2025 Colorado Aviation ECONOMIC IMPACT STUDY

Individual Airport Economic Impact Report

Rifle Garfield County (RIL)

Rifle Garfield County Airport (RIL) is a general aviation airport in western Colorado, located three miles east of Rifle. RIL is surrounded by attractions such as the White River National Forest and Sunlight Mountain Ski Resort. The airport is owned and operated by Garfield County. RIL has a single asphalt runway (08/26) that is 7,000 feet long by 100 feet wide and has a precision instrument approach. The airport serves corporate jet aircraft and often acts as an alternate for the Aspen-Pitkin County Airport, especially during the peak ski season. The airport supports business activities including fixed base operator (FBO) services, private hangar rentals, transportation services, airframe and powerplant maintenance, and more. RIL supports a variety of activities including recreational flying, environmental patrols, soaring, and air cargo operations. RIL is home to an aerial/wildland firefighting single engine air tanker (SEAT) base which directly contributes to the safety of many communities in Colorado's mountains.

Top Activities

- Corporate/ Business Activity
- Recreational Activities
- Aerial Medical Operations
- Aircraft Maintenance
- Aerial/ Wildland Firefighting



Economic Impacts of

Rifle Garfield County (RIL)

Rifle Garfield County is one of 66 public use airports that contribute to the State's aviation economic impact. To understand how RIL and other airports support economic activity, the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) Division of Aeronautics undertook the 2025 Colorado Aviation Economic Impact Study (CEIS). The study determined that RIL generated the below total economic activity in 2023. Of the $79.4 million of total business revenues generated by RIL, $67.1 million were generated by on-airport activities and $12.4 million generated by visitor spending.[1]

391 total jobs

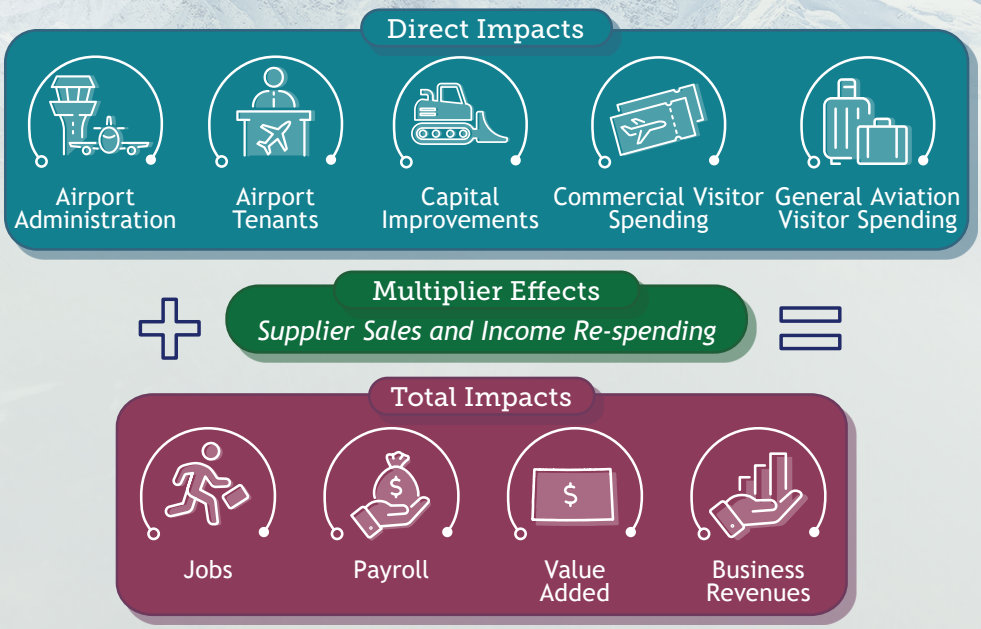
$25.1M total payroll

$42.5M total value added

$79.4M total business revenues

[1] *Totals may not sum due to rounding*

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What is Economic Impact?

Two types of economic impacts are generated as a result of airport activity: Direct Impacts and Multiplier Effects (supplier sales and income re-spending). Direct impacts come from the activities of the airport administration, on-airport tenants, capital improvement spending, and spending by visitors arriving on commercial and general aviation aircraft. Multiplier effects are generated when portions of direct revenues are used to purchase goods and services from Colorado businesses (supplier sales), and when income earned by workers in airport-supported jobs is spent at Colorado businesses (income re-spending). Total Impacts represent the summation of the direct impacts, supplier sales, and income re-spending effects for the state.

Economic Impact Measures

Economic Impacts are communicated by the total jobs, payroll, value added, and business revenues generated by each airport. These are defined as:

Jobs
Total number of people employed, both full-time and part-time.

Payroll
Total employment compensation, including wages, benefits, and taxes paid on behalf of employees.

Value Added
Total contribution to the Gross State Product. It includes all payroll, profits, and business taxes paid.

Business Revenues
Total expenditures for airport administration, capital projects and tenant sales of goods and services, as well as visitor spending in Colorado's hospitality-related sectors. Also referred to as "output," "sales," or "economic activity/impact."

Statewide Aviation Economic Impacts

Colorado's 66 public use airports range from small GA airports to a major international airline hub, all of which contribute to the state's economy. The impacts of on-airport activities and visitor spending associated with each airport, combined with the statewide impacts of off-airport air cargo operations, helped Colorado's aviation system generate $68.9 billion in total economic activity (business revenues) in 2023.

348,466 total jobs

$23.5B total payroll

$40.3B total value added

$68.9B total business revenues

For more information on the Colorado Aviation Economic Impact Study, please visit our webpage at *https://www.coloradoaviationsystem.com/*