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Mather trumpets noise abatement

By: *Matthew Self, The Telegraph*

Mather Airport trumpeted the return of their noise abatement procedure last week, but city, district and county officials in the area were not impressed.

Mather's Instrument Landing System, a precision landing system that enables aircraft to remain as high as practical, has been off line since the end of August, a Mather spokesperson said. Airport officials believe it is the best hope to lessen noise incurred from large cargo planes flying over homes.

Residents from Cameron Park to Folsom have registered complaints with the Sacramento County Airport System since the nearby airport transitioned from a military installation to civilian use in 1995. It now operates as a commercial venture that caters to companies, such as UPS.

While the ILS allows for higher elevations during landing, it creates a direct flight path over some of the most dense housing along the heart of the Highway 50 corridor.

The airport had been using a VOR/DME approach and pilot judgement when visibility allowed while the ILS was down. The less precise landing systems sometimes cause aircraft to land at lower elevations causing more noise for affected homes, but the sphere of their landing path does not broach the Highway 50 corridor as consistently as the ILS.

Monica Newhouse, a SCAS spokesperson, admitted they were receiving more complaints with the return of ILS.

"The use of ILS is a double-edge sword," she said. "They have done a lot of things at Mather to make it the best it can be. If you put all the planes on ILS, more planes go through that community. UPS uses larger planes, and they want to use the best guidance they can to get those planes in. We can't win either way."

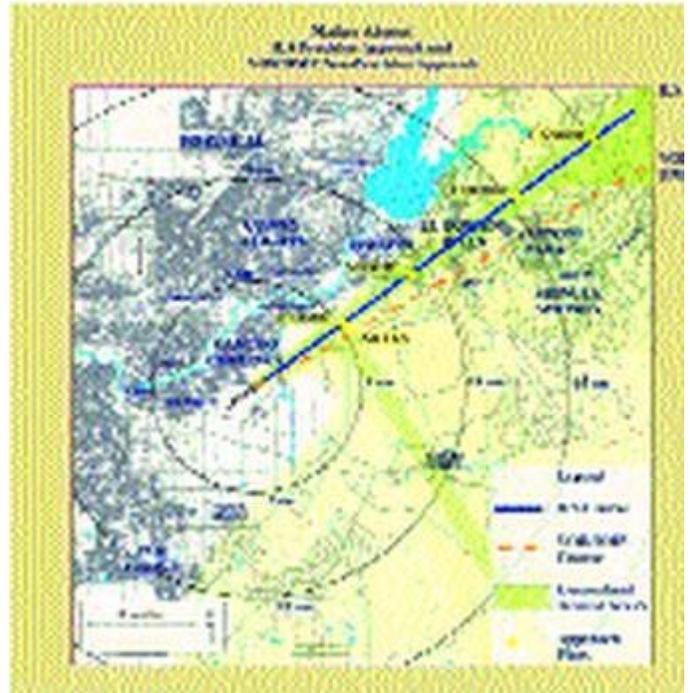
Folsom Mayor Steve Miklos proposes a simply - but costly - solution: Remove the cargo planes and restrict nighttime flights.

"I don't have any issue with them except between 10 p.m. and 7 a.m. As you know, riding any aircraft, you have to power up to land. They power up in the Cameron Park/Serrano area all the way in," Miklos said. "What it really boils down to is the (Sacramento County) Board of Supervisors has to tell them they need to come up with a nighttime guideline."

Miklos said he will propose writing a strongly-worded letter to the county board at the Dec. 14 Folsom City Council meeting.

El Dorado County Supervisor Rusty Dupray (Dist. 1) expressed frustration in dealing with his counterparts across the county line.

"They're the ones who make decisions for that airport. We have a good line of communication, but we don't feel as though they're listening very carefully what El Dorado Hills and Cameron Park is saying," he said.



The ILS approach to Mather allows for higher elevations during landing. Courtesy Photo

"We have major concerns over Cameron Park and El Dorado Hills, as does the city of Folsom. We have sent letters from the Folsom/El Dorado Hills joint powers committee. We've sent letters from the board of supervisors. What's happened with Folsom is they're at the point of sending scathing letters to the carriers to tell them they're not going to support their businesses. We have addressed it until we're blue in the face with Sacramento Metro Airport System."

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