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Sequoia Trees Create Unique Sense of Place at Fresno Yosemite International Airport

Boise, ID—Architecture firm, CSHQA, a design collaboration, teamed with the Fresno Yosemite International Airport, the National Park Service and NatureMaker, a company that specializes in handcrafted, artificial interior landscaping to produce a unique environment for Fresno's air travelers. Strolling through the airport's new, life-size, replica sequoia forest, passengers are delighted and fascinated by the giant trees that seem to be supporting the roof of the terminal. Right down to the authentic cedar split rail fencing, native granite curbing, natural ground cover material, and carpet flooring patterns that resemble the local agricultural landscape as seen from the sky, the sense of place is captured in the details.

When CSHQA started the project in 2004, the Airport expressed a need to remodel and expand the terminal facility to make more efficient use of existing space and expand where necessary to comply with TSA standards for screening passengers and checked baggage and accommodate projected passenger levels through 2020. In addition, the Airport wanted to take the opportunity to improve its image, by representing itself as the gateway to the city, surrounding agricultural region and national parks.

Fresno Yosemite International Aviation Director Russell Widmar stated, "The CSHQA team was very conscientious and responsive to the design challenges of rehabilitating a 60 year old facility. We couldn't be happier with the results."

The project includes significant work in all areas of the building including the ticket lobby, baggage screening, baggage make-up, central lobby, baggage claim, rental car counters, and security checkpoint. The original terminal building was constructed in 1959 with a series of expansion and remodel projects over the last 50 years that makes this project not only interesting, but quite challenging. A complete code analysis was prepared for each area of the building to serve as a roadmap for code required upgrades in areas impacted by new construction. Detailed phasing plans were prepared to define how the project could be constructed in a fully operating terminal facility.





Construction is nearing completion on the \$9.2 m remodel and expansion of the ticket lobby, central lobby and baggage claim. The completely remodeled ticket lobby with simple clean lines is a state-of-the-art facility with fully integrated common use airline ticket counters, computers, printers, kiosks and LCD information display systems. New automated window shades make the space open and transparent, while controlling direct sunlight and glare when needed. A more efficient layout for the ticket lobby preserved space for a manual in-line baggage inspection system and baggage make-up operation that has improved operational efficiencies for TSA and the Airlines. A very practical and low budget design solution aesthetically enhanced the baggage claim while doubling its capacity and improving circulation.

Over the next nine months construction is ongoing on the \$2.8 m remodel and expansion of the security checkpoint which will be complete by summer 2010. This project will increase capacity by adding space for up to three TSA passenger screening lanes and queuing space for passengers entering the screening area. The security exit lane will also be widened to create an open gateway from the concourse into the airport's new replica sequoia forest feature in the central lobby. Future projects in the planning stages include a new in-line checked baggage inspection system which was made possible by the extensive remodel efforts that have just been completed.

CSHQA designed the award-winning Boise Airport in Boise, ID and recently celebrated the grand opening of the new terminal at Rogue Valley International-Medford Airport in Medford, OR. Other aviation related projects currently on-going include a new general aviation terminal at Grant County Regional Airport in John Day, Oregon and renovations at Reno-Tahoe International Airport in Reno, NV. Headquartered in Boise, ID, CSHQA is a progressive architecture and engineering firm with teams that continue to work together with owners to create better-built environments and spaces. CSHQA has branch offices in Sacramento, CA; Phoenix, AZ and Denver, CO; with satellite offices in Los Angeles, CA; and Salt Lake City, UT.

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