

# HeraldNet

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## **PAINE FIELD**

### **Airport needed to relieve congestion**

The nation's and world's airports are becoming more and more congested as the population expands and business becomes more global.

The Heathrow collision in early October 2007 demonstrates this point.

Paine Field needs to be developed to further the economy in Snohomish County and relieve the congestion at Sea-Tac and traffic -- ground and air -- throughout Seattle.

How many times have you dreaded the trip from Snohomish County to Sea-Tac to pick up friends or relatives or to depart Sea-Tac yourself? The time and fuel saved by driving to Paine Field could be enormous for Skagit, Whatcom and Snohomish County residents.

I recently flew a commercial flight from Salt Lake City directly to Bellingham that was operated by Delta Airlines. What a relief, not to have to fight the King County traffic.

The manufacturers of airplane engines have made tremendous technical improvements on quieting engine noise and they will continue to make technological strides in that area. Paine Field is an ideal airport for commercial airlines. The Instrument Landing System (ILS), a ground-based instrument approach system that provides precise guidance to an aircraft approaching a runway, is from the north over the water.

In 2003 the FAA spent \$9 million to install a 180-foot state-of-the-art control tower for Paine Field. The ILS, the tower and other improvements make this an ideal and safe location for a new commercial airport and, unlike Sea-Tac, it is operating way below capacity.

I believe Snohomish County and the surrounding counties are missing the boat (or plane, in this case) by not bringing Paine Field up to its full potential as a regional airport.

**GREGG ORTEGA**  
*Lake Stevens*

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