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John R. Cooper
TRANSPORTATION DIRECTOR

December 16, 2021

The Honorable Michael J. Armistead
Choctaw County Judge of Probate
117 South Mulberry Avenue, Suite 9
Butler, Alabama 36904

**Subject: Annual Inspection Report
Butler—Choctaw County Airport**

Dear Judge Armistead:

An inspection of the Butler—Choctaw County Airport was conducted by personnel of the Alabama Department of Transportation Aeronautics Bureau on November 18, 2021. The purpose of the inspection was to update the information currently on file regarding the airport and to ascertain compliance with the rules and regulations of the Alabama Department of Transportation governing licensed public-use airports within the State of Alabama.

Attached you will find a copy of the Annual Inspection Report for the Butler-Choctaw County Airport. As noted in the report, the airport **does not meet** all the requirements for the issuance of an operating license. There are obstruction violations to the Required ALDOT 20:1 Approach/Departure Path to Runway 12. These obstructions have been mentioned in previous reports. There are also some serious pavement issues that pose a safety hazard to aircraft. The operating license for the airport is **suspended** pending the necessary corrective actions of the violations listed in the report.

Additionally, excessively tall grass has completely obscured the airport lighting system. Because this restricts the ability of pilots to safely delineate the runway at night, the airport should be **closed to all night operations** until the grass is mowed. To close the airport to night operations, please contact the Leidos Flight Service Station at 1-877-487-6867 and issue a Notice To Airmen (NOTAM) notifying pilots of the nighttime closure.

The County should submit a written plan of action to the Aeronautics Bureau within **sixty (60) days** of the receipt of this report, to discuss a plan to correct the deficiencies, close the airport or propose another viable solution. If the airport plans to remain open, then the sponsor should detail how it plans to correct the pavement safety deficiencies and how it will safely accommodate aircraft until the ramp is repaired.

It should be noted, that once widespread pavement failure begins to occur on the runway, the Aeronautics Bureau will have no other recourse than to issue a Mandatory Closure Notice, and the airport will be closed indefinitely.

If you should have any questions concerning the inspection or corrective actions, please do not hesitate to contact Mr. Gus Slaten with the Aeronautics Bureau at (334) 242-6820.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Frank Farmer', with a stylized, cursive script.

Frank Farmer
Chief, Aeronautics Bureau

Copy: Tyler Davidson
Airport Manager

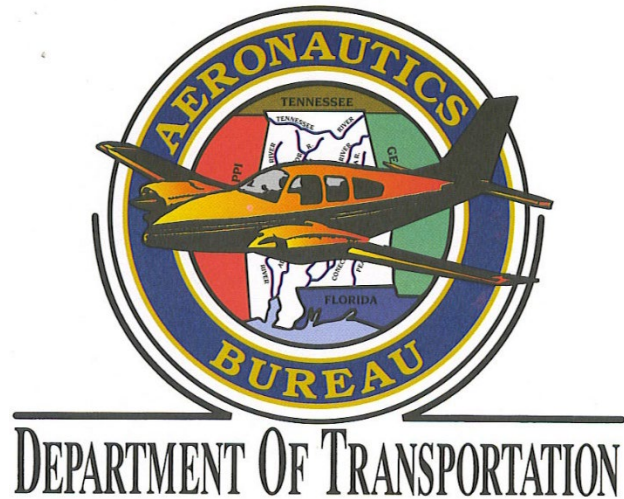
Mr. Graham Coffelt
FAA/ADO

Mr. Rans Black
FAA/ADO

Mr. Hank Eubanks
Volkert & Associates, Inc.

ANNUAL INSPECTION REPORT

November 18, 2021



BUTLER—CHOCTAW COUNTY AIRPORT

BUTLER, ALABAMA

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November 18, 2021

Introduction:

Code of Alabama 23-1-357(c). The department may perform such acts, issue and amend such orders and make, promulgate, or amend general or special rules, regulations, and procedures and establish minimum standards, consistent with the provisions of this article as it shall deem necessary to carry out the provisions of this article and to perform its duties hereunder, all commensurate with and for the purpose of protecting and insuring the general public interest, health, welfare, and safety. (Act 2000-220, 10.)

In accordance with the provisions of the Code of Alabama 23-1-357(c) an inspection of the Butler-Choctaw County Airport was conducted by Mr. Gus Slaten of the Alabama Department of Transportation Aeronautics Bureau on November 18, 2021.

The corrective actions that may be prescribed in this inspection report do not relieve the airport owner from compliance with any other Federal, State or local laws, ordinances or regulations that may be applicable. It is the responsibility of the airport owner to be aware of and obey all Federal, State or local laws, ordinances or regulations that may have a bearing on the corrective actions that may be specified in this report.

Inspection Methodology:

The inspection of the required State Approach/Departure Path and Federal Runway Protection Zones was accomplished by the use of approved engineering methods and equipment. The angles, locations and heights of trees or other objects within these areas were derived by the use of a theodolite and electronic distance measuring device.

All other areas of the inspection were conducted visually and photographed for reference purposes.

The FAA Airport Design Standards referred to in this report were taken from the Airport Layout Plan (ALP) dated June 29, 2012.

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License Status:

Code of Alabama 23-1-375(a). ...a person or municipality may not operate an airport, restricted landing area, or other air navigation facility without a license issued by the department.

Based upon the findings of the inspection conducted on November 18, 2021, the airport **does not meet** the requirements for the issuance of an operating license.

The inspection was conducted on the airport under the provisions of the Administrative Code for the following areas:

1. Approach and Departure Paths **Administrative Code 450-9-1-.12(1)** (See Appendix 1)

State Licensing Standards:

- For all hard surface runways, the approach and departure path begins 200 feet from the runway end (runway threshold).
- For runways with displaced thresholds, the approach and departure path begins at the displaced threshold.
- The approach and departure path for all runways is centered along the extended runway centerline and extends for 1000 feet.
- The approach and departure path for all runways slopes up at a ratio of 20:1.
- All penetrations of the approach and departure paths, whether natural or manmade, constitute an obstruction to navigation and must be removed.
- The land beneath the approach and departure path must be controlled by the airport owner. This is accomplished by ownership of the property in fee simple or by written perpetual agreement with the owner of the land.

Inspection Results: VIOLATION

- Runway 12 – Trees identified as #1, #2, #5, #6, #11, #12, #14, #15, and #17 violate the ALDOT Required 20:1 Approach/Departure Path (See Photo #1 and Appendix 2).
- Runway 30 – No Obstructions (See Photo #2).

Required Action:

- Remove all obstructions to the ALDOT Required 20:1 Approach/Departure Path.

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- *Note: obstructions identified in this report are representative and may not include all existing obstruction violations.*

Photo #1 – Runway 12 Approach

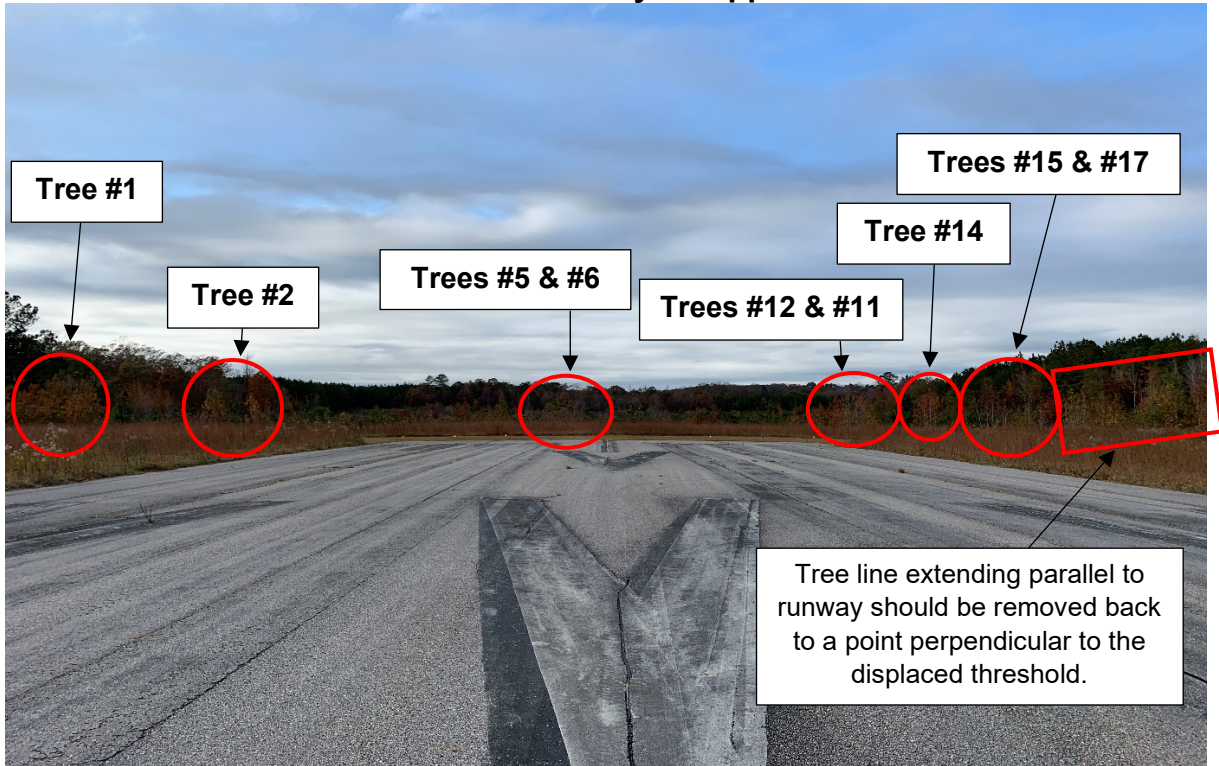


Photo #2 – Runway 30 Approach



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2. Primary Surface Administrative Code 450-9-1-.12(2)

State Licensing Standards:

- Primary Surface (See Appendix 1): The primary surface is 250 feet wide, centered on the runway centerline and extends 200 feet past the end of the marked runway. The primary surface is required to be free of all obstructions, manmade or natural. The only allowable objects are runway lights, guidance signs, or navigation equipment that by function is required to be within the primary surface boundaries.

Inspection Results:

- Pine tree limbs are beginning to encroach on the limits of the Primary Surface (See Photo #3 and Appendix 3).

Required Maintenance:

- Remove all trees/limbs/brush encroaching on the limits of the Primary Surface.

Photo #3 – Primary Surface Encroachment



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3. Runway Safety Area Administrative Code 450-9-1-.12(3)

State Licensing Standards:

- Runway Safety Area (Appendix 1): All runways are required to maintain an obstruction free area adjacent to each runway. This area is 120 feet wide, centered on the runway centerline, and extends for a distance of 200 feet past the runway end. The area must be compacted and graded smooth with no ruts, humps, depressions or other potentially hazardous surface variations. The slope along the longitudinal centerline shall not exceed a rise or fall of three percent in elevation relative to the runway end elevation. The lip from the top of the pavement to the grade adjacent to the runway should not exceed 3 inches.

Inspection Results: **VIOLATION**

- Large ruts were found in the Runway Safety Area (RSA) at 75 feet from the displaced threshold and 41 feet left of centerline on the approach end of Runway 30 (See Photo #4)
- Grade on portions of the runway shoulder exceed the three (3) inch limitation, causing hazardous surface variations (See Photo #5).
- Grass within the RSA is excessively tall and should be cut.

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Photo #4 – Ruts in Runway Safety Area

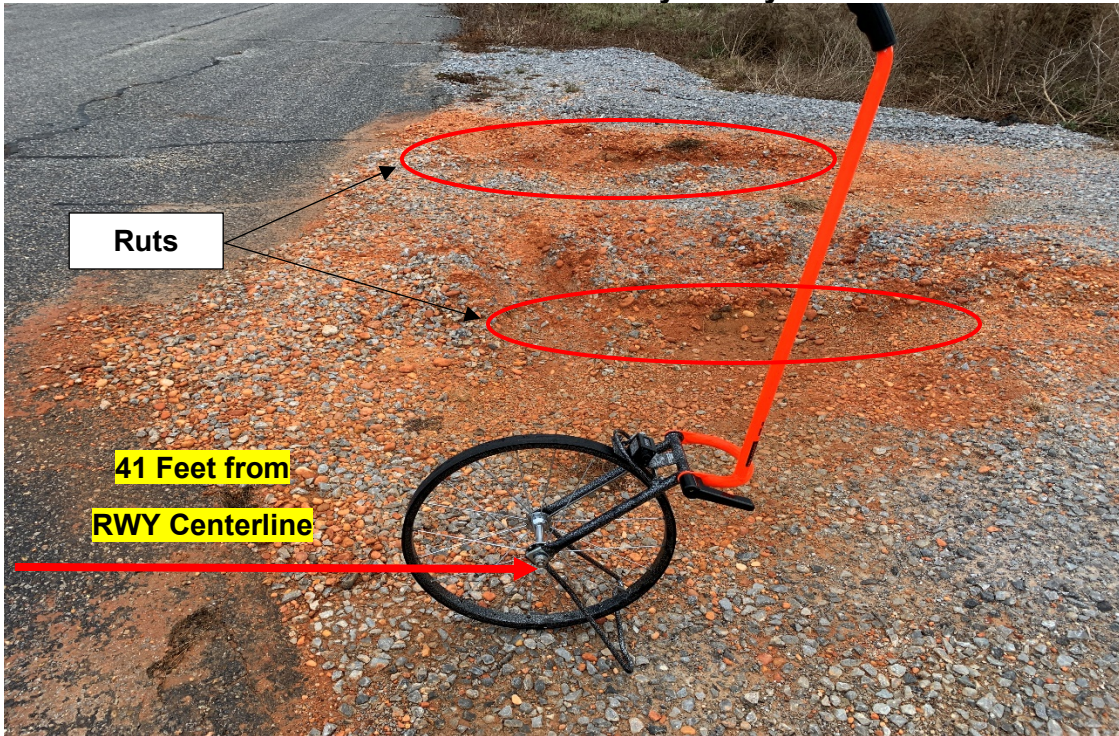


Photo #5 – Hump in Runway Safety Area



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Action Required:

- Fill in ruts and bring grade down flush with the runway surface, compacting smooth, so that no hazardous surface variations exist.
- Cut excessively tall grass.

4. Airport Markings Administrative Code 450-9-1-.12(4)

State Licensing Standards:

- Airport Markings: All runways are required to be marked in a manner identifying the boundaries of the landing areas. The runway markings must be painted white and be maintained in a legible condition.

Inspection Results: VIOLATION

- The airport markings are in **EXCEPTIONALLY POOR** condition. There are effectively *no runway markings left* (See Photos #6).

Photo #6 – NPI Runway Markings Missing



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Action Required:

- Markings should be re-applied in accordance with FAA AC 150/5340-1M.

5. Wind Direction Indicator Administrative Code 450-9-1-.12(5)

State Licensing Standards:

- Wind Direction Indicators: All airports are required to have an operational wind direction indicator. It must be installed in a highly visible area and free from obstructions to ensure true wind direction and velocity. Night operations require the indicator be lighted.

Inspection Results:

- The wind direction indicator (wind cone) is operational and in *GOOD* condition (See Photo #7).

Photo #7 – Wind Cone



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6. Airport Lighting Administrative Code 450-9-1-.12(6)

State Licensing Standards:

- Airport Lighting: Runway lights and a lighted wind direction indicator are required for night operations. A rotating beacon is suggested. All runway, threshold, and taxiway lighting shall be maintained in operational condition and shall not be obscured by natural growth such as grass and/or weeds.

Inspection Results: Restriction

- The results of the lighting system inspection are as follows:

*Runway lights are obscured by tall grass and, therefore, are not adequately visible to delineate the runway at night (See Photos #8, #9, and #10).

Runway Lights – 2 inoperative

Threshold Lights – 3 inoperative

Action Required:

- A Notice to Airmen (NOTAM) must be issued, closing the airport to night operations, until the grass obscuring the lighting system is cut to an acceptable height of not more than 12 inches and is maintained.

Maintenance Required:

- Repair/replace inoperative lights.

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Photo #8 – Runways Light Fixtures Not Visible



Photo #9 – Runway 12 PAPI Obscured



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Photo #10 – Runway Threshold Light Obscured



7. Runway, Taxiway and Apron Conditions Administrative Code 450-9-1-.12(7)

State Licensing Standards:

- Runway, Taxiway and Apron Conditions: All airport pavement surfaces associated with aircraft operations must be kept smooth and free of any defect or obstruction that could damage an aircraft. The lip of the airport pavement surfaces must not exceed three (3) inches in elevation from the top of the pavement to the shoulder. The drop should only be enough to allow sufficient drainage and not pose a control problem for aircraft exiting the runway. The aircraft parking apron is for the operation and parking of aircraft only and should be smooth and free of obstructions or defects that could cause damage to aircraft during operations.

Inspection Results: **VIOLATION**

- All airport surfaces are in **POOR** condition.
- Runway surface condition is deteriorating.

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- Crack sealant has failed in several areas allowing vegetation to grow (See Photo #11).
- The runway is presenting extensive alligator cracking and several areas of pavement failure are beginning to appear (See Photos #12 and #13).
- The last runway overlay is delaminating, exposing older pavement beneath. Both the edges of the newest overlay and the exposed older pavement are raveling and producing larger pieces of Foreign Object Debris (FOD) (See Photo #14).
- The apron is experiencing complete pavement failure in several areas. Severe cracking and raveling, as well as vegetation growth, is present across the aircraft parking apron (See Photos #15 through #18). There is also a pile of rubbish on the apron that was identified in the previous report (See Photo #19).
 - The pavement failure on the apron is creating *a major Foreign Object Damage (FOD) risk to aircraft*. In the apron's current state, there is only a small section in which aircraft can be parked. As total pavement failure expands, the existing parking area will grow smaller.

Photo #11 – Crack Seal Failure, Block Cracking, and Vegetation Growth



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Photo #12 – Alligator Cracking on Runway



Photo #13 – Pothole (Pavement Failure) on Runway



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Photo #14 – Runway Pavement Failure, Exposing Underlying Layer



Photo #15 – Apron Alligator Cracking



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Photo #16 – Severe Alligator Cracking on Apron



Photo #17 – Extensive Vegetation Growth on Apron



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Photo #18 – Pavement Failure, Raveling, and Vegetation Growth



Photo #19 – Rubbish on Apron



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Required Action:

- Immediately mark hazardous areas of the ramp closed to aircraft movement in accordance with FAA AC 150/5340-1M and FAA AC 150/5370-2G.
- Remove FOD from runway.
- Eradicate vegetation on runway.
- Immediate action should be taken to ensure pavement safety standards meet the requirements of the Aeronautics Bureau. Further pavement failure will result in the *immediate closure* of the airfield by personnel of the Alabama Department of Transportation Aeronautics Bureau. The County Engineer should plan a pavement rehabilitation project for the airport as soon as practicable.
- The airport should submit a written plan of action **within 60 days of receipt of this report**, detailing how it plans to correct the pavement safety deficiencies and how it will safely accommodate aircraft until the apron is repaired.

8. Fueling Area Requirements **Administrative Code 450-9-1-.12(8)**

State Licensing Standards:

- Signs should be posted prohibiting open flames or smoking in fueling areas. The fueling facility must be labeled indicating the type fuel being dispensed.
- Grounding cables must be available.
- A fire extinguisher approved for the purpose of extinguishing petroleum product fires available during all fueling operations.
- Serviceable hoses and connections that would preclude a rupture or leaking of fuel.

Inspection Results:

- There is no fuel service available at this airport

9. Prohibited Activities **Administrative Code 450-9-1-.16**

State Licensing Standards:

- Prohibited Activities: The use of any portion of the aircraft operations area, or airport property within the boundaries of the imaginary surfaces of a licensed airport for any purpose other than the operation of aircraft shall be deemed a non-aeronautical activity and is prohibited.

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Inspection Results:

- No prohibited activities were observed during the inspection.

Summary:

The table below summarizes items noted in this report.

INSPECTION SUMMARY

Inspection Area	Violation/Maintenance	Corrective Action
Approach/Departure Path	VIOLATION	Remove all obstructions to the ALDOT Required 20:1 APP/DEP Path to Runway 12 as soon as possible.
Primary Surface	Maintenance	Remove all trees/limbs/brush encroaching into the limits of the Primary Surface.
Runway Safety Area	VIOLATION	Fill in ruts and grade smooth areas where hazardous surface variations exist. Ensure grass is mowed and maintained.
Airport Markings	VIOLATION	Immediately re-apply markings in accordance with FAA AC 150/5340-1M.
Airport Lighting	Restriction/Maintenance	Issue NOTAM to close airport to night operations. Cut grass obscuring the lighting system. Repair/replace inoperative lights.
Surfaces	VIOLATION	Immediately mark hazardous areas of the

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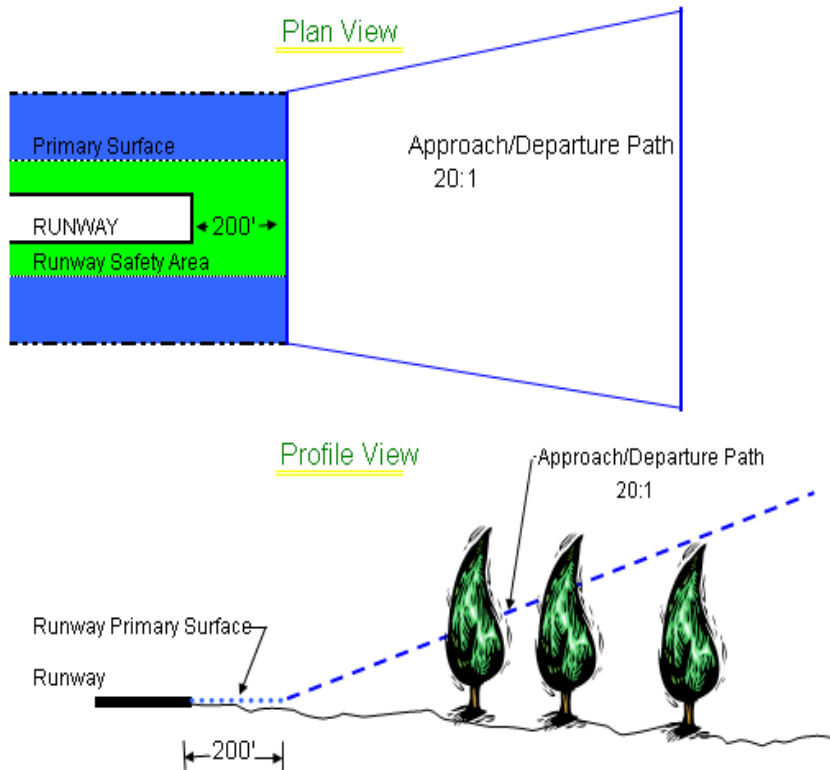
		<p>ramp closed to aircraft movement in accordance with FAA AC 150/5340-1M and FAA AC 150/5370-2G.</p> <p>Remove FOD from runway.</p> <p>Plan airport pavement rehab plan immediately.</p> <p>Submit plan of action</p>
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Please contact Mr. Gus Slaten at the Alabama Department of Transportation Aeronautics Bureau at (334) 242-6820 with questions concerning the Annual Inspection Report.

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Approach and Departure Path Dimensions			
Inner Width	Outer Width	Length	Acreage
250 Feet	450 Feet	1,000 Feet	8.04 Acres
Primary Surface Dimensions			
250 Feet Wide Centered Along Runway Centerline Extending 200 Feet Past the Runway End			
Runway Safety Area Dimensions			
120 Feet Wide Centered Along Runway Centerline Extending 200 Feet Past the Runway End			



APPENDIX 1

Butler-Choctaw County Airport
Butler, AL
Nov. 18, 2021
Runway 12
Obstruction Evaluation

Notes:
 1. Drawing not to scale.
 2. For informational purposes only and not to be used for any other purpose.
 3. Obstructions identified are representative and may not include all obstructions.
 4. Aerial image may not be current.

- ALDOT Violation
- Penetrates FAA Surface
- FAA Controlling Obstruction

1. Tree 20' Abv RWY
 203' From DPTH
 123' Right of CL
 10:1 Obst Clnc From DPTH

6. Tree 16' Abv RWY
 261' From DPTH
 13' Right of CL
 16:1 Obst Clnc From DPTH

12. Tree 22' Abv RWY
 252' From DPTH
 68' Left of CL
 11:1 Obst Clnc From DPTH

17. Tree 26' Abv RWY
 225' From DPTH
 132' Left of CL
 8:1 Obst Clnc From DPTH

2. Tree 16' Abv RWY
 251' From DPTH
 108' Right of CL
 15:1 Obst Clnc From DPTH

7. Tree 143' Abv RWY
 2,037' From RWY End
 145' Right of CL
 12:1 Obst Clnc (FAA Surface)

14. Tree 15' Abv RWY
 255' From DPTH
 90' Left of CL
 16:1 Obst Clnc From DPTH

5. Tree 23' Abv RWY
 358' From DPTH
 39' Right of CL
 15:1 Obst Clnc From DPTH

11. Tree 19' Abv RWY
 291' From DPTH
 73' Left of CL
 15:1 Obst Clnc From DPTH

15. Tree 24' Abv RWY
 249' From DPTH
 105' Left of CL
 10:1 Obst Clnc From DPTH

