



Sun West Airlines

Sun West Airlines was based in Phoenix, Arizona and began commuter airline service from Phoenix to Gallup and Farmington, New Mexico, as well as Durango, Colorado in March, 1980 using Piper Navajo aircraft after Frontier and two other commuter airlines had ended service on the route. Service to Albuquerque started on October 26, 1980 with flights to Gallup and Farmington. An Albuquerque – Durango – Farmington - Phoenix route was added in 1981 and service to Winslow, Arizona was added the following year on an Albuquerque – Gallup – Winslow - Phoenix route. The frequency of flights from Albuquerque to Gallup, Farmington, and Durango were all increased in late 1981 when the original Frontier Airlines ended their service on the routes which they had operated with 50-seat Convair 580 aircraft. Sun West also received the Essential Air Service (EAS) contract to serve Gallup after Frontier ended all service entitling them to a government subsidy. 14-seat Beechcraft 99 airliners were introduced in June, 1983 and Sun West briefly operated nonstop flights from Albuquerque to Tucson, Arizona during the summer of that year. With intense competition from Air Midwest, Mesa, Pioneer, and Trans-Colorado Airlines, service from Albuquerque to Farmington and Durango ended in early 1984. The direct service to Winslow also ended by the fall of that year and was replaced with direct flights to Flagstaff, Arizona from Gallup and Albuquerque. All flights were operated with Beech 99's by then but service returned to Winslow in early 1985 however the carrier ceased operating on March 5, 1985 ending service on its last remaining route of Albuquerque – Gallup – Winslow - Phoenix. Mesa Airlines began new service on the Albuquerque - Gallup route two months later.

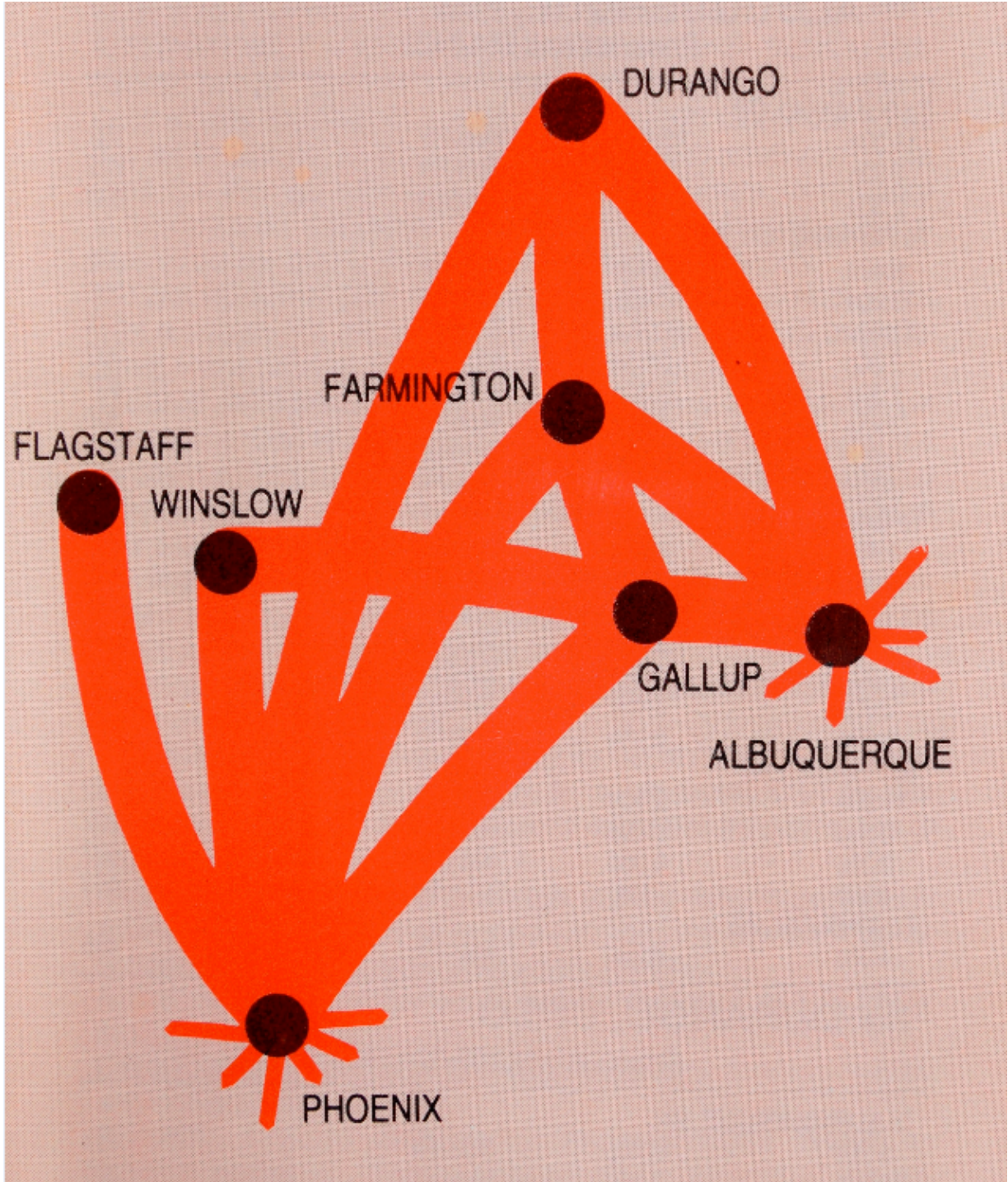
At its peak in the summer of 1982, Sun West was operating ten daily flights at Albuquerque and 15 per day at Farmington.



Sun West Airlines Piper Navajo.



Sun West introduced the Beechcraft 99 along with a new livery in 1983.



Sun West route map from October, 1982.