



Feb 3, 2017

NEWS

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“Flights Bring More New Visitors to Sun Valley in 2016” SUN Air Passenger Survey shows \$113 million in economic impact from air travel visitors last year

Increased air service to Sun Valley has continued to generate more visitors and economic impact for the community, according to the results of the recently completed 2016 air passenger survey at Friedman Memorial Airport (SUN) by Fly Sun Valley Alliance. The flights brought in an estimated 15,200 new first-time visitors, resulting in over \$21 million in estimated direct spend economic impact to the area from those first-time visitors. **Total estimated direct spend economic impact from all visitor and part-time resident SUN air travelers was \$113 million in 2016.**

According to Fly Sun Valley Alliance’s recently completed 2016 SUN Air Passenger Survey Report:

- The over 15,200 estimated new first-time visitors represented:
 - 23% of SFO flight passengers
 - 30% of DEN flight passengers
 - 20% of LAX flight passengers
 - 12% of SEA flight passengers
 - 22% of SLC flight passengers

Other highlights of the 2016 SUN Winter and Summer Air Passenger Survey Report include:

- Of all SUN air passengers on Alaska, Delta, United flights:
 - Approximately 80% visitors/part-time residents; 20% full-time local residents
 - Breakdown: 21% new visitors, 44% repeat visitors, 15% part-time residents, 20% local residents
- Total direct spend* economic impact of 58,434 SUN visitor/part-time resident travelers: \$113 million
- Total direct spend* economic impact of 15,200 new, first-time SUN visitor air travelers: \$21 million
- **Direct spend: purchases for lodging, food, entertainment, recreation, shopping, car rental, etc.*
- Overall Average Per Capita Spend per Trip: \$1935
 - Visitors: \$1550 (average 5 night stay); Part-Time Residents: \$3563 (average 15 night stay)
- 73% of all visitor/part-time resident air travelers said availability of flights to SUN was very to extremely important in their decision to visit.
- All Passenger Groups (visitors, part-time residents, locals) reported an increased use of SUN in 2016

Full survey report can be found at <http://www.flysunvalleyalliance.com/sun-stats-economic-impact>

The seasonal SUN Air Passenger Surveys are done each winter and summer/fall season by Fly Sun Valley Alliance in conjunction with RRC Associates research consulting firm, and in partnership with Friedman Memorial Airport.

Passenger Traffic Continues to Increase

Commercial air passenger enplanements at the Friedman Memorial Airport (SUN) were up 15% in 2016 compared to 2015, not including passengers on flights that were weather diverted to alternative airports. For the three year period 2013-2016 enplanements were up 33% and seat capacity was up 19% due to new flights, expanded air service schedules and increased marketing, continuing the positive trend in air service growth at SUN.

“This data shows that our strategic community air service development plan is working well and producing strong positive results,” said Carol Waller, Director of the non-profit Fly Sun Valley Alliance. “Along with our key partners – the Sun Valley Air Service Board, Sun Valley Resort, Friedman Memorial Airport, Visit Sun Valley - we are seeing the results of our collective efforts continue to grow, not only through more air passengers, more new visitors and more direct economic spending, but also through significant investment in our community’s tourism product and infrastructure. Projects including the recently completed Friedman Memorial Airport terminal expansion, the multi-million dollar transformation of the Sun Valley Lodge & Spa, and the development of the new Limelight hotel in Ketchum, are all a direct result of the successful expansion and improvement of air service to our community.”

Waller added, “This positive progress is made possible through the 1% LOT for Air funds provided by the Sun Valley Air Service Board for these specific air service development and air service marketing efforts. The Wood River Valley community has made an important economic investment in air service, and it’s working. We have strong momentum going and will continue to build on it for the future.”

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