

Two years ago, my wife and I left Boise in our C-206 for a wedding in McCall. We expected to arrive in McCall well ahead of a thunderstorm moving in from the west. But the storm was moving faster than forecasted, and by the time we were near Cascade, the storm already had arrived at McCall. We did a 180-degree turn only to discover the storm had moved in behind us as well, blocking our return to Boise. We made a quick descent to the grassy Garden Valley airstrip, just behind a U.S. Forest Service Twin Otter that had encountered the same conditions en-route to McCall. Although Garden Valley is not exactly a backcountry airstrip, this incident exemplifies the safety value of Idaho's network of airstrips located throughout the state.

Regarding sabotage, the Shearer airstrip experienced suspected sabotage a number of years ago. The belief was that someone had salted the center of the strip to attract elk. The result was serious damage to and temporary closure of the airstrip. I don't recall if anyone ever was charged.

Good luck in your efforts.

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