

# Walla Walla's airport passenger traffic posts record high for March



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WALLA WALLA — Passenger numbers at the Walla Walla Regional Airport continue to rise.

Inbound and outbound passengers put up the best March on record, said Walla Walla Regional Airport Manager Jennifer Skoglund.

During the month, 3,021 passengers flew out of Walla Walla compared to 2,849 passengers during the same month in 2013.

Interestingly, a greater margin of passengers came in last month, Skoglund said. According to the numbers, 3,081 people flew into the airport. That's up from the same period a year before when 2,875 inbound passengers flew to town.

Skoglund attributed the increase to ongoing marketing — with the help of federal grants — and a conscientious push by Tourism Walla Walla, the Walla Walla Valley Chamber of Commerce and the Walla Walla Valley Wine Alliance to promote the local airport.

“They are all doing a lot of projects and spending money on marketing, and we try to keep the message very cohesive,” Skoglund said.

She said the schedule at the airport may be more conducive for those who fly out of another destination to make it back directly into town.

Skoglund said the load factor — percentage of seats occupied on the planes — was up significantly over March 2013.

The outbound average on the 6:15 a.m. and 2:07 p.m. flights was 68.65 percent, compared to 64.62 percent during the same month last year.

The inbound average on the 1:36 and 8:35 p.m. flights was 70.57 percent, compared to 65.87 percent March 2013.