



Department of Public Works

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AGENDA
TUOLUMNE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AIRPORTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
November 17, 2025
10:00 AM – 11:30 PM

LOCATION:
48 Yaney Ave, Sonora, CA
Third Floor — Conference Room – Public Works – 3A

This Airports Advisory Committee meeting will be available to the public via in-person attendance only at the above physical address.

1. INTRODUCTIONS

2. PUBLIC FORUM

The public may speak on any item, not on the printed agenda. No Action may be taken by the Committee.

3. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

Consideration of approving the minutes of the meeting on October 6, 2025.

4. STAFF / COMMITTEE REPORTS

5. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

- a. Review and recommend Pine Mountain Lake Airport (E45) CTAF/UNICOM frequency change request to the FAA.

6. NEXT MEETING – January 12, 2026, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM, 48 Yaney Ave, Sonora, CA, Third Floor Conference Room- Public Works-3A

7. ADJOURNMENT



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MINUTES
UNAPPROVED
TUOLUMNE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AIRPORT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
OCTOBER 6, 2025
10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Steve Grier, District 4 Supervisor; Mark Banks, Jeremy Zawodny, Joe Sobczak, Jim Stenger

COUNTY STAFF: Blossom Scott Heim, Director of Public Works; Tonya Scheftner, Airports Manager; Brittaney Barton, Administration Technician II

ABSENT: Jaron Brandon, District 5 Supervisor

CALL TO ORDER: Supervisor Grier called the October 6, 2025, meeting to order at 10:32 a.m.

PUBLIC FORUM:

The public may speak on any item, not on the printed agenda. No action may be taken by the committee. The amount of time allocated for the public forum is limited to 15 minutes total.

Member of the public voiced concerns about allowing enough time for the public to review agenda materials following publication.

Discussion ensued.

Supervisor Grier made a note of concern and stated it can be discussed at a future meeting.

With no further comments, Supervisor Grier closed the public forum.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Approval of minutes from May 19, 2025, Airports Advisory Committee Meeting.

Supervisor Grier looked for a motion to approve the minutes of the Board of Supervisors Airports Advisory Committee Meeting on May 19, 2025. No changes or additions were requested. A motion was made by Committee Member, Supervisor Grier, motion passed 5-0.

STAFF/COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- a. Proposed frequency change for Pine Mountain Lake Airport (PML) concurrent with name change.

Tonya Scheftner, Airports Manager, began her presentation by explaining the current radio frequency used at Pine Mountain Lake Airport, 122.90, is shared with nine other airports resulting in congestion and interference for radio calls. This was determined by Committee Member Joe Sobczak, who conducted a database search providing numerous airports up to about 200 nautical miles (NM) away and Airports Manager, Tonya Scheftner, who was able to narrow down his search to 75 nautical miles. Due to Pine Mountain Lake Airport's higher elevation, increased radio traffic from surrounding airports is more easily intercepted.

Joe Sobczak stated that frequency 122.90 serves as the predominant channel in the region, primarily used by private airports.

Discussion ensued.

Tonya Scheftner proposed changing the radio frequency to 122.725. Implementing this change would eliminate shared use with the congested 122.90 frequency used by numerous other airports, limiting it to only one shared frequency within 75 NM (Rio Vista Municipal Airport). She asked to have this added as an action item to the next committee meeting and that input be solicited from community members in the Pine Mountain Lake area.

b. Obstacle Departure Procedure implemented by the FAA for Pine Mountain Lake Airport Runway 27

Tonya Scheftner reported that she received an email from the FAA stating Pine Mountain Lake Airport is now under obstacle departure procedure for Pine Mountain Lake departing from Runway 27. Instrument Flight Rules (IFR) procedure requires 300' cloud ceiling and 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ statute miles of visibility which will negatively impact commercial pilots even though it is Part 91.

Discussion ensued.

Tonya Scheftner, accompanied by Jason Johansen, a member of the Pine Mountain Lake airport community, and Joe Sobczak, met with the FAA at the airports manager meeting where it was determined that Pine Mountain Lake Airport has never had an aerial survey done. Based on assumptions of terrain, elevation, and 100' average tree height rather than a survey, it appears to be close to 20:1 departure, but FAA member did not specify. The aerial survey might be necessary but could make things worse for airport depending on findings. The price of a survey could be anywhere between \$50,000 and \$100,000, verification is needed from the FAA.

Discussion ensued.

Supervisor Grier said to put a pin in this topic and asked the public if there are any questions.

Member of public asked for clarification on statute miles of visibility.
Round table discussion continued.

Supervisor Grier motioned to move forward with next item on Agenda.

DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS:

- a. Review and recommend Pine Mountain Lake Airport name change.

Tonya Scheftner reflects on a public meeting that was held on August 6, 2025, with the Pine Mountain Lake Community to discuss the proposed name change of Pine Mountain Lake to Groveland-Yosemite Airport to improve clarity for visitors planning a trip to Groveland and Yosemite, tourist branding, strengthening local economic development, and matching regional airport naming practices. The name change proposal generally received positive responses from the community. She proposed a timeline of approximately 1 year but has yet to receive confirmation from the airports district office in San Francisco – assuming the committee motions to proceed with the name change.

New signage indicating the name change will cost approximately \$4,500. This total would not include painting the taxiway. Per Caltrans, the name of the airport needs to be removed from the taxiway rather than redone to match the name change.

Discussion ensued.

Supervisor Grier & Committee Member Jim Stenger discussed how the name change could bring more traffic to the area, thus increasing revenue to nearby small businesses.

Jim noted that increasing visibility and activity at the airport could enhance Pine Mountain Lake Airport's recognition by the FAA within the national airports database, thereby improving eligibility for FAA funding.

Discussion ensued.

Committee Member, Mark Banks, recommended a motion be made to change the name of Pine Mountain Lake to Groveland-Yosemite Airport, seconded by Committee Member, Jeremy Zawodny. Motion passed 5-0.

- b. Review and recommend amended airport fee increase option.

Blossom Scott-Heim, Director of Public Works, reflected on the county accepting the Airports Feasibility and Viability Study in December 2024 which recommended that hangar rents be increased. The new rates were recommended by professionals who specialize in airport evaluations. Three options were presented to the committee in May 2025.

Two revised rate adjustment options were then presented to the Committee. Blossom requested that the Committee review the options and provide a recommendation for the Board of Supervisors. The

proposed adjustments represent an approximate annual increase of \$32,000 for Columbia Airport and \$1,200 for Pine Mountain Lake Airport.

Option 1: Implement the full rate increase effective January 2026.

Option 2: Implement a 50% rate increase in January 2026, with the remaining 50% plus the annual CPI adjustment effective July 2026.

Discussion ensued.

Tonya Scheftner stated commercial hangars that have negotiated leases are not subject to rate increase. She noted rows A-E they will be the most impacted by the rate increases. The feasibility study recommended an increase from \$172 to \$247. The CPI increase brought them up to \$183 per month. The county is proposing \$220 per month following the consultants revising to \$235 per the request of the Airports Advisory Committees for another review based on the deferred maintenance and age.

Discussion ensued.

Supervisor Grier asked if the committee is in favor of proceeding with rate increase and which of the two options presented is favorable.

Committee member, Mark Banks, made a motion to move forward with the second option, seconded by committee member Jim Stenger. The motion was passed 5-0.

NEXT MEETING: The next scheduled Board of Supervisors Airport Advisory Committee Meeting will be held on November 17, 2025, at 10:00 a.m.

ADJOURNMENT: Supervisor Grier adjourned the meeting at 11:34 a.m.



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TO: Airport Advisory Committee Members

FROM: Tonya Scheftner, P.G., Airport Manager
Blossom Scott-Heim, P.E., Director

DATE: November 17, 2025

RE: Pine Mountain Lake Airport (E45) CTAF/UNICOM Frequency Change

REQUESTED ACTION

Review and discuss requesting CTAF/UNICOM frequency change for Pine Mountain Lake Airport (E45) and to provide direction to staff regarding making a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Tuolumne County is considering requesting a CTAF/UNICOM frequency change for Pine Mountain Lake Airport (E45). The airport currently operates on common traffic advisory frequency/universal communications (CTAF/UNICOM) 122.900 MHz. Due to frequency congestion and interference from multiple airports also operating on 122.900, Tuolumne County is considering requesting FAA Spectrum Engineering evaluate assignment of a new CTAF frequency.

A public meeting was scheduled in Groveland on November 14, 2025, where attendees were given the opportunity to provide feedback regarding the potential frequency change.

FAA approval is required through the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Airports District Office (ADO) who will determine if there is an operational justification to forward the request to FAA Spectrum Engineering to determine if the change is feasible and assign a frequency. A proposed new frequency may be submitted by the airport staff if known. Following FAA Spectrum Engineering Evaluation determination, FAA coordination with charting and publication will ensue, and updates will cascade through FAA records, aeronautical charts, and flight service systems.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

County costs are estimated at \$2,000 for digital updates and can be absorbed in the current budget; FAA administrative changes are no cost.

RECOMMENDATION

Airport Staff recommend that the Airport Advisory Committee recommend approval of the proposed request to the FAA for a CTAF/UNICOM frequency change for Pine Mountain Lake (E45) to the Board of Supervisors.

Background

Pine Mountain Airport (E45) is a public-use general aviation airport owned by Tuolumne County. The airport currently operates on CTAF/UNICOM 122.900 MHz. Due to frequency congestion and interference from multiple airports also operating on 122.900, Tuolumne County would like to request FAA Spectrum Engineering to evaluate assignment of a new CTAF frequency.

Regional Frequency Use

While FAA Spectrum Engineering evaluates conflicts within ~25 nautical miles (NM)/3,000 feet above ground level (AGL), Pine Mountain Lake notes frequency interference from numerous airports beyond the 25 NM radius, such as Lodi Airport, New Jerusalem, Gustine, and Chowchilla – all within 60 NM miles.

Because Pine Mountain Lake sits at nearly 3,000 feet elevation, aircraft in the traffic pattern typically operate near 4,000 feet MSL, which provides extended line of sight into the Central Valley. As a result, pilots at E45 frequently receive overlapping transmissions from other airports within 60 NM (including Lodi, New Jerusalem, Gustine, and Chowchilla). This elevated siting increases the effective radio horizon, making E45 more prone to co-channel interference than the lower airports.

A full table of CTAF assignments within 75 NM of Pine Mountain Lake Airport, compiled from FAA Chart Supplement data, is provided in **Attachment A** for reference.

Regulatory Framework

Per FAA Order JO 7400.2 (Procedures for Handling Airspace Matters) and FCC Part 87 (47 CFR §87.213, §87.21747), UNICOM/CTAF assignments must be spaced to prevent co-channel interference within the protected service volume (generally 25 NM radius and 3,000 ft AGL). Advisory Circular AC 90-66B emphasizes the importance of clear, interference free CTAF communication at non-towered airports for safe operations.

Recommendation

To avoid overlap and enhance safety, Tuolumne County Airports recommends the following frequency change options:

- **Primary Candidate: 122.725 MHz** (not currently assigned within 60 NM, minimal regional overlap)
- **Alternate Candidate: 123.075 MHz** (acknowledging more distant users, but none within the protected service volume.

Attachment A – Regional CTAF Frequency Survey (75 NM Radius from Pine Mountain Lake Airport, E45)

Airport	ID	CTAF (MHz)	Distance from E45	Notes
Pine Mountain Lake	E45	122.900	Current CTAF	
Columbia	O22	122.975	15 NM	Conflicts if co-channel
Mariposa-Yosemite	MPI	122.700	22 NM	
Calaveras County	CPU	123.000	28 NM	
Oakdale	O27	122.800	30 NM	
Turlock	O15	122.800	33 NM	
Merced-Yosemite	MCE	122.700	38 NM	
Westover/Amador	JAQ	123.075	42 NM	Alternate Candidate - Nearest 123.075 to E45
Pickel Meadows	7CL4	122.900	43 NM	Adds to 122.900 congestion
Georgetown	E36	123.050	45 NM	
Daulton	77CA	122.800	45 NM	
Chowchilla	206	122.900	45 NM	Adds to 122.900 congestion
Bryant Field	O57	122.900	51 NM	Adds to 122.900 congestion
Lee Vining	O24	122.800	51 NM	
Gustine	301	122.900	52NM	Adds to 122.900 congestion
Eagles Nest	CA20	122.700	52 NM	
Cameron Park	O61	123.050	52 NM	
Madera Municipal	MAE	122.800	52 NM	
New Jerusalem	1Q4	122.900	54 NM	Adds to 122.900 congestion
Lodi (Kingdon)	O20	122.900	55 NM	Adds to 122.900 congestion
Lodi Airport	103	122.900	55 NM	Adds to 122.900 congestion
Alpine County	M45	122.900	59 NM	Adds to 122.900 congestion
Rancho Murieta	RIU	122.800	57 NM	
Los Banos Municipal	LSN	122.800	58 NM	
Placerville	PVF	122.800	58 NM	
Franklin Field	F72	122.900	65 NM	Adds to 122.900 congestion
Rio Vista Municipal	O88	122.725	75 NM	Primary Candidate -Nearest 122.725 to E45

Note: FAA Spectrum typically evaluates conflicts within ~25 nautical miles (NM). Because E45 sits at nearly 3,000 feet elevation (with aircraft pattern near 4,000 ft MSL), the effective radio horizon can reach 70-80 NM into the Central Valley. Frequencies compiled by Joe Sobczak.