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Special counsel appointed to lead Trump-Russia probe

EX-FBI BOSS ROBERT MUELLER PUT IN CHARGE OF INQUIRY

Calls grow on Capitol Hill for Comey's notes, testimony

By **REBECCA R. RUIZ AND MARK LANDLER**
The New York Times

WASHINGTON — The Justice Department appointed Robert Mueller III, a former FBI director, as special counsel Wednesday to oversee the



Robert Mueller III

investigation into ties between President Donald Trump's campaign and Russian officials, substantially raising the legal and political stakes in an affair that has threatened to engulf Trump's 118-day-old presidency.

The decision, by the deputy attorney general, Rod Rosenstein, came after a cascade of damaging developments for

Trump in recent days, including his abrupt firing of the FBI director, James Comey, and the subsequent disclosure that Trump had earlier asked Comey to drop the investigation of former national-security adviser Michael Flynn.

Rosenstein, who wrote a memo that the Trump administration initially cited as the rationale for Comey's dismissal, had been under escalating pressure from Democrats, and some Republicans, to appoint a special counsel. By appointing Mueller, a former

federal prosecutor with an unblemished reputation who once stood up to President George W. Bush on the legality of his domestic wiretapping program, Rosenstein could alleviate questions about the government's capacity to investigate the swirl of questions surrounding the Trump campaign and the Russians.

Rosenstein said in a statement that he concluded, "It is in the public interest for me to exercise my authorities and appoint a special counsel to as-

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Analysis offers ammunition for advocates of bike commuting



MIKE SIEGEL / THE SEATTLE TIMES

Bicycle commuters make their way south along Fourth Avenue North after riding across the Fremont Bridge on Wednesday.

DATA ON COMMUTERS

Connected routes and safe, secure storage encourage use



By **DAVID GUTMAN**
Seattle Times staff reporter

Not even 3 percent. That's the stat used by those who object to adding bike lanes to Seattle's crowded streets, which necessarily means fewer parking spaces and less roadway for cars. Only 2.9 percent of workers in center-city Seattle typically rode a bike to work in 2016, according to data from Commute

Seattle, a nonprofit funded by business and transportation agencies.

A greater percentage than that telecommuted. More than twice as many walked to work. More than 16 times as many took public transit.

Well, bicycling advocates respond, you're not going to get more cyclists until you build more bike lanes.

It can feel a little chicken-and-egg:

Which comes first, the bikers or the bike lanes?

A new analysis by Commute Seattle offers some added ammunition for bike advocates.

There are a bunch of large employers, Commute Seattle found, that have a radically higher percentage of bike commuters than the city average. What do those employers have in common?

A couple things, but most notably they're all near a bike path or a protected bike lane.

Of the 15 businesses with the highest percentage of bike-commuting employees, all are within five blocks of a protected bike

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Alaska Air to fly out of Everett's Paine Field

STARTING IN FALL 2018

Snohomish County officials applaud move; nearby residents wary

By **DOMINIC GATES**
Seattle Times aerospace reporter

Starting next year, people living north of Seattle will have Everett's Paine Field as an alternative to Seattle-Tacoma International, as Alaska Airlines begins daily passenger flights likely serving popular destinations in Oregon and California.

"As our region continues to grow at a record pace and Sea-Tac Airport nears capacity, the time is right," said Alaska Airlines Chief Executive Brad Tilden. "Today's news means less time stuck in traffic on Interstate 5 and more time enjoying your vacation or making the most of your business trip."

Alaska announced Wednesday it plans to begin the flights in fall 2018, but it won't disclose specific routes and flight schedules — or begin selling tickets — until early next year.

Citing noise and traffic concerns, some nearby residents as well as the mayor of the city of Mukilteo, which adjoins the Paine Field runway, have long opposed commercial flights at the airfield.

In contrast, Snohomish County and Everett officials have strongly backed the development as a boost to the area's economy.

Snohomish County Executive Dave Somers called Alaska's move "great news."

"Businesses will have easier access to major markets, and leisure travelers can skip the commute down south, saving time and fuel," Somers said.

Alaska said it plans to operate nine daily departures from the airport, subject to expected FAA approval. Groundbreaking on a new passenger terminal is scheduled for next month.

Brett Smith, chief executive of New York-based private equity firm Propeller Airports, the developer of the passenger terminal, said Wednesday that Alaska is only the first airline to commit to starting service out of Paine Field. He expects more to come.

"We have interest from a number of carriers," Smith said in an interview. "I'm confident there will be more than Alaska by next year."

The new terminal will be relatively small, with just two airport gates. With typical turn times that means the peak capacity of

See > **FLIGHTS, A9**

Port commissioner with clout, big war chest also attracts controversy

By **DANIEL GILBERT**
Seattle Times staff reporter

As John W. Creighton III campaigns for reelection to the Port of Seattle Commission, he is drawing some of his largest contributions from small, minority-owned businesses that until recently were suing the Port for discrimination.

The longest-serving Port commissioner advocated for those firms to get better lease terms at Seattle-Tacoma International Airport. Two such

firms have contributed about 15 percent of the nearly \$52,000 he has raised so far, a campaign war chest more than double that of any other commission candidate.

That same relationship is at the heart of an ongoing lawsuit against the Port, brought by two former employees who claim that the commissioner ousted them to help his political donors. The Port and Creighton deny the allega-

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STEVE RINGMAN / THE SEATTLE TIMES

Port Commissioner John Creighton at a May 9 commission meeting.

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