

Airport project still 'up



FILE PHOTO

A meeting next week between Oconee officials and airport contractors might indicate when the runway extension project could be completed, Oconee County Regional Airport Director Kevin Short said Wednesday.

BY CARLOS GALARZA
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SENECA — A meeting next week between local officials and airport contractors could determine whether the runway extension project at the Oconee County Regional Airport might be completed before the end of the year.

Airport Director Kevin Short said Wednesday that he would have talks with the contractor next week.

Part of the discussion could include how recent heavy rain might have im-

pacted the project's revised timetable.

Short said that, anytime there is rainfall of almost an inch at the project site, the consultant has to do an erosion inspection. He said the airport had almost 3 inches of rain the past two days.

The results of the erosion inspection also might be taken up at next Wednesday's meeting.

When completed, the 600-foot extension project would give the airport a 5,000-foot runway. The additional length would allow

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in the air'

larger aircraft to land and take off.

Accommodating bigger aircraft translates to more revenue from fuel sales.

County Administrator Scott Moulder had expressed hopes that the \$4.4 million project could be completed by a year-end deadline. However, he said the target date is "still up in the air."

"At this time, we are running into difficulties with the paving due to the rain and colder weather," Moulder said.

County officials said they

are working with the paving contractor to try and meet the deadline.

The project originally was supposed to be completed by early August.

However, state regulators shut down the project after they realized that a phony permit had been used to begin work.

Federal authorities indicted a Talbert & Bright engineer in October on charges of mail and wire fraud related to the fake permit.

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