

**For Immediate Release
September 7, 2007**

Rutherford County Airport Awarded \$88,000 for Runway Approach Survey

Forest City, NC – The Rutherford County Airport was awarded \$88,000 in federal funds by the North Carolina Aeronautics Council today. This grant will allow for an approach survey to be completed on Runway 1-19. This grant has a 10% local match of \$9,778 for a total of \$97,778. Funding levels are evaluated annually by the NCDOT Aviation Staff for recommendation to the Aeronautics Council. The grant was part of the Rural Airport Development Program that supplements the current State Aid to Airport Programs, which works with publicly owned and operated airports statewide.

These funds will be used to determine if precision approach equipment can be used at the airport. If the survey comes back positive, the airport will look into applying for grant funds to design, buy and install the equipment.

Phillip Robbins, member of the Rutherford County Airport Authority, stated “this survey will allow the airport to determine the feasibility of precision approaches into the airport during inclement weather. It will also allow the minimum altitude height for flying to be lowered. Currently only non-precision equipment like GPS devices are used for landing aircraft at the airport.”

The grant is part of special funding through the Federal Aviation Administration and Rutherford County qualified based on their Tier 1 status. Last year, Rutherford County also received a \$200,000 grant for airport expansions from the North Carolina Aeronautics Council. The County hosted the Aeronautics Council for a second time in June for their monthly board meeting.

County Commissioner Paul McIntosh stated: “With the influx of large developments in the county, we are seeing a greater use of the airport and its facilities. The Rutherford County Airport is truly one of our greatest gems and assets for economic development.”

The Rutherford County Airport provides the county with a significant source of property tax revenue with 58 based aircraft at a calculated value of \$41,272,750, which results in ad valorem taxes of \$218,745 based on the county rate of \$0.53 per \$100 for 2007. Airport services include: General Aviation, Helicopter, Aircraft Rental, Aircraft Sales, Aircraft Parts Sales, Jet Fuel, Avgas, Aircraft Repair, Flight Instruction, Car Rental, Restaurant, Vending, Hangar Rental, Tie Down and Observation Points.

The Rutherford County Airport sits on 250 acres with approximately 92 aircraft operations a day. 75% are local general aviation, 24% transient general aviation, and 1% military. The runway is 5,000 x 100 feet in length. The airport is managed by FBO (Fixed Based Operator) Leading Edge Aviation, LLC.

