

# Big Creek (U60)

## Recommended Standard Operating Procedures



## Introduction

Welcome to Big Creek, one of Idaho's premier backcountry airstrip destinations. Mountain flying in Idaho is one of general aviation's most gratifying flight experiences. Idaho has nearly 100 backcountry airstrips that offer access to unequaled outdoor recreation such as camping, fishing and hiking.

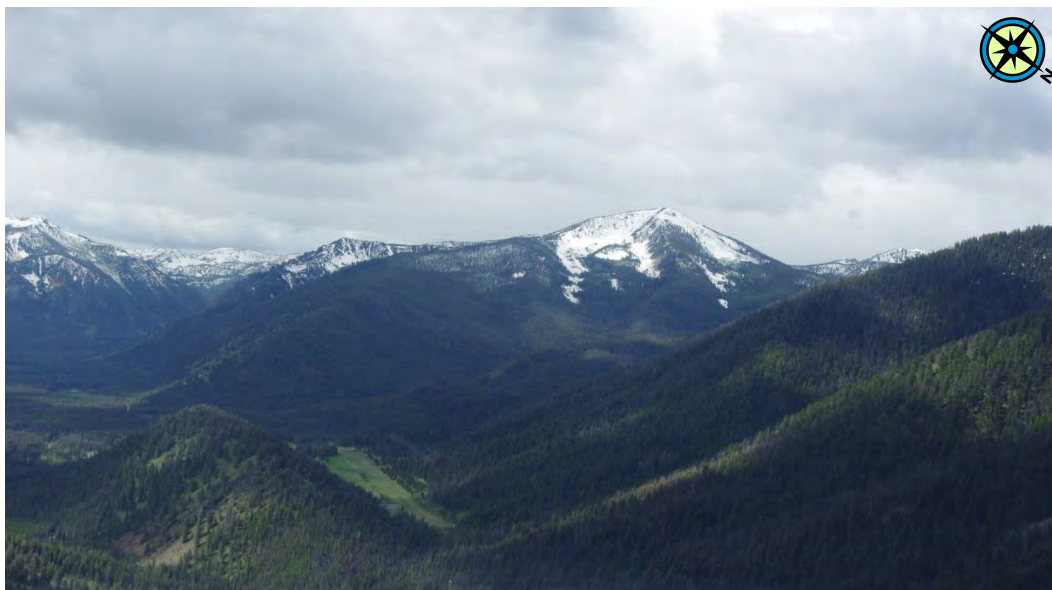
At the same time, flying in the mountains of Idaho is a serious, challenging endeavor and the number of recent accidents attests to that fact. Safe backcountry flying requires rock-solid skills in slow flight, airspeed control, intimate knowledge of your aircraft performance and well-prescribed personal limitations. Most of all, safe backcountry flying requires the proper attitude, one that is safe, conservative and professional. A safe flight is a stress-free and enjoyable flight.

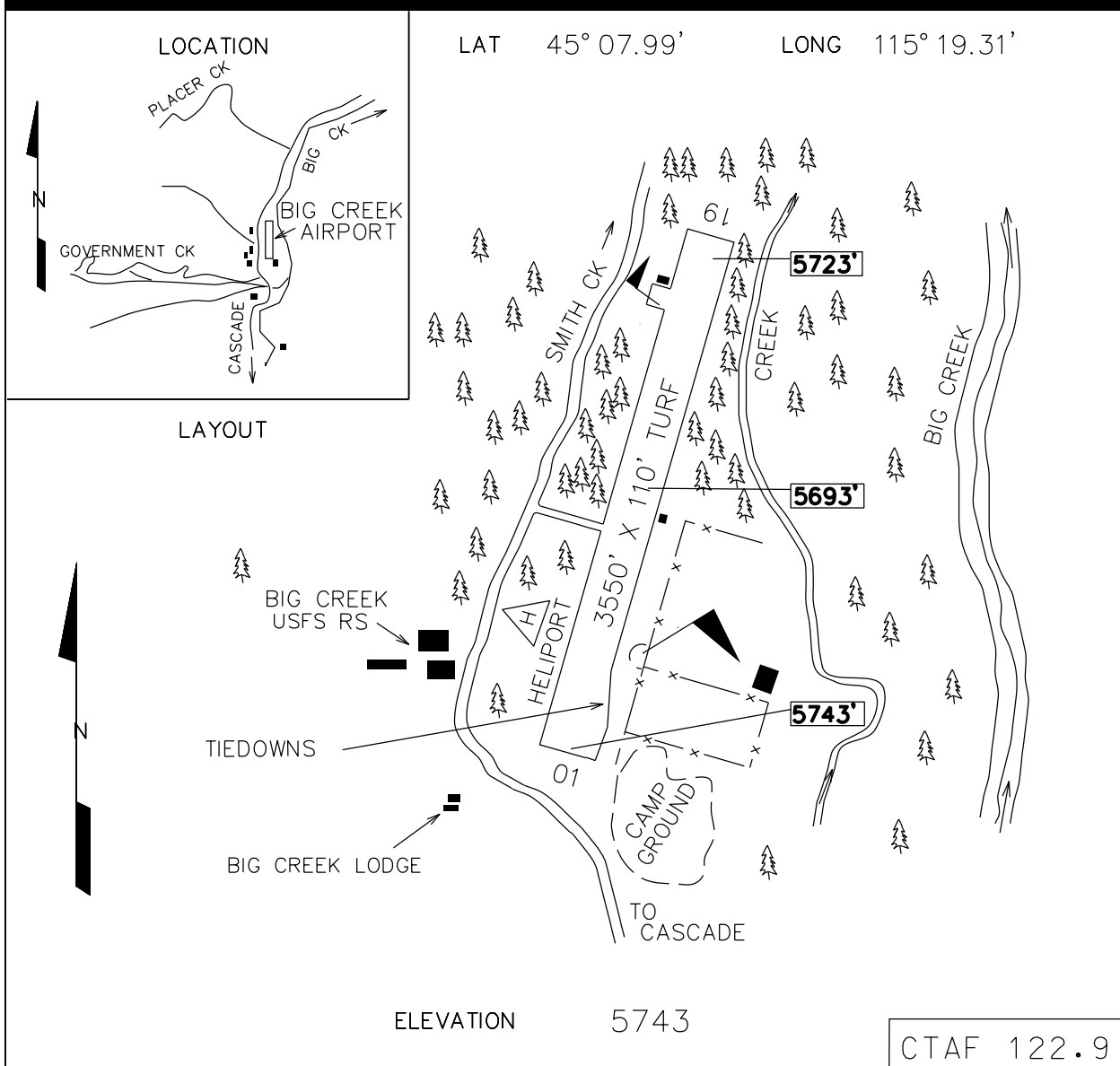
The procedures in this document are not a substitute for proper mountain flying training. Pilots interested in developing such skills will find excellent flight training resources on page 1 of this document.

These preferred operating procedures were collaboratively developed by the FAA, NTSB, local flight training providers and the Idaho Division of Aeronautics. Our goal is to set a standard for safe operating practices at the Big Creek Airport. These include proper planning, communications, traffic patterns and inflight decision-making. They are proven procedures based on safe operating practices that will ensure your Idaho flying experience is a safe and enjoyable one.

We look forward to your safe arrival at Big Creek Airport.

Idaho Division of Aeronautics





LOCATION BIG CREEK RANGER STATION

FUEL NO

VOR FREQ RAD NM  
DNJ 116.2 040° 43.5

SERVICES TIEDOWNS

COMMUNICATIONS CTAF 122.9

NAV AIDS NO

MANAGER  
208-334-8775, STATE OPERATED

LIGHTS NO

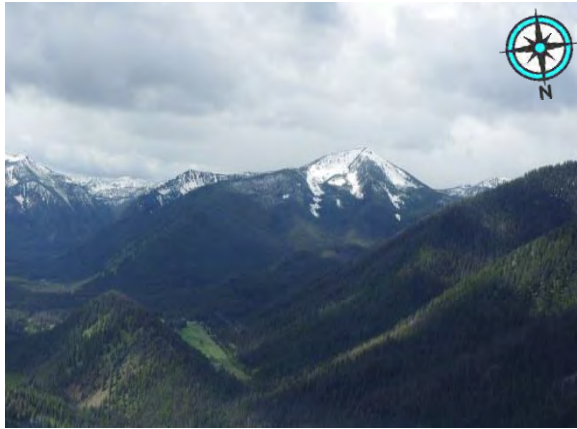
FBO(s)  
NO

ATTENDED NO

REMARKS RECOMMEND LAND RWY 19, DEPART RWY 01. CHECK AIRCRAFT PERFORMANCE FOR HIGH DENSITY ALTITUDE. RUNWAY MAY NOT BE VISIBLE FROM ALL PARTS OF TRAFFIC PATTERN. STEEP ENCLOSING TERRAIN. RUNWAY SUBJECT TO ONGOING RODENT DAMAGE. NO WINTER MAINTENANCE. AIRCRAFT USE SIDES OF STRIP DURING SKI OPERATIONS. SOUTH END OF RWY ROUGH. PORTIONS OF RUNWAY MAY BE CONED OFF FOR SPRINKLERS OR SURFACE RE-HAB.

Get recommended operating procedures: [www.itd.idaho.gov/aero](http://www.itd.idaho.gov/aero) click publications 11-16





## Preflight Planning

Big Creek (U60) is part of the vast network of Idaho backcountry airstrips. Careful reading and adherence to the procedures in this manual are essential to maintaining the safety at this particular backcountry airport. Flight planning should include:

- thorough aircraft maintenance status,
- familiarity with NOTAMs,
- backcountry operations,
- Idaho mountain flying tips,
- density altitude calculations,
- common courtesies,
- backcountry etiquette,
- weather en-route and during your stay,
- search and rescue procedures and
- survival gear.

**Do not** attempt operations at Big Creek without having a solid fundamental background in mountain flying. The Idaho Division of Aeronautics strongly recommends that visiting pilots obtain an airport checkout before landing at Big Creek Airport. The Idaho Aviation Association (IAA) now has a page where instructors list their services and specialties at:

[www.idahoaviation.com/instructors.php](http://www.idahoaviation.com/instructors.php)

## Route Planning

### Arrivals

#### Landing Runway 19

It is **recommended** that you land runway 19, wind permitting. Make your initial arrival call on 122.9 at least 5 miles from Big Creek Airport. Announce your distance, direction and altitude from Big Creek Airport. Maintain 1,500' above field elevation (AFE) as applicable or minimum (7250). *Configure your airplane to canyon maneuvering speed. Begin a descent to a traffic pattern altitude of 800-1000' AFE.*

*(Big Creek Airport) N45 07.99 W115 19.31*

#### CAUTION

*There could be numerous airplanes departing and arriving north of the airfield. Consistent position reports, traffic scans and use of landing lights are crucial upon descent and throughout the approach into Big Creek Airport.*

*You may encounter strong downdrafts on final.*

If needed, circle to observe the airfield for obstacles and hazards such as airplanes, animals, vehicles, pedestrians and sprinklers. Conduct a standard left-hand pattern that includes an upwind, crosswind, downwind, base and final.

#### Landing Runway 01

#### NOTE

*Landing downstream to the north is **NOT recommended**. Landings to the north should only be considered when wind or weather dictates that landing to the south would be unsafe.*

#### CAUTION

*USFS Heliport Ops adjacent to the SW end of the airport. Activity is greatest during summer months.*



## **Straight in Landing**

Straight in landings to Runway 19 or 01 are **strongly discouraged**.

### **WARNING**

*By not joining the pattern, there is increased risk of a midair collision. Your radio calls could be masked by terrain. You may not see airplanes, animals, vehicles, pedestrians or sprinklers on the runway until established on final*

## **Landing Abort Procedures**

### **Runway 19 and 01**

At your predetermined abort altitude, typically 200-300' AFE, begin your abort and follow the desired abort path (see map). Pick an altitude that will provide a safe abort procedure. Abort altitudes may vary for every type of aircraft and situation. 200-300' AFE is a good altitude for most aircraft.

### **NOTE**

*You must abort the landing early if you cannot land **on-speed, on aim-point, and within the first 1/3** of the*

*runway. Early recognition to abort is paramount and requires instinctive action by the pilot.*



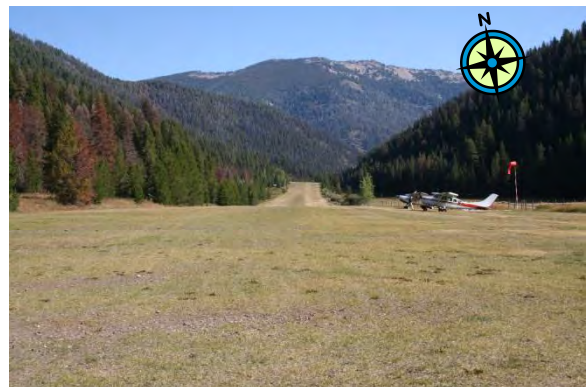
## **Departures**

### **NOTE**

*Declaring intentions, scanning for traffic and use of landing lights are encouraged for departures. Make your initial radio call on 122.9 prior to taxiing. Landing traffic always have the right of way.*

### **Departing Runway 01**

North Departure-Example: "Big Creek traffic, Cessna 20836 departing runway 01 climbing northeast bound".



### **CAUTION**

*Rising terrain to the east will restrict your view of aircraft on the downwind and base legs. You may encounter strong downdrafts.*

*Southerly winds prevail mid-morning through the afternoon. Aircraft should remain on the ground until more favorable conditions exist.*

#### NOTE

*Consider extending your departure leg towards Smith Creek before making your turn to the south (see map). Doing so might provide better altitude separation between you and downwind traffic.*

#### Departing Runway 19 is **Strongly Discouraged** Why?

1. Your takeoff path is directly toward rising terrain.
2. You may encounter strong downdrafts.
3. High density altitude conditions have contributed to accidents at Big Creek.



## SAFETY ALERT

### Arrivals

**Be alert for high-density traffic en-route to Big Creek Airport during fly-ins.**

**Runway is not visible from all parts of the traffic pattern.**

**First 1000' of runway 19 could be wet and soft (see map).**

**Runway and tie down area subject to ongoing rodent damage. Be alert for large rodent holes.**

**Runway 19: Prior to making your base to final turn, be sure to scan the final for any straight-in traffic. Straight-in traffic procedures are strongly discouraged.**

- Make inbound calls at least 5 miles out. State your intentions on backcountry frequency 122.9. Keep communications brief and concise. Refer to the VFR Route Planning section of this guide.

**Example:** *“Big Creek traffic, Cessna 20836 is 5 miles north of Big Creek airport inbound at 7500. We will enter an upwind for landing runway 19 Big Creek”, etc.*

- If your landing appears unsafe because of altitude, spacing, speed of preceding aircraft, or any other reason, abort your landing and initiate a go around above 200' AFE.
- **Common Errors:** excessive speed and/or altitude, landing long and late go-arounds.
- Formation arrivals are highly discouraged.

## SAFETY ALERT

### Departures

**Steep enclosed terrain may mask your view of traffic landing runway 19.**

**Landing traffic may only be visible when established on final.**

**Last 1000' of runway 01 could be wet and soft (see map).**

**Runway and tie down area subject to ongoing rodent damage. Be alert for large rodent holes.**

- Make a radio call on 122.9 prior to taxiing.

**Example:** *“Big Creek traffic Cessna 20836 is taxiing for runway 01 northeast departure Big Creek.”*

- Formation departures are highly discouraged.



## Big Creek Airport Notes

- Safety is priority Number One!
- You are always responsible for your safety and the safety of those in your group.
- Mishaps, incidents, or accidents must be reported to the Valley Co. Sheriff's dispatch at (208) 382-5160, and the Boise FAA Flight Standards Office at (208) 387-4000.
- Be familiar with high density altitude operations.
- Use of landing lights while in the pattern is recommended.
- Keep radio communications brief and concise. No excessive chatter.
- Landing traffic should clear the runway and expedite to parking.
- Tie downs are frequently obscured by tall grass. Be alert for deep rodent holes in this vicinity.
- Consider remaining in parking until aircraft on final has landed.
- Pilot training is discouraged at Big Creek Airport during organized fly-ins.
- Aerobatic maneuvers, formation flying, and low passes are all highly discouraged over Big Creek Airport.
- Fuel is not available at Big Creek Airport.
- Non-radio equipped aircraft are not recommended during Big Creek Airport fly-ins.
- Wi-Fi service available at the lodge.
- Webcams facing north/south are accessible at [www.idahoaviation.com/webcams.php](http://www.idahoaviation.com/webcams.php)
- During the spring and summer months, sprinklers are active throughout the day.

- Camping located SE side adjacent runway.
- Big Creek USFS Ranger Station open spring and summer from 7:30AM - 12:00 midnight.

## Please – Add these items to your checklist!

1. Check your ELT on 121.5 after every landing and monitor 121.5 when able during flight.
2. Close your flight plan with the appropriate FAA facility.

**Remember-** 121.5 ELTs are no longer monitored by satellites. Relying on a 121.5 ELT alone could delay an aerial search by hours-even days! Consider purchasing a 406 ELT, Personal Locator Beacon (PLB) or SPOT. The search process begins within minutes!

## Common Courtesy

- Be considerate of other wilderness users. Fly quiet.
- Minimize practice landings and takeoffs.

## Important Phone Numbers

Idaho Division of Aeronautics	208-334-8775
Lockheed Martin Flight Serv.	800-992-7433
Big Creek Ranger Station	208-634-2784
Big Creek lodge (reservations)	208-949-1828
Valley County Police Dispatch	208-382-5160
Arnold Aviation <i>for help relaying emergency info</i>	208-382-4844

**Download the latest version of this SOP at:**

[www.itd.idaho.gov/aero](http://www.itd.idaho.gov/aero)

Click on:

- Publications,
- Airport Operating Procedures

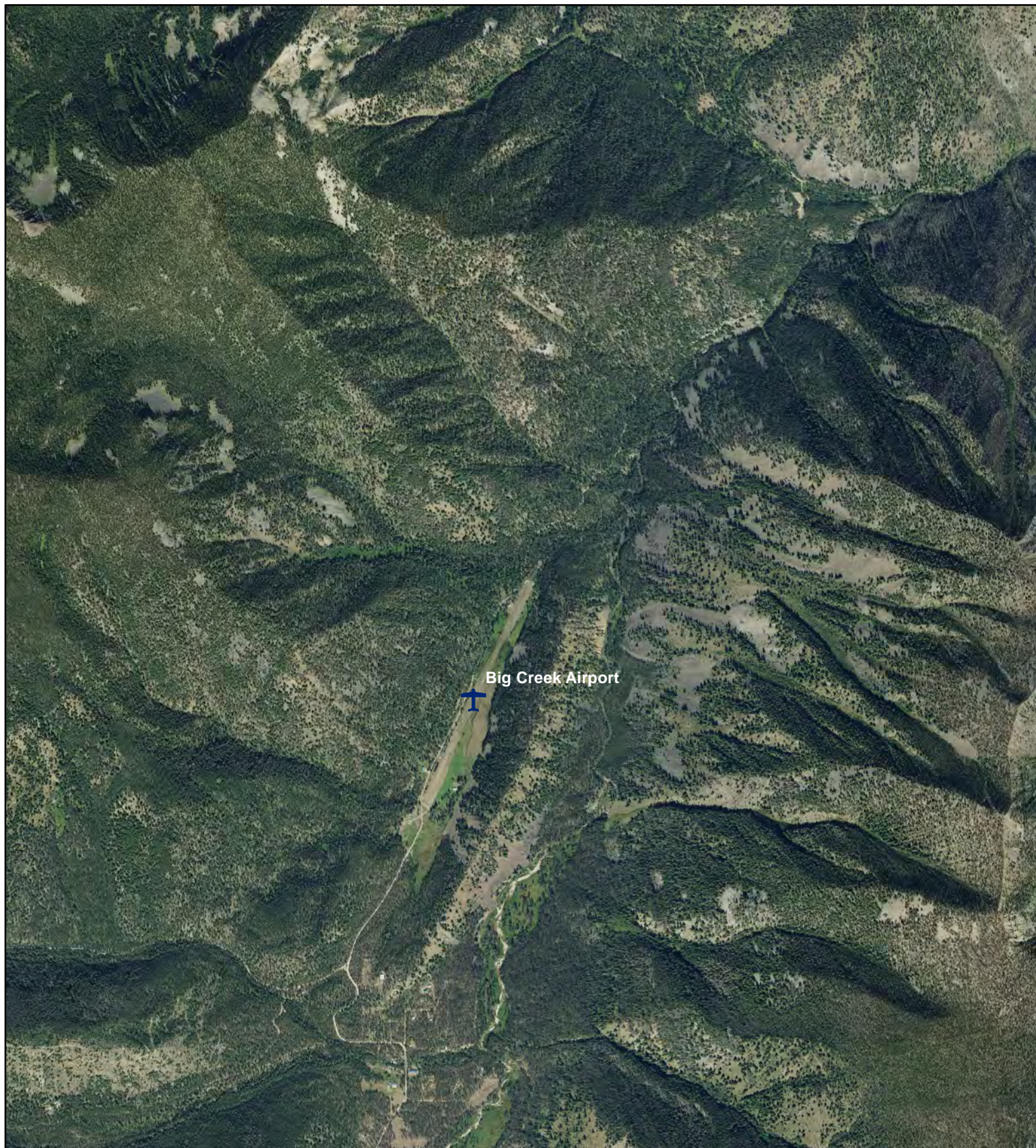


# IDAHO DIVISION OF AERONAUTICS

## (Recommended Airstrip Operating Procedure)



Big Creek Airport





# IDAHO DIVISION OF AERONAUTICS

## (Recommended Airstrip Operating Procedure)



### Legend

 Big Creek Airport



0 250 500 1,000 1,500 2,000  
Feet



# IDAHO DIVISION OF AERONAUTICS

## (Recommended Airstrip Operating Procedure)



### Legend

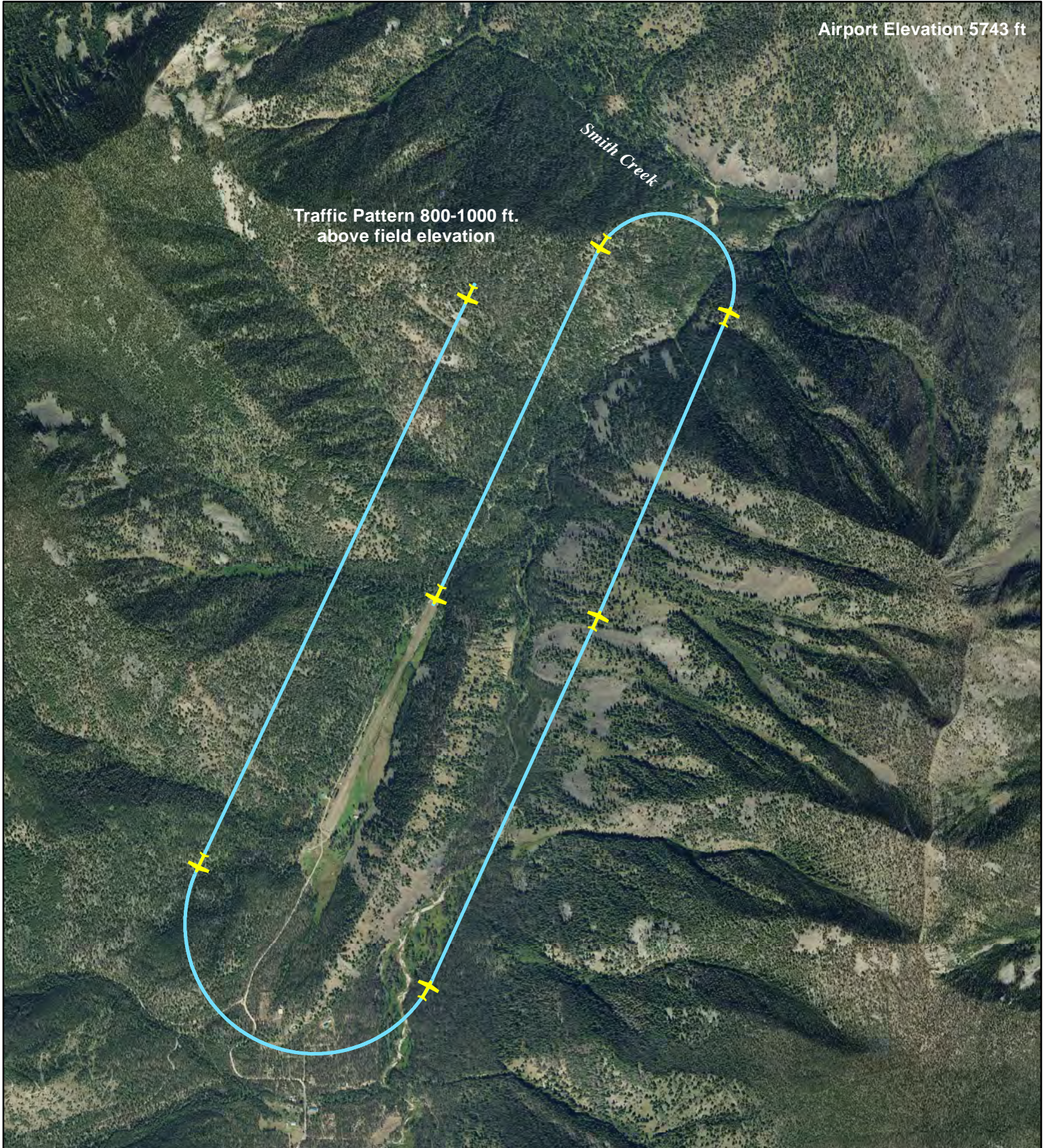
 Big Creek Airport Traffic Pattern

Airport Elevation 5743 ft

Traffic Pattern 800-1000 ft.  
above field elevation

*Smith Creek*

0 0.5 1 2 Nautical Miles






# IDAHO DIVISION OF AERONAUTICS

## (Recommended Airstrip Operating Procedure)



### Legend

 Big Creek Airport Abort Path



0 0.375 0.75 1.5  
Nautical Miles







# DENSITY ALTITUDE:

*Have you checked your performance today?*

(OAT) Outside Air Temperature									
(PA)	0C	5C	10C	15C	20C	25C	30C	35C	40C
* Pressure Altitude Ft.									
2000				2480	3080	3680	4280	4880	5480
3000			3120	3720	4320	4920	5520	6120	6720
4000			4360	4960	5560	6160	6760	7360	7960
5000		5000	5600	6200	6800	7400	8000	8600	9200
6000		6240	6840	7440	8040	8640	9240	9840	10440
7000		7480	8080	8680	9280	9880	10480	11080	11680
8000	8120	8720	9320	9920	10520	11120	11720	12320	12920

*Density Altitude (in red)*

**Rule of Thumb: For every 1 degree C, Density Altitude increases 120ft**



*How will a hot and humid day affect your airplane?*

- It will increase your take-off distance
- It will reduce your climb performance
- It will increase your landing distance

Refer to the performance section in your airplanes Pilot Operating Handbook (POH)

**Enjoy your flight in Idaho.....safely!**

***Always Safety First!***

*Density Altitude Calculator*

*Derived from US National Weather Service Formula*

*\* Obtain PA at airport by setting 2992 in the Kollsman window of the aircraft altimeter*



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