



MEDIA RELEASE

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RFD Shares Updated Plans for its \$50M Cargo Expansion Project

ROCKFORD, Ill. (Oct. 28, 2021) – Chicago Rockford International Airport (RFD) officials today announced it is in the process of redesigning a portion of its expansion project which will remove a detention basin that was originally planned in the Bell Bowl Prairie. Additionally, construction that was previously on hold until November 1 will be suspended within the Bell Bowl Prairie until Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) consultation activities with the US Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) are concluded.

In consultation with the FAA and USFWS, the capacity of the planned Bell Bowl Prairie detention basin will be replaced by other planned basins on RFD grounds.

"During the coming months, we will continue to work with the FAA, IDNR, and the USFWS to ensure the project continues and we can plan and develop in compliance with the Federal and state regulations for the endangered species," said Zack Oakley, the Deputy Director of Operations and Planning at RFD. "The FAA is reinitiating consultation under the Endangered Species Act with the USFWS to evaluate impacts to the Rusty Patched Bumble Bee, so planned construction initially scheduled to continue on November 1 will be suspended until further consultation is completed. We anticipate the resumption of the project in the spring of 2022."

Throughout its numerous expansion and economic development projects, including this expansion, RFD has demonstrated a responsibility and awareness to potential environmental impacts. As part of this project, RFD:

- Completed a FAA Environmental Assessment in 2019 and received a "Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)"
- Followed all guidelines and rules set forth by the FAA, Federal, state and local government
- Coordinated with the FAA, USFWS, and the IDNR in regard to a sighting of the Federally Endangered Rusty Patched Bumblebee that was recorded in the vicinity of project. RFD paused all work in the area to accommodate the bee foraging season
- Voluntarily worked with the IDNR on a field survey and relocation of two state endangered plant species (large-flowered beard tongue and prairie dandelion). RFD agreed to allow INDR to remove and transplant these specific plants prior to commencing construction, in addition to the prairie gentian, prairie smoke, prickly pear, aromatic aster, and bastard toadflax

This \$50 million dollar cargo expansion is significant for the region. It is estimated to create hundreds of construction jobs, generate up to 600 permanent new jobs at the airport, and facilitate continued growth of the region's strength in worldwide international cargo operations.



RFD continues to be an economic engine for the Rock River Valley, and Northern Illinois, as a competitive and expanding international air cargo gateway, creating skilled jobs in aviation, transportation, logistics and construction. Over the past year, RFD and its partners have created over 1,000 new jobs bringing the total jobs on the airport campus to over 8,000. Among the many projects the Airport and its partners have announced and/or achieved this past year include the construction of this new \$50 million international cargo center, the AAR/United Airlines partnership and the \$19 million UPS ramp expansion.

About Chicago Rockford International Airport

Chicago Rockford International Airport (RFD) continues to expand its international air cargo gateway. RFD is the second largest hub in the United States for UPS, one of the world's leading express freight integrators, as well as being an important mini hub for Amazon Prime Air. RFD currently operates a freighter network serving destinations to and from countries from around the world, as well as from international tier one freight forwarders such as DB Schenker, DSV and SENATOR. Visit www.flyrfd.com.

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