U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Aviation
Administration**

Air Traffic Organization
Western Service Center

1601 Lind Ave SW.
Renton, WA 98057

May 6, 2016

Reference: **Early Notification to Prepare an Environmental Assessment for the Denver Metroplex Project**

This notification is to inform you that the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) intends to prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA) to consider the potential environmental impacts of the implementation of the Denver Metroplex (DEN Metroplex) Project. Attachment A is a copy of the Notice that will be published in the Denver Post that notifies the general public of the FAA's intent to prepare an EA.

A "Metroplex" consists of multiple airports in and around a busy metropolitan area. The DEN Metroplex Project would improve the efficiency of the Denver Metroplex airspace by optimizing aircraft arrival and departure procedures serving a number of airports, including:

- Denver International Airport (DEN)
- Centennial Airport (APA)
- Greeley-Weld County Airport (GXY)
- Fort Collins-Loveland Municipal Airport (FNL)
- Buckley Air Force Base (BKF)
- Front Range Airport (FTG)
- Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport (BJC)

Additionally, the Longmont Vance Brand Municipal Airport (LMO) is currently and would continue to be served by flight procedures and is included in the EA but does not meet the FAA Order 1050.1F criteria to be designated an EA Study Airport.

The project may involve changes in aircraft flight paths and/or altitudes, but would not require any ground disturbance or increase the number of aircraft operations within the Denver Metroplex airspace area.

To evaluate potential environmental impacts of the DEN Metroplex Project, the FAA has established a General Study Area to evaluate human, physical and natural environmental conditions that could be affected by the aircraft path changes proposed to occur below 10,000 feet above ground level (AGL). The General Study Area captures one year of all radar flight paths up to the point at which 95 percent of departing aircraft are at or above 10,000 feet above

ground level (AGL) and 95 percent of arriving aircraft are at or above 7,000 feet AGL. The lateral boundary of the General Study Area is based on the point where aircraft cross U.S. Census tract boundaries at the 10,000/7,000 feet AGL thresholds. This extent is concisely defined to focus on areas of air traffic flow. Attachment B presents the General Study Area for the DEN Metroplex Project. Additionally, a Supplemental Study Area will be developed up to 18,000 feet AGL if the proposed action or alternative(s) are over a national park or wildlife refuge where other noise is very low and a quiet setting is a generally recognized purpose and attribute. The Supplemental Study Area is based on the point where aircraft cross U.S. Census tract boundaries at the 18,000 feet AGL threshold vertically. Attachment C presents the Supplemental Study Area for the DEN Metroplex Project.

The FAA intends to issue the Draft EA in the middle of 2017. We welcome your input as we prepare the EA and we are sending this early notification for the following reasons:

1. To advise you of the initiation of the EA study;
2. To provide you an opportunity to submit any background information that you may have regarding the study area established for this EA; and
3. To provide you an opportunity to advise the FAA of any issues, concerns, policies or regulations that you may have regarding the environmental analysis that will be undertaken in the EA.

Many resource categories defined within FAA Order 1050.1F *Environmental Impacts: Policies and Procedures* would remain unaffected, either because the resource does not exist within the General Study Area or the types of activities associated with the DEN Metroplex Project would not affect them. The FAA is seeking public input via this Early Notification specifically for those environmental resource categories or components that the DEN Metroplex Project could potentially affect. These environmental resource categories or sub-categories include:

- Socioeconomic Impacts, Environmental Justice and Children's Environmental Health and Safety Risks (Environmental Justice subcategory only)
- Department of Transportation Act: Section 4(f) Resources
- Noise
- Air Quality
- Climate
- Compatible Land Use
- Historic, Architectural, Archeological and Cultural Resources (Historic and Cultural Resources sub-categories only)
- Fish, Wildlife and Plants (Wildlife sub-category only)
- Natural Resources and Energy Supply- Energy Supply sub-category only (aircraft fuel only)

The FAA intends to hold public workshop(s) following publication of the Draft EA. The public workshop(s) will be conducted to provide an opportunity for the public to learn about the project and to submit comments. The FAA will provide public notice of the public workshop(s) and the availability of the Draft EA at a future date.

FAA is currently working on additional details related to this project, and will be coordinating with the appropriate agencies in the near future. If you desire to provide comments and/or have any questions about the information provided, please provide them by letter or email, before June 7, 2016 at the following address:

Attn: Marina Landis
Environmental Specialist
Western Service Area - Operations Support Group, AJV-W22
Federal Aviation Administration
1601 Lind Ave., SW
Renton, WA 98057
Telephone: (425) 203-4561
Email: 9-ANM-Denver-Metroplex-EA@faa.gov

Attachment A – Public Notice
Attachment B – General Study Area
Attachment C – Supplemental Study Area

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
Federal Aviation Administration

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) intends to prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA) to consider the potential environmental impacts of the implementation of the Denver Metroplex (DEN Metroplex) Project.

SUMMARY: The FAA is issuing this notice to advise the public it intends to prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA) for the DEN Metroplex. A Metroplex consists of multiple airports in and around a busy metropolitan area. The DEN Metroplex Project would improve the efficiency of the Denver Metroplex airspace by optimizing aircraft arrival and departure procedures serving a number of airports, including Denver International Airport (DEN); Centennial Airport (APA); Greeley-Weld County Airport (GXY); Fort Collins-Loveland Municipal Airport (FNL); Buckley Air Force Base (BKF); Front Range Airport (FTG); and Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport (BJC).

Additionally, the Longmont Vance Brand Municipal Airport (LMO) is currently and would continue to be served by flight procedures and is included in the EA but does not meet the FAA Order 1050.1F criteria to be designated an EA Study Airport.

The EA will be conducted pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and its implementing Regulations found at Title 40, Code of Federal Regulations, Sections 1500-1508. The purpose of the proposed DEN Metroplex is to improve the efficiency of the controlled airspace using more current navigation technology called Area Navigation (RNAV). The FAA has not made any decisions about the final EA content.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:
Air traffic procedures operating in the airspace above and near DEN in addition to the EA Study Airports will be evaluated in the draft EA. The current procedures, which are intended to provide an orderly flow of traffic in and out of a busy metropolitan area, are largely dependent upon navigational aids on the ground and/or air traffic controller issued radar vectors. Ground-based navigational aids have limited capabilities, which dictate the location of a route in/out of the airspace. Radar vectors involve multiple communication transmissions between an air traffic controller and a pilot. RNAV technology is not limited to ground-based navigational aids and not subject to the same limitations. Therefore, RNAV-based procedures can direct pilots along more direct routes with predictable location and altitude information. A predictable procedure would involve less communication between an air traffic controller and a pilot; thereby reducing workload for both individuals. The application of RNAV technology for the DEN Metroplex would enhance efficient use of the airspace.

Proposed Action
The FAA intends to issue the Draft EA in the middle of 2017. We welcome your input as we prepare the EA for the following reasons:

- To advise you of the initiation of the EA study;
- To provide you an opportunity to submit any background information that you may have regarding the study area established for this EA; and
- To provide you an opportunity to advise the FAA of any issues, concerns, policies or regulations that you may have regarding the environmental analysis that will be undertaken in the EA.

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Many resource categories defined within FAA Order 1050.1F Environmental Impacts: Policies and Procedures would remain unaffected, either because the resource does not exist within the General Study Area or the types of activities associated with the DEN Metroplex Project would not affect them. The FAA is seeking public input via this Early Notification specifically for those environmental resource categories or components that the DEN Metroplex Project could potentially affect. These environmental resource categories or sub-categories include:

- Socioeconomic Impacts, Environmental Justice and Children's Environmental Health and Safety Risks (Environmental Justice subcategory only)
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- Noise
- Air Quality
- Climate
- Compatible Land Use
- Historic, Architectural, Archeological and Cultural Resources (Historic and Cultural Resources sub-categories only)
- Fish, Wildlife and Plants (Wildlife sub-category only)
- Natural Resources and Energy Supply- Energy Supply sub-category only (aircraft fuel only)

Implementation of the proposed DEN Metroplex is neither anticipated to increase the number of aircraft operations at the EA Study Airports; nor involve physical construction of any facilities.

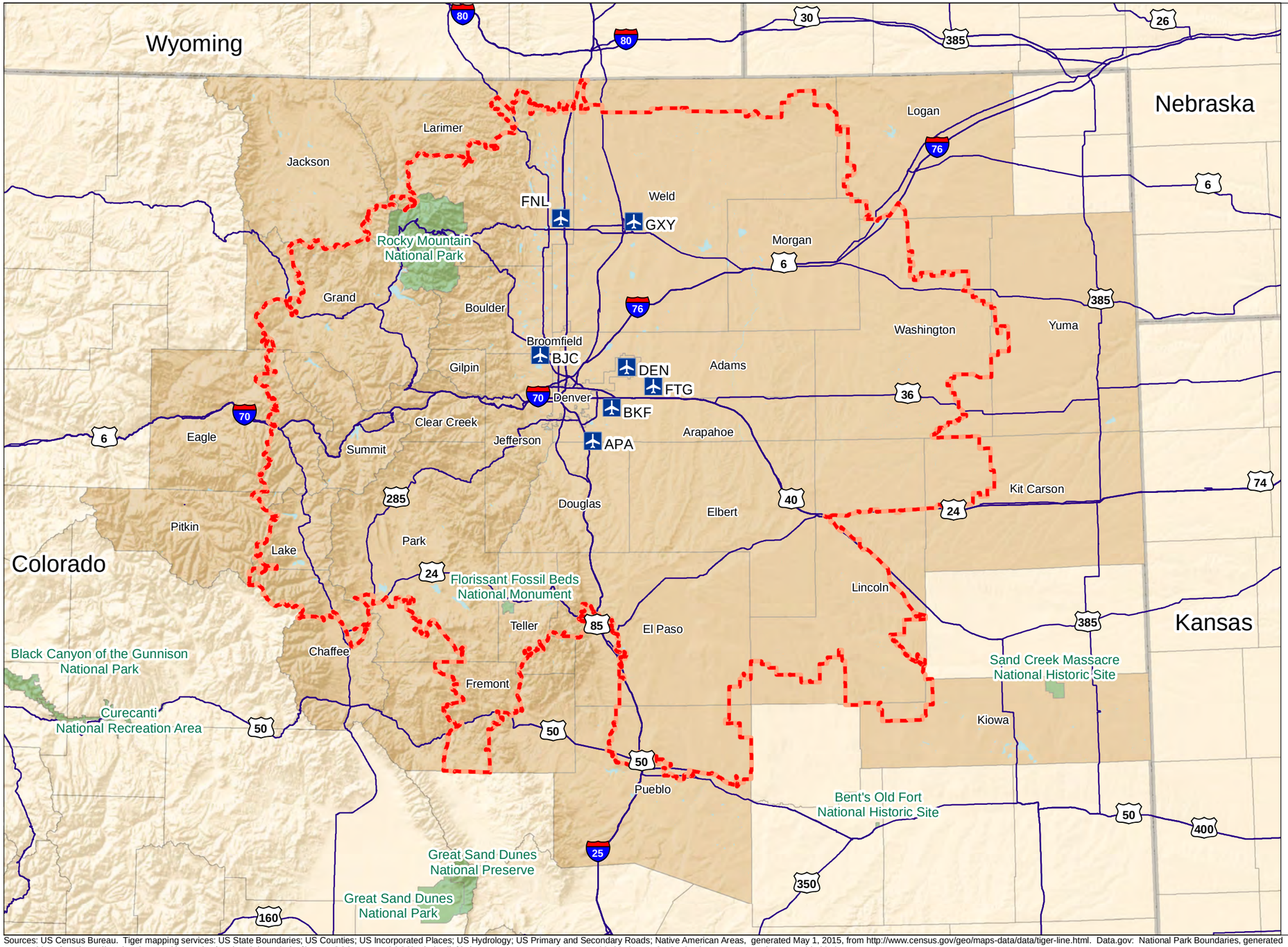
General Study Area

To evaluate potential environmental impacts of the DEN Metroplex Project, the FAA has established a General Study Area to evaluate human, physical and natural environmental conditions that could be affected by the aircraft path changes proposed to occur below 10,000 feet above ground level (AGL). The General Study Area captures one year of all radar flight paths up to the point at which 95 percent of departing aircraft are at or above 10,000 feet above ground level (AGL) and 95 percent of arriving aircraft are at or above 7,000 feet AGL. The lateral boundary of the General Study Area is based on the point where aircraft cross U.S. Census tract boundaries at the 10,000/7,000 feet AGL thresholds. This extent is concisely defined to focus on areas of air traffic flow. The General Study Area for the DEN Metroplex Project is located at http://www.metroplexenvironmental.com. Additionally, a Supplemental Study area will be developed up to 18,000 feet AGL if the proposed action or alternative(s) are over a national park or wildlife refuge where other noise is very low and a quiet setting is a generally recognized purpose and attribute. The Supplemental Study Area is based on the point where aircraft cross U.S. Census tract boundaries at the 18,000 feet AGL threshold vertically. The Supplemental Study Area for the DEN Metroplex Project is located at http://www.metroplexenvironmental.com.

PUBLIC WORKSHOPS

The FAA intends to hold public workshop(s) following publication of the Draft EA. The public workshop(s) will be conducted to provide an opportunity for the public to learn about the project and to submit comments. The FAA will provide public notice of the public workshop(s) and the availability of the Draft EA at a future date.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Attn: Marina Landis, Environmental Specialist, Western Service Area - Operations Support Group, AJV-W22, Federal Aviation Administration, 1601 Lind Ave., SW, Renton, WA 98057. Telephone: (425) 203-4561 Email: 9-ANM-Denver-Metroplex-EA@faa.gov



LEGEND

- Study Airports
- General Study Area Boundary
- Highways
- Water
- National Park Service Properties
- Counties in the General Study Area
- US Counties
- US State Boundaries

Notes:
APA - Centennial Airport
BJC - Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport
BKF - Buckley Air Force Base
DEN - Denver International Airport
FNL - Fort Collins-Loveland Municipal Airport
FTG - Front Range Airport
GXY - Greeley-Weld County Airport

Projection :GCS North American 1983
Scale: 1:2,631,162

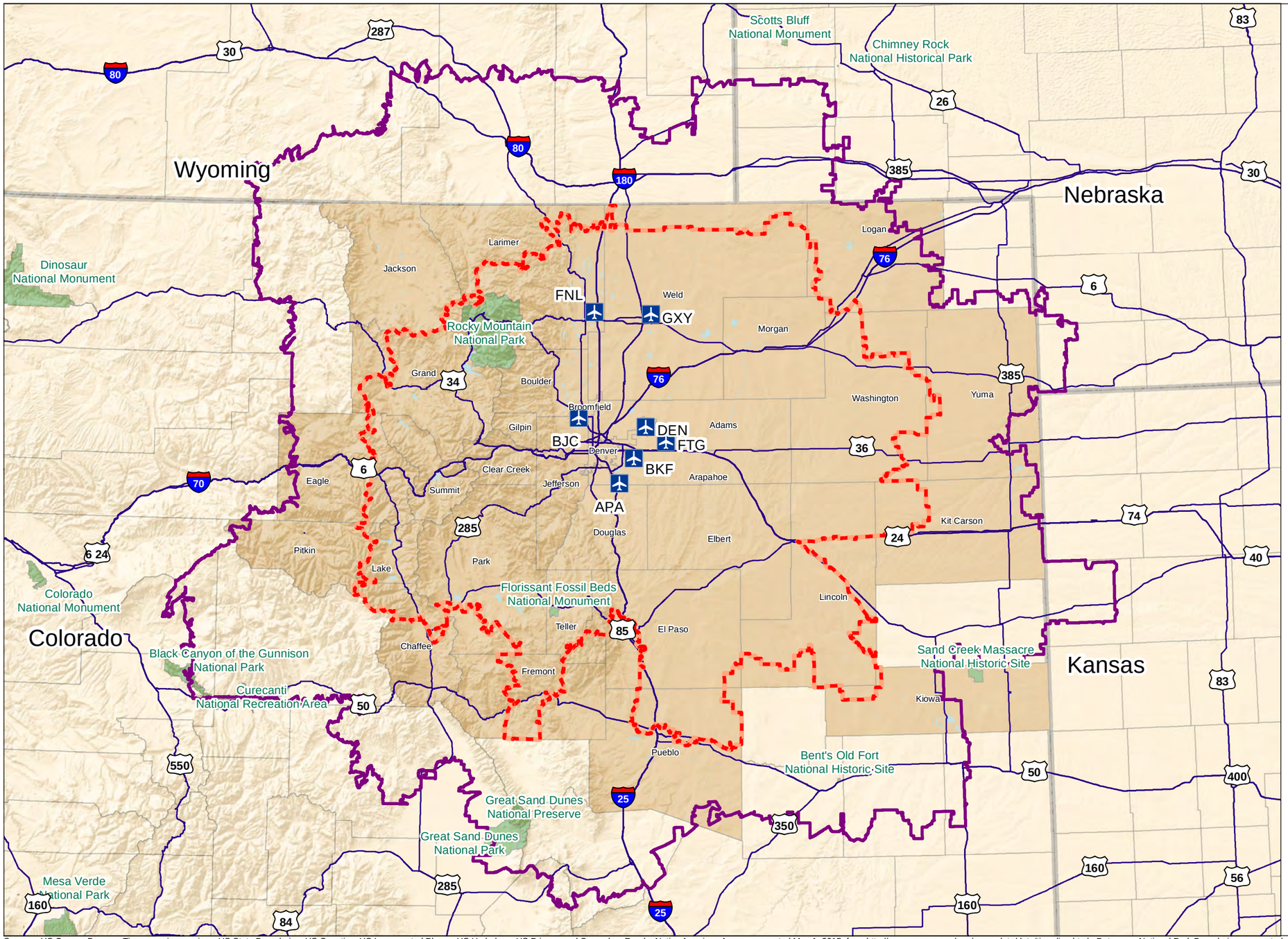
0 5 10 20 Miles

N

Sources: US Census Bureau. Tiger mapping services: US State Boundaries; US Counties; US Incorporated Places; US Hydrology; US Primary and Secondary Roads; Native American Areas, generated May 1, 2015, from http://www.census.gov/geo/maps-data/data/tiger-line.html. Data.gov: National Park Boundaries, generated May 1, 2015, from https://catalog.data.gov/dataset/national-park-boundaries0a4c. USGS. TNM: USGSShadedReliefOnly Basemap, generated January, 26, 2016. NFDC. Study Airports, generated January 26, 2016.
Prepared by: ATAC Corporation, January 2016.

DEN METROPLEX EA

General Study Area



LEGEND

- Study Airports
- 18K Supplemental Boundary
- General Study Area Boundary
- Highways
- Water
- National Park Service Properties
- Counties in the General Study Area
- US Counties
- US State Boundaries

Notes:
APA - Centennial Airport
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Prepared by: ATAC Corporation, January 2016.

DEN METROPLEX EA

18K Supplemental Boundary