High-Flying Fuel Costs Hamper Kodiak Aircarriers

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Mary Donaldson/KMXT

Across the nation, airlines are having to cut back on employees and scheduled flights, all because of the increase of fuel prices. Mary Donaldson takes a look at how the increases in fuel prices are affecting the smaller airlines in Kodiak.

Kodiak's Emerald Isle has several small airlines, both for transportation and for wildlife and scenic charters that fly all across the island and beyond. Rising fuel costs for this summer are being felt by these small airlines. Jo Murphy is one of the owners for Seahawk Air, and says that even though they only utilize one aircraft, the effects are still being felt at her business.

(Murphy 1 :26s "...overall prices.")

Murphy says because they aren't a scheduled airline, but rather an on demand charter, there isn't much else they can do to cut back on added costs from fuel prices, since they to fly to where the customer charters them to.

(Murphy 2 :28s "...affected travelers.")

Bob Stanford is the owner of Island Air in Kodiak and says that his operations fly up to six aircraft on daily flight schedules, as well as charters. The spike in fuel costs has affected the spending priorities at his business.

(Stanford 1 :23s "...climbing rapidly.")

Stanford says making adjustments is a part of business, but with how fast fuel prices have risen, he can barely plan his yearly budgets, because when the next year comes around, they are out of date because of the constant increases.

(Standford 2 :45s "...it's never enough.")

He says Island Air has had to raise its rates considerably in an effort to keep up with rising fuel prices.

Mary Ann Harvey is a co-owner of Harvey Air with her husband Steve. They are also a charter flight business and fly only one twin-engine aircraft. She says they have seen a shift in the types of customers. There is less local traffic, and more tourists booking charter flights.

(Harvey 1 :39s "...discourage a lot of travel.")

She says over the past few years, Harvey Air's money spent on fuel has doubled, leading to a larger than average price increase for her customers.

(Harvey 2 :17s "...quite a boost.")

Nationally, several airlines, including Alaska

Airlines have been making adjustments to travel, such as increases in airfare, decreasing the amount of flights being offered, and charging more for baggage and in flight services that all used to be free of charge, all in attempts to deal with the drastic rise in fuel prices.

I'm Mary Donaldson.

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