

GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN

AIRPORTS WILL HAVE DELAYS



SETH WENIG, ASSOCIATED PRESS

A plane lands Thursday at Newark International Airport in Newark, N.J.

Authorities say 40 busiest US sites to see reductions of up to 10%

JOSH FUNK AND RIO YAMAT
Associated Press

U.S. airlines prepared to phase in hundreds of flight cuts at the country's busiest airports starting Friday, including those in New York, Los Angeles, Dallas and Chicago, due to the government shutdown, according to a list distributed to the airlines and obtained by The Associated Press.

The Federal Aviation Administration's order to reduce air traffic at 40 of the busiest airports across the U.S. includes locations across more than two dozen states and is likely to ripple far beyond those targeted places.

With just hours to go, airlines scrambled Thursday to figure out where to cut, and travelers with plans for the weekend and beyond waited nervously to see if their flights would take off as scheduled.

The affected airports include busy connecting hubs and those in popular tourist

destinations, including Atlanta, Denver, Dallas, Orlando, Miami and San Francisco. In some of the biggest cities — such as New York, Houston and Chicago — multiple airports will be affected.

Airlines will phase in the cuts at the direction of the FAA, starting with eliminating 4% of flights at the 40 airports on Friday and working up to 10%, according to three people familiar with what the agency said, but who were not authorized to discuss it publicly.

United Airlines will cut 4% of its flights over the weekend based on guidance from the FAA, said company spokesperson Josh Freed.

The FAA had not yet published an official order as of midday Thursday and didn't immediately respond to questions about implementation details.

Some airlines planned to focus on slashing routes to and from small and medium-sized cities.

"This is going to have a noticeable impact across the U.S. air transportation system," industry analyst Henry Harteveldt said.

The FAA said Wednesday it would reduce air traffic by 10% across "high-volume" markets to maintain travel safety as air traffic controllers exhibit signs of strain during the shutdown.

It is imposing the flight reductions to relieve pressure on air traffic controllers who are working without pay during the government shutdown and have increasingly called off work. The move also comes as the Trump administration ramps up pressure on Democrats in Congress to end the shutdown.

Controllers already missed one full paycheck and are scheduled to again receive nothing next week as the shutdown drags on.

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NEW MEXICO PBS

President Donald Trump on Wednesday announced he'd nominated Steve Pearce, a prominent New Mexico Republican, to lead the Bureau of Land Management.

Trump nominates Pearce to lead public lands agency

If confirmed, former NM congressman would be in charge of 245 million acres overseen by BLM

PATRICK LOHMANN
Source New Mexico

President Donald Trump has nominated Steve Pearce, a Republican former member of Congress from New Mexico, to lead the federal Bureau of Land Management, the White House announced Wednesday.

Pearce would be in charge of an agency that oversees 245 million acres of public lands, including for recreation, cattle

grazing and extraction of oil and natural gas.

His nomination drew swift criticism from environmental groups in New Mexico and across the country.

They urged Congress to reject Trump's nomination.

"Pearce's entire political career has been dedicated to blocking Americans' access to public lands while giving the oil and gas industry free rein to drill and frack anywhere they wanted," said Jennifer Rokala, executive director of the Center for Western Priorities, in a statement Wednesday afternoon.

Pearce, who founded an oilfield services

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