\$13 daily maximum  
\$78 weekly maximum

### Long-term Parking in the North Lot:

\$2 per hour  
\$10 daily maximum  
\$60 weekly maximum

### Express Shuttle Parking:

\$2 per hour  
\$9 daily maximum  
\$54 weekly maximum

### Valet Parking:

\$18 per day  
\$12 for five hours or less

For all parking (except Valet) there is a \$10 lost-ticket fee if original parking stub is not presented when exiting the parking facility.

For your convenience, we offer a parking calculator on our website to assist you in estimating your parking fees. Visit [www.FlyFord.org](http://www.FlyFord.org) for more information.

## Connected

How can you stay connected with what's happening at your airport?

### On Facebook:

[GeraldRFordInternationalAirport](https://www.facebook.com/GeraldRFordInternationalAirport)

### On the web:

[www.FlyFord.org](http://www.FlyFord.org)

### Subscribe to Airport Connections:

Send an email to [gfiainfo@grr.org](mailto:gfiainfo@grr.org) with "Subscribe" in the subject line.

*Airport Connections* is the quarterly newsletter of the Gerald R. Ford International Airport. We encourage our readers to contact us with comments, suggestions, and submissions. If you wish to be added to the mailing list for *Airport Connections*, please contact the Kent County Department of Aeronautics:

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**Facebook:** [GeraldRFordInternationalAirport](https://www.facebook.com/GeraldRFordInternationalAirport)

**Airport Board** | Roger Morgan\*, chair; Dick Vander Molen\*, vice chair; Birgit Klohs; Terri Lynn Land; David Slikkers; Ted Vonk\*; Floyd Wilson, Jr.

\* County Commissioner

**Executive Director** | Brian D. Ryks, A.A.E.

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