Oregon Air

November 19, 2026

VIA FIRST CLASS MAIL AND ELECTRONIC MAIL

Jason Ritchie, Director
Office of Airports, Northwest Mountain Region (ANM-600)
Federal Aviation Administration
2200 S. 216th Street
Des Moines, WA 98198
Email: jason.ritchie@faa.gov

REQUEST FOR RESCISSION AND RE-EVALUATION OF CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION (CATEX) DETERMINATION

Airport: Hillsboro Airport (HIO), Hillsboro, Oregon
Sponsor: Port of Portland
Project: HIO Sky Harbour Jet Hangars

Dear Mr. Ritchie:

We submit this formal administrative Request for Rescission and Re-evaluation of the Categorical Exclusion (CATEX) Determination dated March 6, 2026 (governed by FAA Order 1050.1G), for the Sky Harbour jet hangar development at HIO. Oregon Air represents thousands of residents who live, work, and recreate near the Hillsboro Airport (HIO) in Washington County, Oregon.

The Sky Harbour CATEX application contains numerous false statements, omissions, and material misrepresentations which the FAA relied upon to make the CATEX determination. The Port of Portland has acknowledged these issues, but has indicated that they will not be submitting a new CATEX. Sky Harbour has withdrawn their initial City of Hillsboro land-use application but is “preparing an application to resubmit under a Type II with NO adjustments”. (source)

Because the CATEX determination was obtained through material misrepresentations of fact on a federal certification, any continued use of that determination to advance local permitting or project approval constitutes ongoing fraud. We ask that you take immediate action to prevent this.

For the reasons detailed below, we respectfully request that the FAA suspend and formally rescind the existing CATEX determination, reject any attempt to cure these misrepresentations through a replacement CATEX or claim of mootness, and require a full Environmental Assessment (EA) before any further federal or local approvals proceed.

I. False Statements on the CATEX Application

The Documented CATEX directly contradicts Sky Harbour's City of Hillsboro filings across several critical environmental categories including but not limited to:

- **Operations & Noise:** The Port claimed no increase in aircraft operations, nighttime flights, or fleet mix changes, whereas Sky Harbour's land-use plan introduces five hangars for up to 30 business jets, nearly doubling HIO's 33 based jets, with approximately 60% active at a time and 50% empty-leg positioning flights during late-night and early-morning hours.
- **Fuel & Surface Traffic:** The Port asserted that fuel usage and vehicle trips would remain unchanged because the project "relocates existing services at HIO," yet the project includes a new 40,000-gallon Jet A fuel farm and an 183,949-square-foot commercial aviation campus generating substantial daily vehicle trips.
- **Water Quality, Dawson Creek & Hazardous De-Icing Chemicals:** The Port checked "No" regarding potential impacts to nearby water resources, Clean Water Act standards, threatened or endangered species, and hazardous materials—claiming that basic surface runoff swales would treat all stormwater before entering surrounding surface waters. In reality, the project sits directly across the street from Dawson Creek and involves aircraft de-icing and anti-icing operations using toxic glycol-based chemicals (similar to automotive antifreeze) that standard sediment filtration bioswales cannot capture or treat, creating a direct risk of toxic chemical runoff into Dawson Creek and downstream watersheds.
- **Facility Scope, Lighting & Aesthetics:** The Port minimized the project as a singular structure ("a new hangar") with no visual or light emission impacts, ignoring five distinct large hangars and 24/7 exterior lighting visible from adjacent public trails.

- **Sensitive Receptors & Capacity:** The Port omitted the adjacent Hillsboro Brookwood Public Library (directly across the street with a direct line of sight to jet engines over a 7-foot chain-link fence) and falsely checked "No" regarding airside and landside capacity expansion.

(Note: A formal complaint regarding these false certifications on a federal form has also been submitted to the U.S. Department of Transportation Office of Inspector General on September 29, 2026.)

II. Port Officials' Public Statements

At the HIO Fall Community Forum on October 27, 2026, Port officials Stephen Winkle and Jennifer Bies made key admissions on the record regarding the CATEX:

- **Improper Comparison:** Mr. Winkle admitted that flight volumes were evaluated against an unreached historical Master Plan forecast rather than the current existing conditions.
- **Incomplete Data:** Ms. Bies acknowledged that the Port failed to "connect the dots" or provide complete explanation of the foundational data.
- **Mischaracterized Scope:** Officials stated that a single answer was disputed, whereas the record demonstrates over twenty false or misleading statements across operations, fuel, traffic, noise, and environmental controls.

III. Extraordinary Circumstances and Unstudied Direct Impacts Preclude a CATEX

Under FAA Order 1050.1G a Categorical Exclusion cannot be issued where extraordinary circumstances exist or where the project has the potential for significant direct or indirect environmental impacts. Port improperly compared Sky Harbour's expansion against an unreached Master Plan forecast instead of existing conditions.

When evaluated accurately against current conditions, adding up to 30 based corporate jets (with 50% empty-leg positioning flights and frequent late-night/early-morning operations) and a 40,000-gallon fuel farm directly across the street from the Hillsboro Brookwood Public Library, adjacent residential neighborhoods, and Dawson Creek indicates clear extraordinary circumstances.

Under FAA Order 1050.1G, (Appendix B, Paragraph B-1), the presence of unstudied direct impacts and extraordinary circumstances, including increased jet noise over noise-sensitive receptors and substantial analytical disputes over operational data, should disqualify the project from a Categorical Exclusion and require a formal Environmental Assessment (EA).

IV. Requested Administrative Remedies

Because the CATEX relies on egregious sponsor misrepresentations, ignores adjacent sensitive receptors and cumulative impacts, we formally request that the FAA:

1. **Issue an Immediate Administrative Stay:** Suspend the active CATEX determination for the Sky Harbour project at HIO and place an immediate hold on any pending Airport Layout Plan (ALP) approvals, airspace determinations, or federal approvals tied to the project.
2. **Formally Rescind the CATEX (No Mootness Dismissal):** Enter a formal written rescission of the existing CATEX determination on the record due to inaccurate and incomplete sponsor representations, and decline to treat the flawed determination as moot even if the Port submits—or has already submitted—revised project materials.
3. **Bar the Use of a Replacement CATEX and Require an Environmental Assessment (EA):** Prohibit the Port of Portland from curing this compromised filing through a second CATEX checklist, and instead require a full Environmental Assessment (EA) with public notice and comment that independently evaluates actual induced jet operations, nighttime flights, cumulative noise, library/ neighborhood receptors, and chemical containment.
4. **Public Notice:** Notify affected agencies, stakeholders, and interested members of the public of any replacement or revised CATEX submitted for this project so that the adequacy and accuracy of the submission may be evaluated through appropriate public scrutiny before any FAA action is taken.
5. **Provide a Written Determination:** Confirm receipt of this request and provide a written determination within 30 days.

Thank you for your prompt attention to ensuring strict compliance with federal environmental and aviation regulations at Hillsboro Airport.

Sincerely,





Sarah Richmond
Lead Appellant
SarahRichmond03@gmail.com
503-516-8960

Brett Hamilton
Founder
brett@simple.be
503-803-7609

Enclosures:

- Report of Sky Harbour CATEX Fraud (October 31, 2026) https://www.oregonair.org/hf/OA2026103102.pdf
- Marked-up CATEX Application (September 26, 2026) https://www.oregonair.org/hf/OA2026092601.pdf
- Excerpted Transcript of Port of Portland HIO Fall Community Forum (October 27, 2026) https://www.oregonair.org/hf/OA2026103101.pdf
- Email from Sky Harbour Group (September, 22 2026) https://www.oregonair.org/hf/SHG2026092201.pdf

CC:

- Don Scata, Acting Executive Director, Office of Environment and Energy (AEE-1), Federal Aviation Administration, 800 Independence Ave. SW, Suite 900W, Washington, DC 20591. donald.scata@faa.gov
- Rick Schoder, FAA Manager of Safety and Standards. rick.schoder@faa.gov
- FAA Hotline https://hotline.faa.gov/
- City of Hillsboro Planning Division
- City of Hillsboro Mayor Beach Pace and Hillsboro City Council