



The RAF  
1711 W. College Street  
Bozeman, MT 59715

Dear RAF Supporter:

***“If not now, when?”***

***“If not us, who?”***

A few years ago, several pilots asked these very questions when founding the RAF.

You see, prior to the formation of the RAF, recreational aviation had no national advocacy and conservation voice; no one to protect recreational airstrips or your access to them. They were slipping away one-by-one.

The results that the RAF has realized so far clearly answer that the time was critical, “now,” and it had to be started by someone, “us.” In its short history the RAF has been instrumental in saving a half a dozen wonderful airstrips from closure, has improved conditions at numerous fields enabling access by aircraft of most types and has successfully created a brand new backcountry airstrip.

Other initiatives throughout the country including the amendment of Recreational Use Statutes in 11 states, congressional actions in support of recreational aviation and establishment of important alliances with other aviation organizations, lay the groundwork for continued success in the years ahead.

The work to-date results from the dedicated efforts of a core volunteer group, each of whom have been willing to shoulder daily responsibilities that range from setting direction for the organization to mending fences or cleaning outhouses. The expenses have been covered out of their pockets and a few donors that have made an all-important financial contribution directing their money towards advocating and conserving recreational use airstrips – places we can all go and enjoy.

So far, we have survived solely on the good will of volunteers and donors like you. We had not found it necessary to make a specific request for funds to carry this work forward. That is no longer the case, today, we are asking and in considering this request please ask yourself:

***“If not now, when?”***

***“If not me, who?”***

The need is now, the RAF is you. Please give strong consideration to supporting the RAF efforts now. Just go to [www.theraf.org](http://www.theraf.org) and click on “Support Team RAF”, or mail your contribution to The RAF, 1711 West College St., Bozeman, MT. 59715

... and in advance, a big THANK YOU from recreational pilots everywhere.

John McKenna

President

*THE RAF MISSION: "Keeping the legacy of recreational aviation strong by preserving, maintaining and creating public use recreational and backcountry airstrips nationwide."*

## ***Airstrips remain open in Missouri Breaks monument – Judge rules in favor of BLM; RAF, Montana Pilots mission***

Federal Judge Sam Haddon ruled in favor of the RAF and the Bureau of Land Management in response to a 2009 lawsuit brought against the agency by environmental activists. The suit against the BLM would have negated a large portion of the Resource Management Plan (RMP), causing the extensive planning process to start over. Six permitted airstrips within the north central Montana monument would have been reconsidered for possible closure.

Judge Haddon stated in his ruling that the BLM spent several years developing the RMP with a wide array of public input. Referring to the airstrips within the Monument, Judge Haddon ruled that the BLM took a "middle ground" by approving six of the ten airstrips and imposing a season closure on one of the six.

The RAF and the MPA joined the BLM in the legal defense of the Monument airstrips. The RAF will continue to follow this issue to ensure aviation interests are represented in future litigation. The RAF believes this to be critical to our mission. RAF president John McKenna commented, "the



*Aerial scene of Missouri River in the Upper Missouri River Breaks Monument*

BLM made good decisions and were fair to all the interested parties. The RAF applauds Judge Haddon's decision."

### **RAF is a Grant Finalist!**

The Lightspeed Aviation Foundation is granting aviation-related charities over \$100,000 and RAF is on the short-list to receive up to \$10,000! Voting ends Sept. 16.

Purchase any new Lightspeed headset now through the end of the year and select your favorite aviation organization of which RAF is included.

A portion of each purchase (up to \$50) goes toward the aviation organization of your choice. Help RAF be a winner!  
*The RAF appreciates your support!*

## **RAF integral to Congressional Caucus**

Continuing the fight for backcountry destinations, the RAF sits at the table in Washington where top GA issues are debated. RAF Director Tim Clifford and Maryland Liaison Craig McCullough inform Congressmen so they understand the importance of preserving recreational aviation.

"The purpose of this caucus is to inform Congress and staff about the importance of GA to our economy and transportation system" Representatives Sam Graves (R-Mo) and John Barrow (D-Ga) wrote in January for the initial launch of the Caucus. Interest has been growing

steadily ever since and news of its activity now reaches 107 legislative members.

The Senate GA Caucus also continues to grow and support GA. Approaching 30 plus members, the Senate GA Caucus is co-chaired by Mark Begich (D-Alaska) and Mike Johanns (R-Neb).

"Legislators participating in the Caucus will hear – direct from the stakeholders – the impact their votes have on the general aviation community," said Clifford, adding, "Contact your representatives and add your voice. Together we can make a difference."

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Donors may deduct contributions made to the founda-  
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*Photo on newsletter flag and back: Mike Todd*



# President's Message – Vision, risk and rewards



–John McKenna

The water comes out the tap, lights brighten the darkness, and gas fires the boiler to keep you warm when the temperature drops. In this modern world these items are not surprising to us. They are supposed to happen. However, somebody took a risk to install those things that now seem automatic. Perhaps a developer came in long before you and dug a big trench in the middle of what is now your street. In went water, telephone, gas, sewer and more. Pavement followed allowing you to easily maneuver the family car out into the greater world beyond.

Some called that early developer foolish for taking the risk. Who else understood the vision that they saw in that bare piece of ground?

So goes it with the work of the Recreational Aviation Foundation (RAF). Maybe you know the story about the original folks – the “developers” – who sat around a campfire concerned that if they did not take care of these aviation treasures, that they would be forever lost.

That group set about to build the infrastructure that is now the framework of the RAF. They dug into the past and found what had already been done. They outlined their vision and began to work on it. There was little support early on, but when work got underway folks started to show up asking about future developments. These early onlookers were put to work, and work they did. They created the framework for the agreements with the BLM, the USFS, the NPS, and private parties as well.

The RAF dug those trenches, laid the lines, and built much of what we know as the streets that we hope will enable many to drive on in the future. This work is already paying dividends and we know it will in the future.

Already some wonderful places have shown up on the ground that the RAF has pioneered. Russian Flat, Missouri River Breaks, and the Ryan airfield. More are underway in places like Florida and Maine. Not to mention the Recreational Use Statute achievements in Arizona, New Mexico, Maine, Massachusetts, Montana, Idaho, Tennessee and New Hampshire. With continued success throughout the country this piece of infrastructure will only add to the foundation of

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Please provide your current email address to: [contact@theraf.org](mailto:contact@theraf.org) . This will save printing and distribution costs for Newsletters and insure you receive the latest RAF information. If you do not have an email address, we will continue to send newsletters via USPS.

the future.

The RAF is proud of the vision that we now share with you. We have a hand in how all this will turn out and we believe we are holding good cards. The fun is just getting underway and we hope you will continue to be a part of it.

Keep flying, be safe, and let's make something that we can all be proud of and hand off to the future.

– John

## Notes and Radio Chatter

"I live overseas and fly in the bush. I'd love to keep up with backcountry flying in the US, and hopefully preserve it for some day in the future when I can enjoy it again!"

– Daniel; Cessna 206, Quest Kodiak

"I am an instrument rated Private Pilot. I got my license and rating in 2001 and then didn't fly until 2008 at which time I flew out of (KDAW) for a few months until they shut down the FBO. I have never run out of passion for flying, just the money to do so. I would like to learn about and experience backcountry flying and feel that this organization is the place to meet people who can help that happen for me. My 15-year old son recently started flying and has fallen in love with it which has re-kindled my love of flying.

I have found in the past that being around other pilots motivates one to pursue flying."

–Joe from NH; flies a Champ

I'm in northern California, near the redwoods, based at O28. Interested in flying to public lands.

– Dan from northern CA

The Arizona Seaplane Pilots have banded together with the Backcountry pilots because our message is the same, that is to open backcountry areas to recreational aircraft. The Arizona Pilots Ass'n has agreed to support both groups. The combined effort is already paying off.

–Todd from Phoenix;  
Grumman Widgeon and BeechJet

Thanks for the quick response. I live in the Washington DC area and I'm flying Gulfstreams for the Air Force out of Andrews AFB. Please let me know if there are any activities in the area involving issues related to recreational flying. I am very interested in helping preserve and expand the rights we have as pilots in this great country of ours!

–Wil

## Leaving a legacy for aviators



–Craig Fuller,  
AOPA president

Fuller awards Ben Ryan the AOPA Challenge Coin

There may be larger gatherings of passionate aviators during the course of a year, but no event surpasses the pure pleasure of being in the company of pilots who fly the back country to attend the annual RAF fly-in at Ryan Field in West Glacier, Montana.

This year, the event had all the right ingredients-- beautiful weather, aircraft of all makes and models, pilots of all ages, and some of the finest cooks and chefs around.

People have asked, "So what did you do?" Truth is, the measure of a good visit to this event is just spending time conversing about flying with people who share the passion. This I learned when coming in for morning coffee early Saturday at the pilot shelter built by the RAF. A plan took shape to fly to Meadow Creek, and soon we were off. Flying off a grass strip on the edge of Glacier National Park provides views without equal.

The most memorable conversation of the weekend was with Ben and Agnes "Butchie" Ryan. They recently celebrated 65 years of marriage. They settled at the site of Ryan Field to build their home in 1967. They built their own house and cleared the land for the airstrip so Ben could fly his aircraft. And in the process, they created a national treasure in every sense of the word. This kind, mild-mannered couple talks cheerfully about their adventure and it's a story you simply cannot get enough of over the course of the weekend.

It was a privilege to be among this fine group of aviators and a real pleasure to be a member of the RAF. Their work to keep open and maintain backcountry airstrips is deserving of the growing support and membership this group is enjoying. When I think of those protecting our freedom to fly, I see the face of Ben Ryan who, with his wife is turning over to the RAF the airfield they built. It's their desire that aviators may continue to enjoy the dream this remarkable couple launched decades ago.

It seemed only fitting to offer some form of appreciation so I gave Ben the AOPA Challenge Coin I was carrying as a sign of friendship and respect for one very fine and generous aviator.

Craig

## *Progress in protecting airstrip land owners –* **Recreational Use Statutes gains**

The RAF is making progress adding specific aviation language to individual states' recreational use statutes (RUS), reports RAF Director John Nadeau. The objective is to offer a layer of liability protection to landowners with airstrips. As of May, states with aviation language in their RUS are:

**Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Montana, Idaho, Maine, Tennessee, New Mexico and Arizona.** Continuing efforts to complete the task, Nadeau's strategy is to partner with RAF Liaisons and contact private airstrip owners to clarify the objective and legislative process. An RAF RUS Guideline is available.

States with legislation pending:

**Kansas** – word is that it passed the House of Reps;

**New York** – Nadeau contacted AOPA's Greg Pecoraro for support. An AOPA E-Pilot article suggested New York pilots contact their elected officials in support and to contact Nadeau at the RAF with questions;

**Pennsylvania** – "House Bill 870 surprised us," says Nadeau, "drafting and passing all within one month." George Jenkins read the AOPA E-Pilot article and contacted Nadeau. Jenkins owns an airstrip with an antique warbird museum and convinced his state Rep to sponsor a bill that adds a great deal of aviation language to the Pennsylvania RUS. The bill passed and was approved by the governor on July 7th.

**Connecticut** – airstrip owners have been contacted. Effort is on hold for better political climate;

**Florida** – beginning stages of airstrip owner contact; (*See related story, pg 10*)

**Minnesota** – has a group in the beginning stages;

**Oregon** – Alan Cossitt has been tasked with beginning stages of airstrip owner contact;

**Nevada** – Shane Gorman has RUS Guideline Packet;

**Washington** – process is underway with Liaison Bob Kay.

## **Help Aviation live forever**

– Dan Prill, RAF vice president

Recently I got to share my love of the skies with a youngster named Ben. We enjoyed an imaginary "zoom-zoom" flight in both my Super Cub and Cessna 185.

The pilot community is aging and not being fully replaced. To maintain vitality in the aviation industry, young boys and girls need to become interested in airplanes and flying. The Experimental Aircraft Association promotes its "Young Eagles" program and AOPA has its campaign to "Get Engaged with GA".

Ben seemed such a natural that I'm sure he will take to the skies one day. I know Ben will grow up appreciating the outdoors and the backcountry. One day I hope to see him land his own airplane at a strip someplace like Russian Flat. It is why the Recreational Aviation Foundation does what it does, it saves backcountry airstrips for kids like Ben, our future.

So go out, Get Engaged in GA, give a Young Eagle a ride or just invite a young person to your hangar. It is all fun and it is why we do what we do.

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## **Nadeau installed as RAF Director**

The sound of "little airplanes" has always been in John's life. His boyhood home was beneath the final approach to the local small town runway in Massachusetts. Biking out to the airfield just to watch takeoffs and landings filled many hours.

Years later, while he ate lunch at that same old picnic table, a landing Piper Cub seemed to signify that it was time for the dream to become reality.

John has owned several airplanes including a Piper Tri Pacer that he rebuilt. He now owns a Cessna Skyhawk. His favorite flying is with his wife of 37 years, Ann Marie, to local airfields by flying low and slow with no particular place to go.

They bought and resurrected an old grass airfield in the woods near their vacation home in Acton, Maine. With it they share the magic of flight with their children and grandchildren. As president of the local lake association he led a conservation effort to complete one of the first lake watershed surveys in Maine, helping to identify and mitigate both point and nonpoint sources of lake water pollution. As CEO of the cystic fibrosis healthcare practice that he founded, John understands the brevity, fragility and preciousness of life. Leaving

the world a better place is important, as is getting on with the task at hand today rather than tomorrow.

He is keenly aware of the need to preserve airfields, of what it takes to maintain them, and is working to help create more.



*Make it one of your “favorites”—*

# New and improved RAF Website

– Dan Prill, RAF vice president

If you're like other internet surfers, once you see the same photo on a website a couple of times, it's about as appealing as yesterday's warm soda pop. For years, the Recreational Aviation Foundation had an excellent website produced by volunteer Dan Lilja but we feared it would lose its fizz and Dan was too busy manufacturing rifle barrels to overhaul it. Who better to handle the new project than *Pilot Getaways* Editor and former rocket scientist John Kounis? And who was better suited for its layout and photography than his brother George who does the stunning photography for the magazine? Taking the lead for the RAF, I met with the Kounis brothers last November during the AOPA Summit in Long Beach.

It took us about two hours to lay out the basics. Our database is essential to our success, having been built one name at a time by RAF Treasurer Jerry Cain. We wanted to import the detailed database intact to provide administrative (non-public) access. I started learning website terms right away with John's coaching. We used Drupal for our content management system and CiviCRM for our customer relationship database. Both of these are open source programs (meaning available at no cost) and are well supported. The CiviCRM program fits a non-profit organization like the RAF well.

For the next four months John and I spent hours via phone on our "GoToMeeting" site. We dedicated a lot of time to the overall theme, then tackled the content, using the best elements of our trusty old website. Volunteering many hours of editing time were RAF founding director Chuck Jarecki, and RAF lifetime member Carmine Mowbray of Clarity Communications. John did the database conversion and had nothing but



praise for Jerry's accuracy.

By January we had the basics in place and I spent two to six hours per day consulting with John. I would tell my wife Margie that I was going to my office to "Kounis" for awhile. John didn't know that he had become a verb. We launched during the Montana Aviation Conference in March, just four months after that first meeting in California – all while John and George continued their hectic schedule producing their own publications.

Thanks to John's knowledge and attention to detail, the new RAF website has been a success. The March/April issue of *Pilot Getaways* describes the website as including "eCommerce, member services, events calendars, embedded video content, and integrated maps."

*Pilot Getaways* has been a supporter of the RAF since the beginning and we appreciate their loyalty over the years. When

you see John or George at a show or conference give them a big thank you for a job well done.

See [www.theraf.org](http://www.theraf.org)

See us on



All the work has paid off and the RAF has a great new website thanks to John and George Kounis and *Pilot Getaways* magazine.

Check them out at [www.pilotgetaways.com](http://www.pilotgetaways.com)

## Meet John Zanchi, RAF New Hampshire State Liaison

John's passion for protecting airstrips was kindled in 1998 by an ad in the Atlantic Flyer. Aviators interested in reestablishing an unimproved private airfield in nearby Maine were needed. This led to a friendship with RAF director John Nadeau.

Zanchi obtained his pilot certificate in 1981 while working in NYC not long after his first GA cross-county flight in a Cessna 182.

His fun comes from exploring New England and the Adirondacks on straight floats; enjoying the three-dimensional challenge of aerobatics; and giving scenic rides off the ice runway on Lake Winnepesaukee in Alton Bay, NH.

An instrument-rated Commercial Pilot, SEL and SES, he has either owned or co-owned a Super Decathlon, Aeronca Chief, Luscombe 8E (150 HP) on floats, wheels and skis, and currently a Waco UPF-7 that was restored from a very incomplete truckload of parts. The Waco flies from the private grass Mountain View Airfield in Wolfeboro, NH.

John has experience working with the NH Division of Aeronautics and testifying before town boards in both NH and ME in support of aviation. He also is a member of the Skyhaven Flying Club based at KDAW in Rochester



*Zanchi pauses before his next flight on straight floats*

## Meet Andy Rowe, RAF Maine State Liaison

"I may be the slowest learner in aviation history as I first soloed in 1963, but did not get my private license until 2010", says Andy Rowe. He followed up with a seaplane rating and is working on an instrument rating. He's owned a Champ (in 1963) which his Dad sold "while I was interrupting my college years with a visit to Paris Island and Camp Lejeune." Between then and now he obtained a degree in Art History, he's "shot almost a thousand TV shows accumu-

lating more frequent flyer miles than the average airline crew", and has a USCG Master's license, sailing the Atlantic from Cape Town to Spitzbergen....all of which interfered with his quest for a private license – for a time. Andy now owns a 180hp Skyhawk on straight PK's.

"I'm a lifelong outdoors nut whether it be hunting, fishing, sailing, diving, climbing, ice boating or wind surfing. I am amazed that the RAF has accomplished so much in such a short time," he adds. Now that he's gotten to know a bit about the organization, he's not surprised and hopes that the RAF can add many Maine airstrips to the RAF's success story.

"I'll have a lot of help here as my instructors, mentors and friends comprise the cream of the crop of Maine's bush pilots and I'm looking forward to getting to work."



*Rowe and his Skyhawk*

## Meet Mark Spencer, RAF Arizona State Liaison

Mark has lived in Arizona since 1974 and has had a long career in the Aerospace industry beginning with Sperry Flight Systems in the early 80s. From Sperry he moved on to W.L. Gore & Associates where he was involved in avionics designs, radar and medical devices. If you had asked Mark at age 12 what he wanted to be when he grew up he would have said "an inventor!" He is named as "Inventor" or "Co-Inventor" on 13 US and European Patents so he fulfilled this dream.

Mark has always been an entrepreneur owning several businesses besides his engineering career including an auto-body shop, photography and a small skiing and rafting tour business. In 2000 Mark ventured out completely on his own with his current business, an engineering consulting and manufacturing representative business in RF Microwave, where he is still involved heavily in the aerospace industry in Arizona and New Mexico.

Mark and his wife Stefanie have four grown children and are both pilots currently living in the backcountry of south-eastern Arizona near an old ghost town called Pearce. With the purchase of their Cub Crafter's Top Cub, Mark got very excited about backcountry flying and jumped in with both feet and spearheaded the effort to add aviation to Arizona's recreational use statute.



# 6th Annual June Ryan Fly-In a Success

This year's Ryan Fly-in saw about 35 aircraft land at the beautiful turf strip near West Glacier, MT. Flying the farthest were Hergenrathers from Houston, and AOPA president Craig Fuller from Frederick, MD. If the pilots compete on the quality of their landings, the cooks compete on the quality of the food, including a judged wood cookstove cook-off organized by pilot Rebecca Smith. Saturday night music was provided by Flying Musicians Assoc.

Former MT Dep't of Transportation chief Jim Lynch (*at left*) again grilled perfect steaks for over 90 people on Saturday evening, assisted by Larry Ashcraft. Fuller enjoyed the weekend with the group of RAF supporters, noting their shared passion for maintaining the freedoms of GA flight.

*Below:* RAF treasurer Jerry Cain demonstrates just how much fun the group is having; *bottom left:* a typical Ryan Fly-in breakfast

*Center left:* Gordon Rock's turbine-powered 210 easily lifts off from the 2,500 foot strip.

*Photos courtesy of Jo Schumaker, John McKenna and Mike Todd*



*Evening camaraderie at Ryan Field – photo courtesy of George Kounis, Pilot Getaways magazine*

# State Reports

## Arizona Report

—Mark Spencer, AZ Liaison

### Arizona kicks off new relationship with US Forest Service

On May 28 Arizona pilots gathered for an overnight camp at the Pleasant Valley (24AZ) airstrip located in the Tonto National Forest near the quiet little historic town of Young. It was an incredible event. Attending in addition to pilots were local Young residents, and Forest Service personnel, all enjoying the outdoors, aircraft, good company, and great food. Town folks brought guitars and homemade treats to share with us! Singing around the campfire that night, even District Ranger Luhrsen joined in. There was absolutely no place I would rather have been at that moment, and I believe the others felt the same way.

It is hard to believe that only five months before, a similar event at the same airstrip was cancelled when the Forest Service voiced concerns about the event. Fortunately, as the RAF has proven in other states, it was really just a matter of sharing information with and hearing the concerns of the district USFS ranger. This process began with a meeting in Phoenix between Forest Service personnel, Bob Carter of the Arizona Pilot's Association, and myself. With the RAF Land Manager's Guide in hand, I began answering concerns while involving the USFS personnel in the conversation. Later emails and phone calls were exchanged, and then a face-to-face meeting with District Ranger Luhrsen took place in Payson, AZ. This meeting ended in a tentative agreement to begin planning for a Pleasant Valley fly-in. More conversations took place, culminating in the fly-in camping trip.

The real work started once we had approval from the Forest Service. A lot of logistics go into a successful fly-in camp, and thanks to the hard work of APA president Nancy Benscoter, and the APA Back Country team, including Bob Carter, Tommy Thomason, his son Blake, and friends Paul and Steve who ran the ground crew up from Phoenix, the event was a real success!

## Montana Report

—Ron Normandeau, MT Liaison

Spring brought heavier than normal snow and continued rain has canceled work parties at Spotted Bear airstrip and Benchmark airstrip. Director Chuck Jarecki flew in to Ryan field multiple times to perform maintenance work in preparation for the RAF fly-in once the field dried out enough for wheeled airplanes.

### US Forest Service proposed rule comment period

The contractor has loaded 1,093 submitted comments into the comment web site so far. The special interest groups have started to show up and some of their comments are interesting. The Montana Wilderness Society presented wilderness-oriented but very coherent and thoughtful comments. The Sierra Club presented references to case law concerning timber harvesting. The ratio of recreation submissions compared to other management components has fallen from 80% on my first evaluation to near 70% at this time, due mostly to state government and other agency submissions being added. This still represents the lion's share of comments and should draw some serious consideration to recreation issues.

Montana's Department of Transportation submitted official comments on the importance of air transportation to reach interior trailheads on public lands. *Thanks Jim Lynch!* Ten US congressmen submitted comments; Maine House of Representatives is well represented; and most state governments, with USFS land responding. I recognize six submissions from the RAF, but lacking a membership list, I don't know how many of the individual submissions are from RAF members.

The final proposed rule will be out for comment, probably in an October- November time frame.

### How the Maine RUS helped Fort Kent airport

—John Nadeau, RAF Director

Fort Kent is in northern Maine on the Canadian border at the confluence of the St John and the Fish Rivers. A group of local pilots wished to reopen its grass airport

which closed in the late 80's. RAF supporter John Craig directed me to contact the Fort Kent Town Council and learned it was in favor of reopening the airport. However, the one sticking point was the same concern all airfield owners have – liability.

The RAF works to add "aviation" to every state's Recreationa Use Statute (RUS) The RUS is a way to encourage land owners to open their land for public recreation. It provides a degree of protection for the landowner if an injury occurs on their land during non-commercial useage and as long as there is no negligence or malicious intent to do harm. In 2009 Maine had added "noncommercial aviation activities" to its RUS and I explained that to the Town council representative.

When I called to follow up, I got the great news that the Town Council looked up Maine's recreational use statute online and stated, "That is it. That is all we need."

The local Flying Club worked to prepare the new Fort Kent Airport for an opening in late June. Camping is allowed and picnic tables and other facilities are planned. We appreciate the RAF help. RAF supporters: your tax-deductible donations can be earmarked to help also.

All airstrip owners are concerned with liability suits – whether the owner is a private landowner, an organization or the government. Adding aviation language to the recreational use statutes is a critical first step toward preserving, maintaining and creating recreational use and backcountry airstrips nationwide. Eight states now have aviation listed in their RUS. Join Team RAF and contact us if you would like to help in your state.

## New Mexico Report

—Rol Murrow, RAF Director and New Mexico State Liaison

New Mexico RAF volunteers have worked hard the last couple of years to build the New Mexico Recreational Aviation Committee (NMRAC) and affiliate it with the New Mexico Pilots Association (NMPA). We believe our team has accomplished much, and the pace is accelerating!

We worked with

Cont'd pg 9

# State Reports *continued*

*cont'd from pg 8*

NMPA to create a new and much improved website, featuring NMPA member and NMRAC forums and tons of news on flying events and meetings in and around the state. Similar to several other state sites, we have incorporated a database of airstrips and NMRAC member Duane Truitt is leading the effort to add useful data. We are considering publishing a backcountry flying guide for the Southwest with prominent aviation author Galen Hanselman.

Last Fall NMRAC organized its first backcountry fly-in at Negrito Airstrip in the Gila National Forest, and it turned out to be a most enjoyable event. NMRAC Chairman Larry Filener recently organized a work party at Negrito. Volunteers flew or drove in to perform maintenance. Another fly-in is being planned this fall. This continues our very positive partnership with the US Forest Service in preserving and improving the airstrips in the state and adding new recreational opportunities on forest lands. Thank you Larry and the hard working team members!

In March I worked with the Arizona Pilots Association (APA), NMPA, NMRAC, and RAF to organize a joint forum at the Cactus Fly-in in Casa Grande, Arizona, bringing together leaders of these groups for the first time.

Our big news came in April, after two years' effort led by NMPA Vice President and NMRAC member Ron Krohn who led a team supporting an aviation amendment to the NM Recreational Use Statute (RUS). Ron developed relationships with sponsors in the House and Senate, and promoted the project among the NMPA membership. As a member of the New Mexico Airport Management Association, I worked with airport managers for support. We testified before the appropriate committees, and on April 6 the Governor signed the bill into law.

New Mexico leaders are supporting RAF's national campaign to better emphasize recreational use and include aviation in the US Forest Service's critical update to its Planning Rule, which will guide officials at all levels in planning uses – and restrictions – on all FS lands. NMPA President Joyce Woods and I

attended the USFS Region 3 meetings and submitted formal comments, which are now part of the public record, along with those from RAF leadership and supporters in other regions.

NMRAC and RAF members Larry Filener, David Hamann, and I met with the USFS Region 3 Director of Recreation recently and discussed both national and state objectives and successes in working on backcountry flying and relationships with local forest managers and their staffs. We believe that a number of FS strips could become more common camping destinations for backcountry flying enthusiasts from around the country.

The New Mexico team has planned additional fly-ins and events and is promoting them and other wonderful flying opportunities in New Mexico and the adjoining states. We encourage you to learn about them by visiting the new website at [www.nmpilots.org](http://www.nmpilots.org), and come Fly New Mexico!

## North Dakota Report

–*Brian Rau, ND State Liaison*

With the help of Paul Belzer, we have identified two possible backcountry/recreational strips that I will start to work on as time permits this summer. Both strips are in the Badlands area of western ND.

One is the old municipal airport located on a butte north of the tourist town of Medora, ND. You can see this strip on Google earth at 46 55' 13.85" N and 103 31' 7.84" W. This strip has been closed for some time. It is situated on a combination of National Park service (Theodore Roosevelt National Park) land and Forest Service Land (Dakota Prairie Grasslands.) I am told the strip was closed after the city of Medora lost interest in it after a fatal accident at the site. I hiked up and walked on it, and all it would take physically is a mower and we would be in business; I expect the bureaucracy to take much longer.

The second strip is on land that is a recent USFS purchase. It is approximately 20 miles north of Medora in a very scenic area of the Badlands. (Google earth at 47 14' 10.39" N and 103 33' 31.12" W.) It was the Eberts ranch airstrip. It is in an area that was originally part of Theodore Roosevelt's Elkhorn

Ranch. The North Dakota Aeronautics Commission has no record of this strip, but that is not unusual for ranch/agricultural airstrips in ND.

Both of these strips are close to the North Dakota/Montana border and any help would be appreciated. I am involved in Agriculture and Agricultural Aviation, so I am quite busy with work at this time. If anyone has any input on these strips feel free to contact me at any time: [brau@theraf.org](mailto:brau@theraf.org) or 701-320-9505.

## Washington Report

–*Bob Kay, W State Liaison*

### Pilots respond to USFS Rule Planning

After the USFS informational forums in DC and locally to explain the proposed new Planning Rule, letters, phone calls and contacts went out in April. Many RAF supporters in Washington responded on line during the public comment period. Hopefully RAF concerns about the Proposed Planning Rule will be given consideration in the final document. The Final Planning Rule is due to be published in December of 2011.

### Ranger Creek Airport Work Day

On May 7th, the Washington Pilot's Association (WPA) Green River Chapter sponsored a cleanup day at Ranger Creek (21W), near the base of Mount Rainier. The chapter sponsors the airport through the Washington DOT Aviation's "Adopt-An-Airport" program. WS DOT manages 16 rural airports in Washington State; go to <http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/aviation/Airports/default.htm> for more info on WSDOT-Aviation supported airports.

Many WPA members are also RAF supporters. For the Ranger Creek work party, RAF supporter Tom Jensen and I were wearing both our WPA hats and our RAF hats. Even though it was a miserable day and no one was able to fly in, we still had a great time cleaning up the airport, fixing wind socks, and picking up rocks and elk piles! World famous Ranger Creek Chili was served for lunch; given the cold wet weather, it was more than welcome. Thank you Green River Chapter members for your dedication and for the chili.

*Continued – pg 10*

# State Reports *continued*

*cont'd from pg 9*

## **Deer Park RAF visit**

I was invited to the WPA Deer Park Chapter meeting at the Deer Park airport (KDEW) north east of Spokane in May. I met many nice folks and answered questions about the RAF. Hopefully I convinced a few to join with the RAF in mutual support of our common interests.

The Deer Park Chapter is also part of the WSDOT Adopt-An-Airport program and has adopted Sullivan Lake Airport (09S) near Metaline Falls, WA, in far northeastern Washington. It's a great little grass strip, right on beautiful Sullivan Lake. Aviators can fly in and camp right on the airstrip or next door in the adjacent FS campground. The 1,500' aircraft parking/ camping area has picnic tables, fire rings and a fresh water spigot.

## **Sullivan Lake airport work day**

On June 5, the Deer Park Chapter of the WPA had their annual Sullivan Lake work day. I represented the RAF along with RAF supporters Greg and Mary Jo Corrado. Greg and Mary Jo flew in from Port Orchard for the work session. In addition to being an avid RAF supporter and backcountry flier, Greg is VP of the Washington Seaplane Pilots Association. We filled lots of gopher holes, picked rocks, cleared saplings and brush from around the new WSDOT installed fence, rebuilt and repainted all the picnic tables. We enjoyed hamburgers, potato salad, baked beans, delicious homemade rhubarb cobbler and scrumptious cookies. It was CAVU and a great day.

## **State Airports Manager**

Paul Wolf, the WSDOT Aviation Airports Manager was in attendance for both the work parties. His job is to coordinate all efforts (both state-financed and voluntary) to keep the 16 WSDOT-supported airports open and in good condition. The state furnishes tools and safety equipment to volunteers supporting these Adopt-An-Airport projects. It's been a good program so far and under Paul's guidance, the program appears to be getting better every year.

## **Washington State RUS**

Our endeavor to amend the existing Washington State Recrea-

tional Use Statute (RUS) to include aviation is off the ground and running. Thanks to RAF supporter Ron Shannon of Sequim, we have a complete list of all FAA recognized private airports in WA. RAF supporter Jim McDevitt of Spokane and others are working on the proposed language change to the existing statute. Additionally, we are compiling a list of WA State Legislators who may be able to get a bill started through the system. We are building relationships with other flying organizations throughout the state in order to advance the cause. If you are not familiar with RUS, go to [www.theraf.org](http://www.theraf.org), and type RUS in the search tab. Email me if you want to learn more.

## **2011 Summer Fly-in**

RAF-WA and WSPA hosted a joint fly-in-campout-work party at Sullivan Lake August 19–21. RAF supporters from Washington and out of state attended. Sullivan Lake has good camping, fishing, hiking, and is a great destination for family fun.

Remember – Flying without feathers is not easy; but, it's always fun!

## **New supporters take on Florida's RUS amendment**

Having just bought their first plane, a 1951 Cessna 170A, Drew and Gary Hatch flew out of their home strip in Holt, Florida (FD93) in search of other backcountry places to enjoy. They discovered a particularly nice airstrip owned by the Florida Department of Agriculture Division of Forestry. Eventually they found the field closed to public use by the state due to liability. No more beautiful turf airstrip walking distance from a state park located on Bear Lake.

When they saw an article on the AOPA website describing the RAF, Drew and Gary discovered a group who shared their passion to guard backcountry aviation. They joined immediately and promptly heard from RAF Florida liaison Tim Clifford. The three began exploring the opportunity to reopen the airstrip.

Additionally, with Tim's guidance, and documents originally drafted by John Nadeau (new RAF Director), they began the process to

add Florida to the increasing number of states that specifically include "non-commercial aviation" in their Recreational Use Statutes (RUS). The Florida RUS Team is now surveying private airport owners for their sentiments toward opening up their airport to non-commercial public use.

Florida has the third largest number of general aviation aircraft owners in the country, and relying heavily upon tourism as its economic base, should benefit greatly by encouraging private airstrip owners to permit transient use of their runways. Passage of the legislation will greatly reduce landowners' liability concerns and encourage them to permit landings.

Florida legislature reconvenes in January 2012 and the RAF will be there to usher passage of the aviation amendment for signing into law by Governor Rick Scott. Anyone interested in joining this effort is encouraged to contact [dhatch@theRAF.org](mailto:dhatch@theRAF.org)

## **Tornado blasts Sun 'n' Fun**

By now everyone is aware that a tornado struck the Lakeland Airport during Sun 'n Fun in March causing extensive damage to numerous aircraft in vendor displays and on the flight line. In the aftermath of the storm, twisted and flipped aircraft littered the display area.

The RAF had 14 folks on hand during this upset. The onset was sudden, and the RAF tent sheltered passers-by seeking refuge from the storm. Our tent held tight, unlike those of many vendors around us. We all made it out of the Sun 'n Fun area safely, and felt lucky to have survived the storm without anyone getting hurt.

The Aviat Husky in front of our tent stayed in place until 100 mph winds peaked, tearing the aircraft from its tie-downs and blowing it across the street.

Maryland RAF liaison Craig McCullough commented on the dark green color of the sky just before the wind and rain started in earnest. The RAF extends our hearts and prayers to all who suffered from the storm. We were overwhelmed by the volume of calls from people

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around the country who were concerned for our safety.

Once again the RAF team worked very hard and met so many wonderful people. We look forward to 2012!



RAF puts the *tornado* in AOPA's 2010 Sweepstake's

"Tougher Than A Tornado Husky"

Learn more at: [theraf.org](http://theraf.org)

AOPA's 2012 Sweepstakes link:

[http://www.aopa.org/members/files/pilot/2011/september/feature\\_sweeps\\_tougher\\_than\\_tornado\\_husky.html](http://www.aopa.org/members/files/pilot/2011/september/feature_sweeps_tougher_than_tornado_husky.html)

## Idaho Aviation Trade Show hosts pilots from New Zealand

Cessna 180 owners Beverley and Graeme Prankerd from Stratford, New Zealand joined RAF friends at the

Idaho Trade Show in Idaho Falls in May.

The Idaho Aviation Trade Show was hosted by Aero Mark FBO of Idaho Falls and Bob and Jane Hoff.

The trip over the pond was encouraged by RAF supporter and 180 pilot, Mike Todd. Upon their arrival, Jack Kotaki of the Idaho Aviation Association (IAA) took on the role as official host.

As is customary, hats from the respective organizations were exchanged. John McKenna is shown here sporting his New Zealand 180/185 club hat, while Graeme is proudly wearing his new RAF hat.

Without a doubt Graeme and his wife Beverley got the award for traveling the farthest.

The RAF sponsored a booth at the tradeshow. John and Tricia McKenna, Jerry Cain and Carl Hicks staffed the booth. The RAF thanks everyone who stopped by the booth "It's always great going to these shows and reconnecting with old friends and meeting new ones" McKenna said, adding, "It always amazes me to see how much support the RAF has out there."



Left to right: RAF volunteer Carl Hicks, Graeme Prankerd from Stratford, New Zealand, Aviat Husky's Stu Horn and RAF President John McKenna

## The Pulaski and the RAF

The RAF established the Pulaski Award as its highest award for service to the RAF and its mission. It is presented to individuals who've devoted years of energy and expertise to work toward **"keeping the legacy of recreational aviation strong by preserving, maintaining and creating public use recreational and back-country airstrips nationwide."**

Why "Pulaski"? It is a versatile tool – half axe and half mat-

tock. Originally designed in 1911 by US Forest Service employee Edward Pulaski as a wildland fire fighting tool, it's ideal to construct fire breaks since it can be used to dig soil or chop trees, roots and limbs. The tool is constructed of high grade steel that is resistant to dulling when working in rocky ground. The handle is usually made of top quality ash. Pulaski is also credited with saving the lives of forty-five forest fire fighters during the disastrous August 1910 wildfires in Idaho.

What better way to symbolize



– Chuck Jarecki, RAF founding Director

the efforts of the RAF and its supporters than the pulaski? It's the tool of choice for the "can do" type of person.



Past RAF Pulaski award honorees Chuck Jarecki, Pete Smith on behalf of Tim Robertson, Gordon Rock, Dan Prill, Craig Fuller –Pilot Getaways photos

## The Recreational Aviation Foundation

was formed in 2003 by a group of pilots from western states in response to a disturbing trend to exclude general aviation from public lands through closures of backcountry airstrips. Pilots from all 50 states have joined in. All see their mission as the need to maintain and preserve existing airstrips, acquire and develop new airstrips, and promote safety in the use of these airstrips.

### To Support RAF:

It's now easier than ever to become a supporter of this important effort to preserve and create public use recreational aviation facilities for future generations. Use the secure "Donate now" button at [www.theraf.org](http://www.theraf.org) or mail in your tax-deductible contribution to: Recreational Aviation Foundation, 1711 W. College, Bozeman MT 59715.

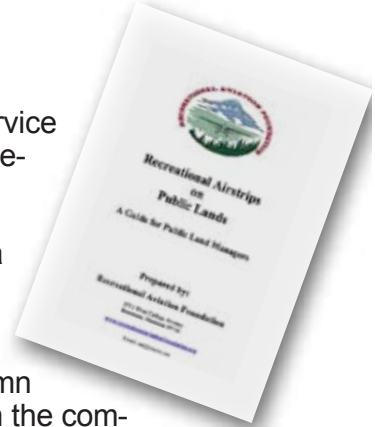
## Updated RAF Reference Publication Now Available

The RAF recently updated its informative publication "Recreational Airstrips on Public Lands, A Reference Guide for Public Land Managers". The document is based on facts and science to inform public land managers in making decisions affecting airstrips. It is written in lay terms for those without an aviation background.

The first version of the document was completed in 2003. This third revision incorporates new information requested by land managers and includes expanded coverage of some topics. Its fifty-five pages include eight pages of color photographs of various recreational airstrips. The manuscript was reviewed

by United States Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management personnel.

The publication is available in either hard copy in a three-ring binder or electronically in PDF format. The electronic version is available in either one column format for easier reading on the computer screen or in two column format for printing. Order from Chuck Jarecki at: [cjarecki@theraf.org](mailto:cjarecki@theraf.org).



## RECREATIONAL AVIATION FOUNDATION

1711 West College  
Bozeman, Montana 59715  
406-582-1RAF (1723)  
[www.theraf.org](http://www.theraf.org)

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