

# AVIATION ADVOCATES SAVE A NEW MEXICO AIRPORT

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By Dan Namowitz

A pilot who keeps up on the news in his southern New Mexico community quickly rallied support for the local airport when he learned that a city official wanted to explore closing it—and from that starting point, the news for the airport kept getting better.



AOPA Airport Support Network volunteer Ron Orozco (shown with his wife, Beth, at Negrito Airstrip in Reserve, New Mexico) rallied local airport advocates to action in Lordsburg, New Mexico. Photo by James Brady.

When pilot Ron Orozco heard that Lordsburg Mayor Robert Barrera was airing ideas about closing **Lordsburg Municipal Airport**, he didn't wait for others to take a stand. Orozco brought the issue to aviation advocates including AOPA's Central Southwest Regional Manager Tom Chandler, the National Business Aviation Association, the New

Mexico Airport Managers Association, and the New Mexico Pilots Association. He also worked with the New Mexico Aviation Division to gather key airport facts for a pro-airport presentation.

Appearing before the Hidalgo County Commission in July to solicit support, Orozco—who now has become AOPA's Airport Support Network volunteer for Lordsburg—made his presentation and responded to questions. In a **report** he submitted to the New Mexico Pilots Association's August 2018 newsletter, he summed up the meeting's conclusion as follows: "It appears the Mayor has backed-off his thought of closing the airport."

"Not only that," added AOPA's Chandler, "but he and the city council are moving forward to pursue a grant from the recently announced \$1 billion in FAA Supplemental Airport Funding to build a parallel taxiway that the previous administration already had in the works.

"Led by AOPA, the aviation community came together to save a rural airport," Chandler said.



Lordsburg Municipal Airport image via Google.



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