



Preserving, maintaining, and creating airstrips for recreational access

Summer 2020 | Issue 26

## Montana – Old-fashioned Barn Raising at Ryan Field

If you’ve seen scenic, remote Ryan Field near Glacier Park, Montana you’ll understand why the RAF has embarked on a vision to restore its backcountry appeal, while adding to its amenities. Visitors enjoy the rustic pilot shelter, vault toilet and solar shower enclosure along the west side of the airfield. They can cook on the wood cookstove, tap plenty of delicious well water and get out



Simulated position of barn at Ryan Field

of the rain.

Now, the plan includes a 30x40-ft post and beam Amish multi-purpose barn in the forest on the east side with flush toilets, and shower. Thanks to the response from generous donors from across the country, the RAF board announces the “Ryan Field Barn Raising.”

Ben and Agnes “Butchie” Ryan first saw the tamarack, pine and

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## Ohio Camp on the lake at Noble County

Ohio’s Noble County Airport, (I10) lies within Wolf Run State Park, 64 nm ESE of Columbus. The campground is on the shore of Wolf Run



Wolf Run Lake – Andy Turner photo.

Lake, a short wooded trail from the tie-downs. There is a large, level location for tents, including picnic tables and fire rings.

“It’s the only fly-in campground on a lake in central Ohio,” RAF Ohio Liaison Christine Mortine said. In April, Mortine was granted RAF funds for equipment carts and an RAF fire ring. “This has proven to be a highly energized project,” Mortine said, with involvement of the Noble Co. commissioners, Ohio State Parks, and Ohio Dep’t of Natural Resources. See the Airfield Guide ([www.airfield.guide](http://www.airfield.guide)) for information on Noble County Airport.

## Minnesota’s Isle Airport remains open

RAF Minnesota Liaison Kurt Pennuto reports that the city council voted to keep Isle Airport, (MY72) open. “I want to thank everyone for their hard work, letters of support and commitment to keeping Isle Airport open for future generations of pilots,” Pennuto said. The airport is listed on charts as private, and is managed by the Isle Airport Association.

The RAF worked along with AOPA, MN Pilots Association, and others; with additional leverage from many letters of support from individuals.

“These efforts oftentimes shift the balance and opinions of elected leadership and this is proof,” RAF President Bill McGlynn said.

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## You Gotta Love It When a Plan Comes Together

– RAF Chairman John McKenna



Who hasn't heard that phrase? And it is even better when you are part of the process. The RAF has embarked on a number of projects this year resulting from a plan coming together. Let me update you on a few of them.

**Airfield Guide:** With the continued hard work and effort of Chip Gibbons and Dave Powell, aided by many of you, this guide is continuing to grow in both content and usefulness. RAF Director Jeff Russell has committed to bring additional effort and thought to this project. Please continue to be a part of making this *the* backcountry "Go-To Guide."

**Video Production:** Coming later this year, or early next will be the pictorial version of our brand book. We have contracted with a good group from Washington State that is working alongside your RAF team. This video would not be possible without the work that has gone into building our brand, articulating it, living it, and now bringing the RAF story to life in video form. Stay tuned.

**Fulfillment of our mission:** Likely one of the least obvious, but most noticeable pieces of who we are, and what we do. All across this country you, RAF volunteers, are mowing the grass, building everything from outhouses to pilot shelters, participating in public planning processes, and even building brand new airstrips. It is not enough to talk about doing this work . . . you have to go *do* it, and many of you are. Jump in if you aren't.

**Ryan Barn:** This signature project is moving from vision to reality. Ryan Field truly represents the plan coming together. For 17 years it has been a work in progress and we believe it is close to becoming one of the all-time best backcountry destinations the country has to offer. By the time you read this, we hope to have enough of the funds necessary to confidently move forward. We don't want to stop there however, as we must make sure we have enough money in the bank to take care of this place for our children, and our children's children. Ryan is all that is good about the RAF and you can each be proud of what you have contributed. For those of you who are watching and have yet to add a few bucks, we can still use your help.

Finally, the plan that is really coming together is the **People Plan**. Our membership is growing, our state liaisons and ambassadors are motivated, and our mission is being fulfilled. You are part of the RAF story, and we hope that you are as proud as we are.

Keep striving, keep telling our story, and bring someone along.  
That will be our real legacy.

## USFS funds airstrips, seeks RAF help

For the past several years, the RAF has been successful including US Forest Service airstrips as a line item in Congress's Appropriations bill. Again for fiscal year 2020, \$750,000 was budgeted for Forest Service airstrip maintenance. (See *related story about results in Arizona, page 5.*) The report just released to USFS land managers specifies standards of maintenance for each Forest Service airstrip for safe operations. It states, "Airfields with existing Minimum Maintenance Standards Plans shall be maintained to at least those standards."

Of special importance, the USFS acknowledges and encourages cooperation with the Recreational Aviation Foundation:

"Units should consider opportunities to leverage appropriated funding. Such opportunities include leveraging of partnerships and volunteers, as such a National Master Challenge Cost Share was developed with Recreation[a] Aviation Foundation to support potential partnership opportunities."

## Ryan Barn Raising — From page 1

cedar timbered 160 acres at the foot of Strawberry Mountain in 1967, and knew they would be happy there. Ben – veteran Army P-38 pilot – imagined his own airfield, and Butchie, veteran Army nurse, pictured views of glorious sunrises and sunsets. Their remarkable story is here: <https://theraf.org/ryan-field/>

Ben built a 2,500-ft airstrip, and the RAF was introduced to Ryan's place in 2003. The couple appreciated the RAF mission and donated the property to the RAF so that aviators seeking a backcountry environment could land and enjoy Montana's spectacular Glacier Country. The field not only provides this experience, it is a place to gather, a place to build community and to be a model for others that could follow. To see a short video about Ryan Field, see [www.theRAF.org](http://www.theRAF.org).

With deep respect for the Ryan legacy, the RAF is building on the foundation that Ben and Butchie laid. Thanks to the generous response so far, the vision of Ryan Field is now very close to being realized. In order to complete and sustain the project, we're asking folks to join in at whatever level they can.

### Will YOU help the RAF "Raise the Barn"?

Go to [www.theRAF.org](http://www.theRAF.org) to be a part of this exciting effort!

Foundation Builders, \$10,000 and over

Truss Builders, \$5,000 to \$10,000

Wall Builders, \$2,500 to \$5,000

Roof Builders, \$1,000 to \$2,500

Ten planks for a contribution of \$500

Five for \$250

Two for \$100

One for \$50

or Nail down my contribution of \$ \_\_\_\_\_



*Donations are tax-deductible to the extent of the law.*

"I love the RAF mission and I hope you continue to find ways to expand opportunities for expanding the pool of public and private landing strips for us all to use and enjoy."

– Dave, Texas, June 2020

### STATE LIAISONS, *continued*

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*The RAF also enlists Ambassadors to represent the RAF at events. See current list on page 7.*

*Front page flag photo: Two-Hearted airfield, Michigan*

*– Heidi Stoeppel photo.*

## RAF improvements noted— Del Norte is Colorado's Airport of the Year

The Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) Division of Aeronautics named Astronaut Kent Rominger Airport, (RCV) "2020 Colorado Airport of the Year."

Improvements at RCV began in 2010, with a state/local-funded runway upgrade to serve Del Norte's new Hospital. Airport Advisory Board Chair Tom Haefeli has also served with Patrick Romano as an RAF Colorado Liaison for the past six years, and noted that the airport was also seeing more visitor traffic.

The Airport Advisory Board designed a

multi-use facility that could be of benefit to the local community as well as transient users. Haefeli was awarded a \$30,000 RAF grant toward the design and construction of the project.

The new facility was completed, thanks to other funding, including many private donors and donated labor, supplies, heavy equipment use and operation from various contractors. The Rio Grande County Airport Fund supplied the balance of funding. "It was a truly community project," Haefeli said.

The building offers WiFi, refrigerator, stove and restroom with shower, and adjacent campsites.

The CDOT press release states: "The volunteer leadership of the airport has helped make RCV one of the shining examples in Colorado of what a small rural general aviation airport can do to support its community and its residents and visitors."

Haefeli invites pilots to come and enjoy the new facility while exploring the many recreational opportunities in the region.



"Wonderful. Can't wait to put it to use. Tom, Jay [RCV airport manager] and the gang should be very proud." — *Arnold, Colorado, January 2020*



### Airfield Guide – Free Guide to fun places

The Airfield Guide ([www.airfield.guide](http://www.airfield.guide)) is a free interactive resource to help plan your next flying journey. Airfields are being added frequently, and once you register, you'll receive invitations to explore the new listings.

You'll find information like lat/long, elevation, ownership, usage, and CTAF. Proximity to recreation like swimming, hiking, mountain biking, camping, lodging, horseback riding, restaurants and WiFi availability is included.

You'll find important Safety Briefings, **some of which are required prior to landing**. Listings include photos and some include videos of approaches and departures.

The "Manage Tour" feature enables you to plan a flight of several locations, and send it to your friends who automatically receive any Safety Briefings associated with each location. Your "Tour" interfaces with ForeFlight® as well.

Go to [www.airfield.guide](http://www.airfield.guide) to register, and begin planning your next adventure — brought to you by the RAF in association with Tailwind Aviation Foundation.

## RAF Grants add recreational access, amenities

The RAF is primarily volunteer-driven, meaning your donations go directly toward

on-the-ground projects that further the RAF mission to preserve, maintain, and create airstrips for recreational access.

This issue includes some of the projects partially or fully funded with RAF grant funds. Projects that have been completed or are underway are in Colorado, Idaho, Montana, New Hampshire, New Mexico, New York, Ohio, three in Oregon, one each in Vermont and Washington State.

Volunteer RAF state liaisons identify places where an airstrip project will improve safety, add amenities, or enhance access to recreational opportunities. The liaison

applies to the RAF grant committee, whose members review each application for relevance to the RAF mission. Applications come in from all over the country, and the review committee takes great care to place dollars where they'll do the most good.

Most projects require the liaison to organize volunteer labor, and marshal RAF resources. Often material and equipment usage is donated. When products or services must be purchased, the emphasis is always on maximizing donors' contributions and deliver the best value on tangible improvements.



Volunteers install a fire ring at Trigger Gap, 2017

— Dave Powell photo.

## New Mexico – Cuba reclaimed; Amigos del Cielo lengthened with RAF grant

After years of cooperative effort with the New Mexico Airstrip Network, Cuba Airstrip is open again for public use. “We convinced the BLM that Cuba Airstrip could be a valuable asset for them as well as a recreational asset for aviation,” RAF New Mexico Liaison Ron Keller said. The airstrip had fallen into disrepair with ruts, cattle tracks, and erosion.

The 3,800-ft airstrip lies at an elevation of 6,798 feet and appeals to recreational pilots because the Continental Divide Trail runs adjacent to the airstrip.

RAF Director Emeritus Rol Murrow joined Keller, outgoing New Mexico Pilots Assoc. President Joyce Woods, and others on the planning/steering committee, and they met with BLM field office personnel responsible for the airstrip. New Mexico Aviation Division offered funding, and NMPA and the RAF provided technical guidance. “This has been a total team effort,” Keller said.

The strip was graded, and FAA charting is in progress. See the Airfield Guide for details.

Keller was awarded an RAF grant to

lengthen the crosswind runway at **Amigos del Cielo** airport, (NM90) near Rodeo, NM to its original length of 1,900 feet. “This will allow pilots, especially those with tailwheel aircraft, a safer option during windy days, a common occurrence in the area,” Keller said. He constructed and placed new windssock poles at this airport using a previous RAF grant.

Amigos del Cielo has unique facilities including camping, lodging, hangars, and a movie theater. Amigos del Cielo is listed as a **permissive** airstrip in the Airfield Guide.

## Arizona – USFS funds benefit airstrips; RAF at Copperstate

The RAF was successful in getting language added to the US Dep’t of Agriculture appropriations bill directing the USFS to invest \$750,000 in backcountry “rural” airstrips each year.

RAF Arizona Liaison Mark Spencer reports that Region 3, (Arizona and New Mexico) has benefited from this funding. Negrito airstrip received funds for fencing and a vault toilet; and at Grapevine, District Ranger Kelly Jardine has budgeted \$10,000 to be invested by August.

The RAF shared a double booth with Arizona Pilots Associa-

tion at Arizona’s annual Copperstate Fly-In Expo February 6-9 at Buckeye, west of Phoenix.

Spencer, his wife Stefanie, and APA representatives signed up new RAF members and presented backcountry forums. Copperstate organizers bring young persons to participate, and over 1,200 school children toured the venue including Spencer’s presentations about flying. The RAF thanks APA for reinforcing the RAF message, and advocating the partnership that has resulted in successes like Grapevine, and Double Circle Ranch airstrips.

## Idaho – Driggs is gateway to Teton recreation

RAF Idaho Liaison Tim Riley reports that the improvements to the airport camping facility at Driggs Reed Memorial Airport, (KDIJ) are ready for use. “Driggs is a world class destination for the pilot community, with access to hiking, biking, fishing, floating, golf and a small town with numerous shops and restaurants,” Riley said. It also serves as a gateway to the Idaho backcountry.

The project was a collaborative effort using an RAF grant and financial support from the Idaho Aviation Association, (IAA), the City

of Driggs, and its Airport Board. A 12 x 16-ft cedar pilot shelter, potable water, porta-potty, power and a charging station were installed at a nice grass tie-down area with views of the nearby Teton Range. More upgrades are planned such as a fire ring and gas barbecue, and more permanent toilet facilities.

Driggs also has a grass runway parallel to the paved runway. “It is a great stop on the way to or from the Idaho backcountry,” Riley said. He points out that the Warbirds Cafe is just a short walk from the campground. An IAA



bike shed and loaner bikes are available to ride into town. The airport has rental cars to access the amenities the area has to offer.

“The project is well aligned with the RAF mission of using aircraft to access recreational resources,” Riley said.

“Well done. This is great news on a beautiful location.”

– Lynn, Florida, May 2020

## Team Building – RAF adds four State Liaisons



**Harper Goodwin, Arkansas**

In eighth grade, Harper's dad gave him a book, *How to Become an Airline Pilot*, then career day in high school "sealed the deal," Harper says.

Four years later he flew out of Louisiana Tech University with 500 hours and a degree in Professional Aviation, and went to work for a one-airplane company that didn't make it, but, "I was lucky enough to spend 37 years doing exactly what I wanted to do, and always seeking real long, real wide, flat places to land," he said.

In retirement Harper bought a Cessna 210 to fly between home in Fort Worth, and property in NW Arkansas. A presentation by then-RAF Arkansas Liaison Dave Myrick about the RAF building a new airfield piqued his interest. "Well, the 210 rolled out of the hangar, and in came the Cessna 180," Harper said, confident of his 20,000 hours of flying time "with at least two hours in a taildragger 40 years ago." Harper now skillfully flies his 180, with a passion for backcountry flying and the RAF's role in its promotion. "I have found it to be a great and worthy cause involving exceptional people," Harper says.

He and his wife Diane live in the woods three miles from that new airfield, Trigger Gap.



**Gabriel Jaszczak, Massachusetts and Rhode Island**

Gabriel completed much of his flight training in the mountains of western Montana. An avid hiker and camper, he admired the pilots flying into Idaho's Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness.

One of his favorite strips in the region is Benchmark, just outside the Bob Marshall Wilderness in Montana.

In 2017, Gabriel moved to the Providence area and earned his CFI certificate. He made the career change to a full-time pilot and now flies for the airlines. He's working hard at saving up for his own tailwheel aircraft.

"I fly for fun because I find it to be the most freeing thing I'm capable of doing, and because it's the quickest way to get some space from urban living," he adds.

Gabriel is excited to help the RAF create and maintain airfields, and to keep general aviation thriving in New England.

"Combining my love of flying, my passion for the outdoors, and my desire to give back to the community seems perfect to me," he says.

Gabriel lives in Providence, RI with his girlfriend and his dog.

For a complete roster of RAF State Liaisons, see [www.theRAF.org](http://www.theRAF.org)



**Trevor Otto, Wisconsin**

Trevor knew at the age of ten that he wanted to fly and own an airplane, just like his late father. By age 16, he'd bought a Koala, a ¾ scale Piper Cub, and after a bit of wood and fabric work, he made his first solo flight in it.

Trevor completed flight training in Daytona Beach. He started his own company called TGO Aviation Services and contracted with International Recovery Group (IRG), specializing in ferry service.

Air Wisconsin Airlines hired Trevor in 2007, and in 2019, Trevor landed his "dream job," flying for Southwest Airlines.

Trevor and his wife, Christen own a 1940 Piper J3 on big wheels and "we have enjoyed exploring much that Wisconsin has to offer in the aviation world," he says. He was introduced to backcountry flying, and enjoys expanding his STOL skills.

RAF Director Jeff Russell – former Wisconsin Liaison – introduced Trevor to the RAF. Trevor believed the Wisconsin Liaison position would be a great way to volunteer his time.

"I will continue to do everything I can to preserve this style of flying for generations to come," Trevor says, "including my two young children."



**Katerina Barilov, California**

Originally from Russia, Katerina lives and works out of a small airport in Santa Paula in southern California. Along with a team of engineers based in Silicon Valley, she is growing a start-up that is building an electric aircraft that will help first responders get to the scene of an accident in remote areas quicker and safer.

A former aerobatic competition pilot, she now flies her modified Piper Colt all over the West.

As an RAF Liaison, Katerina is excited to

spread the word about the RAF's mission to the GA community and beyond, encouraging people to use aviation as a sustainable way to get in touch with the great outdoors. Since January, 2019, she had served as an RAF Ambassador.

She is passionate about how aviation facilitates public land access, exploration, and adventure. She hopes that as more people discover the freedom of aviation, they grow a deeper connection to our land.

## RAF Ambassador Team

Our enthusiastic RAF Ambassadors serve at work parties and aviation events.

Arkansas	Donna Perkins	Minnesota	Paul Noskowiak
Arkansas	Presley Melton	Minnesota	Amy Gesch
Arizona	Jeffrey Iorio	Missouri	Jim Dickerson
Colorado	Michael Langersmith	Missouri	Sarah Dickerson
Colorado	Alex Ruehle	Missouri	Jim Rhodes
Colorado	Sam Chambers	Nebraska	Mark Farrell
Colorado	Bill Murrish	Nevada	Fred Williams
Connecticut	Greg Delp	New Mexico	Larry Filener
Florida	Debra Folsom	New York	Bob Anderson
Florida	Amrat Chugani	North Dakota	Jeff Faught
Florida	Wes Whitley	ND and MN	Rick Mercil
Florida	Joe DeLeon	Oregon	Alan Cossitt
Florida	Lynn Gardner	Oregon	Bill Ables
Georgia	Eric Davis	Tennessee	Cal Scholten
Georgia	Brian Unrein	Texas	Mike Hergenrath
Idaho	Andrew Simmons	TX and MT	Steve Maus
Illinois	David Warner	Washington	Ray Ballantyne
Illinois	Tom Scott	Washington	Jered Paine
Iowa	Ken Warren	Wisconsin	Charlie Miller
Kansas	Bruce Latvala	Wisconsin	Bill Mecozzi
Maine	Jeremy Harmon	Wisconsin	Austin Levin
Michigan	John Riordan	West Virginia	Jack Soronen



### The Ambassador Experience

— Rick Mercil, ND and MN

“Recreational Aviation Foundation”—  
What’s not to like about these three  
words?

As a pilot, the RAF has offered me so many opportunities to meet interesting people in interesting places, hence *recreational aviation*. The word “Foundation” reminds me to give back.

Whether it’s a work party or a financial contribution, the RAF feeds my passion to fly and give back. It’s covering all the bases.

## RAF Podcasts – Your chance to hear those “campfire” stories

When RAF friends gather around the fire hub, there are plenty of good stories. We’re capturing these stories in digital format, and we think you’ll enjoy *The RAF and Backcountry Flying* podcasts. Find them on Spotify and Apple Podcasts, or on the RAF website, [www.theRAF.org](http://www.theRAF.org).

Host RAF President Bill McGlynn is criss-crossing the nation digitally, beginning with RAF co-founder and Chairman John McKenna of Montana, and is adding stories of other members of the “RAF Family”. Hear from Oklahoma Liaison Steve Thomp-

son, aircraft owner since age 16. If you think Recreational Use Statutes are boring, you haven’t heard New Englander John Nadeau’s version. Bill catches Katie Pribyl between ranch chores, and it’s clear she’s totally comfortable branding calves, flying her Skywagon off the ranch, or flying an RJ in and out of O’Hare. You’ll meet others, like former RAF director Tim Clifford, and learn the Ryan Field story, and more.

Each guest shares personal stories of how and why they were attracted to the RAF, its mission, and mostly, its engaging people.



### BACKCOUNTRY BOUTIQUE

On the 5th of each month, we advertise a new RAF logo item on the RAF website and Facebook. We sell limited quantities and when they’re gone, they’re gone! Watch for our next big reveal! And hurry — items have been selling out fast!

**Purchases benefit the RAF mission to preserve,  
maintain, and create airstrips for recreational access.**

“I ordered an RAF logo face mask from your Backcountry Boutique and was immediately pleased with the style, fit, comfort and construction. Thanks for a high quality product that has already received a great deal of use!”

— Joe, Rhode Island, June 2020

## Arkansas – Trigger Gap salvages firewood; Survival Clinic

RAF Arkansas volunteers split and stocked firewood for the two firepits at Trigger Gap airfield, (17A) on Valentine's weekend. RAF Arkansas Liaison Harper Goodwin and his wife live near the field, and hosted the crew to remove downed trees from their yard, salvaging the firewood for campers' use. Participating in the project were the Goodwins, Chip Gibbons, Craig Gourley, Greg Matteri and his wife Debbie, and RAF Arkansas Liaison Dave Powell and his wife Julie. For more details about this scenic recreational airfield, its amenities, and Safety Briefing, go to the Airfield Guide.

### Survival training outdoors at Sugar Creek

The OZ1 Flying Club based in Bentonville, presented a "Downed

Aircraft" survival course in February, covering techniques to stay alive until help arrives. The all-day course was held at Arkansas's Sugar Creek airfield, (58AR).

Instructors trained in SERE, (Survival, Evasion, Resistance and Escape) taught essential trauma medicine for downed pilots, how to build a shelter, starting a fire, and assembling your own survival kit. "We were fortunate to have some of the most qualified professionals in the country teaching this course," said RAF Arkansas Liaison Dave Powell, who supported the event. The RAF offered a discounted price on the Garmin inReach® Mini, as part of its RAF Gear Pack. (See the RAF Outfitter on page 11 for more detail.)

## Florida – New owners at Chipola Airpark; Airfield to preserve ID'd

Chipola Airpark, (5FL8) near Greenwood in Florida's panhandle will soon be open to the recreational community, thanks to RAF Florida Liaison Bobby Capozzi and his wife, Kim.

The couple purchased the 2,850-ft turf airfield last year. Sun 'n Fun visitors probably know this hardworking pair, as they have co-hosted the Hospitality House for the Florida Sport Aviation Antique & Classic Association (FSAACA) each year at the Lakeland,

Florida event. The Capozzis report that a new windsock is being installed, and once they feel the field is ready, they will submit Chipola Airpark details for listing in the Airfield Guide.

### Otter Springs airfield identified for preservation

RAF Florida Ambassador Lynn Gardner reported to Capozzis the possibility of preserving Otter Springs airfield near Trenton, FL. The airfield has recreational possibilities and its future is in question.

## Vermont – RAF grant keeps popular airfield open

RAF Vermont Liaison Robert Burley was awarded an RAF grant to keep Allenholm, (VT26) open for public use by providing for seasonal mowing, and improving the existing open bay hangar. This 2,000-ft turf

airfield lies in a working apple orchard on an island in Lake Champlain, between Vermont and New York mountain ranges.

"Multiple water, hiking, camping and scenic recreational opportunities abound," Burley said. There is a B&B on the field, and bicycles are available. Nearby is a quaint Vermont village, Allenholm farm store, famous for its pies and pastries; a renowned bistro, craft shops, and the ferry to New York State. Within a mile is a state park with beaches and watercraft rentals on Lake Champlain. "A particularly wonderful experience is walking or biking on the

former railroad causeway crossing Lake Champlain," Burley added.

"The field has a 50-year history of use for instruction, fly-ins, local social events, weddings and island recreational access," he explained, adding, "RAF involvement has led to a regional resurgence in use, and remaining open will preserve these uses."

The airfield owner and the airfield enjoy strong local and regional support, and a Vermont Land Trust conservation easement specifies agriculture and/or aviation use for the property.

Allenholm is listed in the Airfield Guide.



"Thanks for your initiative to save Allenholm. There are a dozen grass strips within 45 minutes of Allenholm in the Champlain Valley on both the NY and VT sides of the lake. It was great to taxi past the RAF windsock going in and out of Allenholm. Well done!"

– Raymond, North Carolina, February 2020



## Oregon – RAF grants improve safety at three USFS airstrips

### Grant improves Rager Airstrip

The RAF and the US Forest Service (USFS) have collaborated on improvements to the primitive airstrip adjacent to the Rager Ranger Station in the Ochoco National Forest in Central Oregon. The 2,800-ft airstrip is a popular destination for backcountry pilots.

Rager airstrip had become hazardous due to encroaching brush, surface damage caused by wildlife and livestock, and missing windsock. USFS District Ranger Johanna Kovarik and Botanist Jill Welborn agreed to the RAF performing the badly needed safety improvements.

With an RAF grant, Oregon Liaison Richard Mayes coordinated brush and trash removal, repair of surface damage, and erection of a windsock. A new stone fire ring was constructed near a donated picnic table in the camping area.

The RAF thanks RAF members Jim Campbell and Ed Stryker for their exceptional dedication to the project.

**Red's Wallowa Horse Ranch** is within Oregon's Eagle Cap Wilderness, administered by the US Forest Service. There is no road to the 1,600-ft airstrip, so access is only by aircraft, foot, or horseback.

"This location is attractive for remote camping and hiking, and fishing on the adjacent Minam River," Mayes said. His concern was that without mowing, the airstrip could become unusable and likely lost to future use. He was awarded an RAF grant to mow the 1,600-ft airstrip and tackle brush removal.

Situated within a designated Wilderness Area, mechanized equip-

ment is prohibited. Mules and non-mechanized mowing equipment must be trailed in.

Hand tools will be used to remove brush infesting the airstrip and the camping areas. RAF Ambassador Bill Ables will coordinate the mowing with USFS representatives, who are currently managing manual weed control efforts.

"The project also demonstrates our willingness to collaborate with the Forest Service, and to donate our time, money and labor to protect backcountry access," Mayes said. See the Airfield Guide for details.

### McKenzie Bridge State Airport

Mayes was granted RAF funds toward maintenance at McKenzie Bridge State Airport, (00S) in the Willamette National Forest.

"McKenzie Bridge Airport is popular with recreational aviators. It provides access to the McKenzie River, McKenzie River Mountain Bike Trail, and remote camping," Mayes said.

The grant will provide for a contractor to mow and remove brush during the growing season for safe operations.

The RAF supports the State of Oregon in maintaining this appealing recreational destination.

"For the past three years we have held at least two volunteer work parties each year to perform maintenance and improvements at the airport," Mayes said. "The project supports our mission to preserve and maintain airstrips for recreational access."

See the Airfield Guide for a safety briefing, and more information.



*Red's Wallowa Horse Ranch adjacent to the 1,600-ft airstrip  
– Richard Mayes photo.*

## Montana –

### RAF grant for improvements at West Yellowstone campground

The RAF provided grant funds and volunteer effort toward improvements at the campground adjacent to West Yellowstone Airport, (KWYS). The most recent grant went toward partially funding two permanent picnic tables with Montana Pilots Association and MT Aeronautics. Airport Manager Jeff Kadlec estimates that during the past season, between one hundred to one hundred and fifty people have used the area.

"These tables will finish off the gazebo area of the campground

and make West Yellowstone's campground one of the best in Montana," RAF Montana Liaison Scott Newpower said. Pilots are welcome to enjoy the campground for day or overnight use.

West Yellowstone Airport is paved and lies at an elevation of 6,649 feet. It is open seasonally, closing mid-October through early May. Pilots are to check NOTAMS or may call 406-459-9825, or 406-646-7631 for specific conditions. The airport is listed in the Airfield Guide.

## Illinois – Bird watching bliss

Havana Regional (910) is a turf airstrip on a sandy plain near the Illinois River and the Emiquon National Wildlife Refuge. On March 7, Havana was again the site for this year's Migratory Bird Fly-in, organized by RAF Illinois Liaison Mike Purpura.

The RAF granted money to upgrade its pilot shelter, adding a shower and restroom. "The Port Authority also makes it one of the friendliest airports in Illinois," Purpura said.

Fly-in participants enjoyed breakfast before being shuttled to Emiquon to see thousands of Trumpeter Swans, ducks, and Snow Geese. "When the skies cleared, all anyone could see was a white raft of birds with the sound of their prehistoric calls reaching our ears," Purpura said. The group returned to the airport for a complete fried catfish dinner.

## Washington – 2020 NW Conference, Avey Field grant

### NW Conference well attended

RAF volunteers staffed a display at the 37th annual Northwest Aviation Conference February 22-23 in Puyallup, WA. RAF Washington State Liaison Dave Whitelaw was joined by RAF President Bill McGlynn, Secretary/Treasurer Mike Perkins, Oregon Liaison Richard Mayes and his wife Sarah, and RAF member John Whitelaw and Ambassador Ray Ballantyne. McGlynn presented "Why Backcountry Flying is Important to the Future of Aviation" to a captive audience. Especially popular were the videos of backcountry landings at the RAF booth.

"It was great to connect with the Direc-

## Utah– Escalante, Grand Gulch (northern AZ)

The pilot shelter at Escalante, (1L7) was built with funds and volunteers from the RAF, Utah Back Country Pilots, and local volunteers. The RAF's "A ten-spot for a tent-spot" campaign brought donations from all over the country. The airport is southeast of town on Highway 12, and is lined by the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument.

RAF Utah Liaison Wayne Loeber and RAF Publicity Liaison Carmine Mowbray performed seasonal maintenance. Linda Mansell's family filled the firewood crib. The open-air shelter has water, electricity, gas barbecue, microwave, and mini fridge, tent spots and commemorative fire ring.

Visitors can also enjoy a heated (and

cooled) pilot lounge with WiFi, restroom, shower, and Keurig-style coffee – sponsored by the local ATV rental enterprise. A courtesy car is available. Airport manager Louise Barnes goes well beyond her city obligations to make Escalante welcoming. See the Airfield Guide for details.

### Grand Gulch (Northern Arizona)

After several meetings with staff at the Arizona Strip BLM headquarters, (located in St. George, UT) Loeber reported that the agency agreed to install a vault toilet near Grand Gulch Mine airstrip. The airstrip provides access to a historic copper mining district and artifacts. The area is also popular with 4-wheelers.



camping area, adding an outhouse, fire pits and picnic tables. Encroaching trees will be felled, bucked, split and left for firewood, and the windsock will be relocated and replaced.

Avey Field is unique in that its north-south runway actually crosses the Washington/British Columbia border, and US Customs is available on the highway to the west. US-based aircraft should park on the US (south) side of the ramp; Canadian aircraft are asked to park on the north side.

tor of Aviation for Washington State, David Fleckenstein. We also met with several airfield owners who wanted to open their airstrips to the public, and appreciated the tips we provided, and our resources online," McGlynn said.

### RAF grant to improve Avey Field

Dave Whitelaw was awarded an RAF grant for airfield maintenance and campsite construction at Avey Field (69S) in Laurier, WA. This 1,975-ft gravel runway is near a bend in the Kettle River, 35 nm NNE of Colville, WA. The airstrip is privately owned, but open for public use.

Whitelaw's project includes creating a

"Made a trip to Avey . . . Amazing! Spectacular location with amenities graciously provided by the RAF have made this a fun aviation destination. It's because of projects like this you've got me as member for life. Thank you, RAF."

– Rick, Washington, June 2020

## New York – Marcy Field in the Adirondacks

Marcy Field, (111) is a 2,390-ft grass strip in the Adirondack Mountains in Keene, New York. Assistant Airport Manager Bob Rose reached out to the RAF to consider some needed improvements.

“There is world class fly fishing in the Ausable River across the road, and the local outfitter ‘The Mountaineer’ is a mile down the road for all needs as well as guide services,” RAF New Hampshire Liaison John Meade said, of some of the recreational opportunities that are accessible.

Restaurants and hotels are within three miles; and visitors can get transportation to the Olympic Village at Lake Placid. Adirondack Rock and River Guide Service is located at the start of the famous Jackrabbit ski trail and will pick up and drop off pilots staying in the lodge. The Town of Keene will provide transportation to The Garden, a point with several trailheads where camping is allowed.

Over the years, trees had grown in on the approach end of Runway 20. An RAF grant



was awarded for their removal. The Town of Keene cooperated by providing equipment and manpower. Local volunteers known as the Adirondack Aviators Group helped town employees remove brush and clean up. See the Airfield Guide for the listing on Marcy Field.

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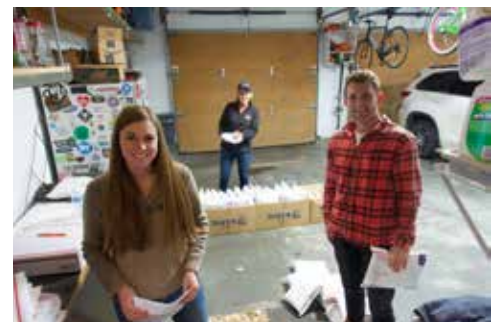
It’s just that simple” – *Andrew Simmons*

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**“We’re not Amazon”** – *Tricia McKenna, RAF Administrative Director.*

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We really do appreciate your business, and your support of the RAF mission!





*Marble, Colorado by Janette Riley  
2018 RAF Contest photo submission.*

***The Recreational Aviation Foundation preserves, maintains, and creates airstrips for recreational access.***

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