



The Recreational Aviation Foundation  
At Its Core

“ The RAF is about *expectations, memories, stories* and, most importantly, *the relationships* we create. ”

– John McKenna, RAF Chairman



# START WITH WHY





“There is a transition in one’s life where we focus more on being significant vs. only being successful.”

*Success to Significance* by Bob Buford

**At the RAF**, it is time to ensure we not only continue being successful but also make a significant impact on backcountry airstrips and our members.

**Articulate and document** the RAF brand, clarifying and evolving the brand to ensure alignment with the organization’s current state, public’s perceptions and lay the groundwork for future vision.

**Create a brand book that serves as a meaningful guide** and filter for all future decisions. Beyond marketing efficiencies and visual consistencies, the newly defined brand should be aligned with the RAF’s short and longterm goals and used as a filter for decisions, both small and large.

A well-constructed brand architecture should be referenced often to ensure every objective, strategy and decision is aligned to, and reinforces and elevates, our mission.

**Why**  
build this document?

# 'BACKCOUNTRY', AS DEFINED BY THE RAF



# *Backcountry*

For some RAF members, the word 'backcountry' is the one that immediately comes to mind to describe the geographic setting of recreational aviation. For others, 'backcountry' is associated with the wide open landscapes and higher elevations of the West and does not easily associate with the rural and grassy airstrips more common in the densely populated and developed Northeast or South. But, 'backcountry' is simply too valuable a word to avoid due to regional differences.

For the RAF, 'backcountry' is more than a place; it also describes a style of flying we enjoy. Where patterns are frequently not rectangles and where extra care must be taken to safely land and depart. In our world, 'backcountry' is about an intimate understanding of field conditions and aircraft performance along with flexibility and sound judgement.

In this context, 'backcountry' can be seen as a way we fly in a variety of landscapes and locales. So, in this book, consider 'backcountry' as being descriptive of all recreational aviation, no matter the location of the airfield.

Speaking of airfields, we've uncovered another regional difference. Generally speaking, folks out West call them 'airstrips' while aviators east of the Mississippi call them 'airfields.' We've used both here and we consider them interchangeable.

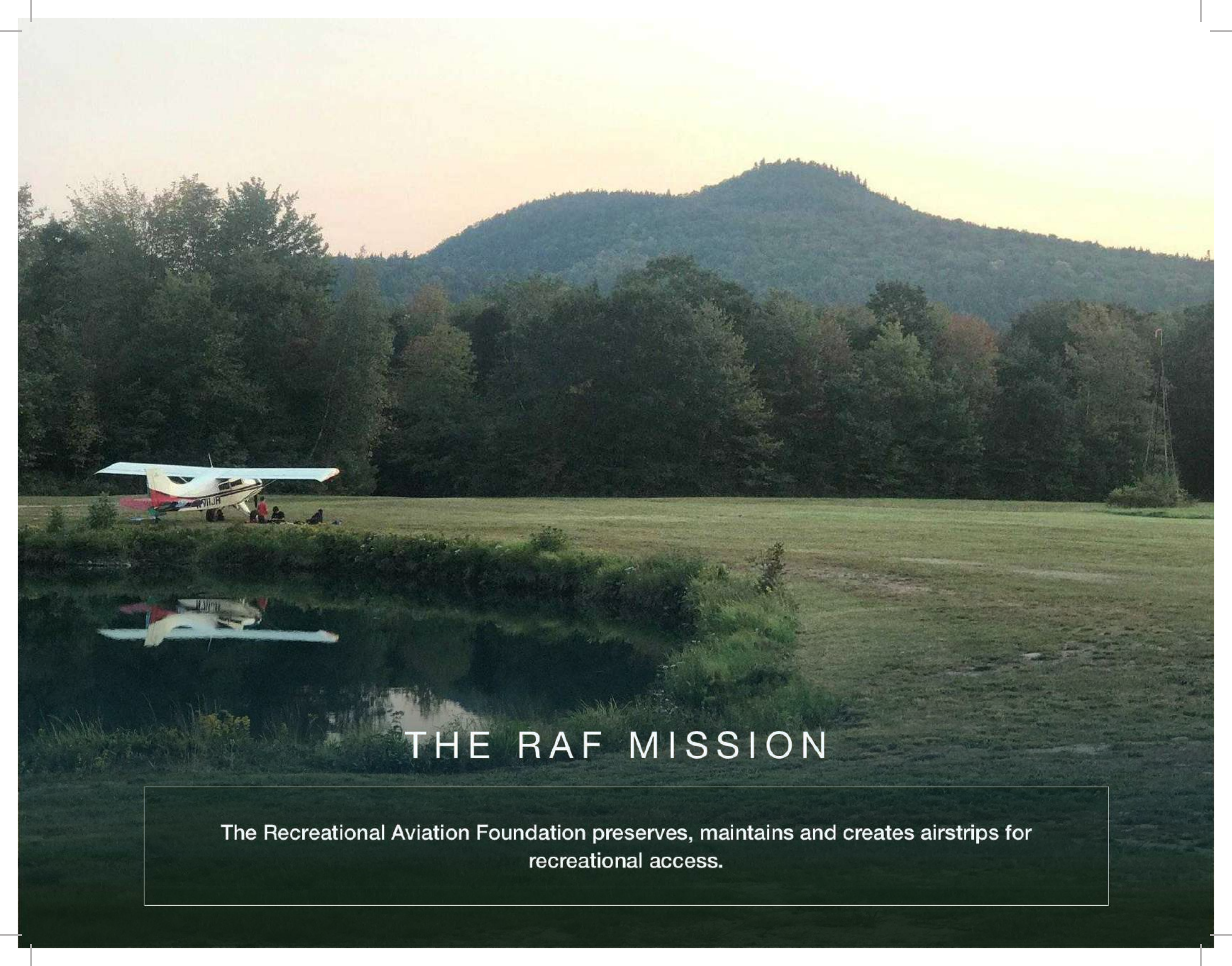


# THE RAF MISSION

**Definition** | Who we are proud to be today.

**Purpose** | Provides a concise explanation to guide the Board's decisions and actions; Clear communication to public of RAF's purpose.





## THE RAF MISSION

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





# THE RAF MISSION

## DEFINED

**Definition** | A description of the long-term change in the world made possible as a result of the RAF's work. What the RAF wants to be known for in the future.

**Purpose** | Provides a clearly-defined focus for the future, a purpose for which every action today will support.

# THE RAF VISION

Through RAF stewardship efforts, provide aviators with destinations that create a passion for new adventures and experiences. These lasting memories will be treasured and shared for generations to come.



# THE RAF'S VALUES

DEFINED

**Definition** | An internalized framework of core principles that guide and direct the organization and its culture.

**Purpose** | Serves as a 'code of conduct' for all members; a shared alignment of its members' traits.





# THE RAF'S VALUES

## PASSION

We have personally experienced the jaw-dropping majesty of the lands and resources we seek to conserve and preserve for future generations. That is the reason why we put our hearts, minds, bodies and souls into efforts that bring results.

## STEWARDSHIP

The RAF sees itself as a caretaker. The great landscapes and natural resources that we seek to interact with were here long before any of us and we want to be a part of protecting them for generations to come. Our form of access is “the only mode that needs no road.”

## LEGACY

The benefits that result from the work we do will outlive us all. Future aviators will value our accomplishments. We want to be successful, but we also want those results to be significant.

## RELATIONSHIPS

The RAF values its relationships with stakeholders and seeks best outcomes with our fellow stakeholders. The issues we face can be complex and sometimes without simple solutions. We are important partners who will seek effective, long-term, balanced solutions.

## FOCUSED

As a volunteer organization, the RAF is made up of givers, not takers. And we are selflessly focused on outcomes that allow us to continue to enjoy access to the natural landscapes that only aviation can provide.



**ADVOCACY**

**INTEGRITY**

**RESPECT**

## THE RAF'S VALUES

Promotion of aviation is fundamental to the RAF. Without the relationships the RAF builds with other aviation advocacy groups, our public land partners, and people who allow us the use of private lands, our over-arching goals could not be attained.

We are open and honest in all of our dealings and negotiations. We base our position on sound science. There are no hidden agendas here. We always “take the high road.”

We acknowledge and respect the views and values of others as we share our enthusiasm for the access that aviation provides.

# THE RAF'S TARGETS

THE RAF SEEKS TO STIR A DESIRE TO EXPLORE AND SHARE AMONG THE FOLLOWING TARGETS:

## Pilots

*especially those who are hungry for new reasons to fly*



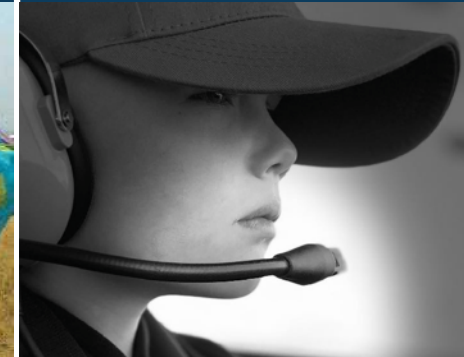
## Non-Pilots

*who don't aspire to become one but are fellow outdoor adventurers like us, who appreciate off-the-beaten-track landscapes and can be important partners for the RAF*



## Non-Pilots

*who aspire to become one*



# THE RAF'S POSITIONING



**Definition** | The core of the RAF, why we exist.

**Purpose** | Ensure alignment and clarity for the entire organization.



# THE RAF'S POSITIONING

## WHAT WE ARE

---

The RAF is a non-profit organization committed to the preservation of our private and public lands and the ability to enjoy access to them for recreational aviation.

## WHAT WE DO

---

We promote greater opportunities for the enjoyment of backcountry recreational aviation. Our work includes raising funds to preserve existing airstrips, build new ones and develop educational materials that will strengthen the advocacy of our vision.

## WHO WE DO IT FOR

---

Our efforts are on behalf of: aviators who are current users of these airstrips and who already appreciate the value of this access to remote public and private lands, pilots who may not yet be backcountry fliers but who know these opportunities need to be protected...and for future generations. Our work is simply “paying it forward.”

## WHY WE DO IT

---

We act because the RAF knows that without our collective involvement, the ability to enjoy these special places is at risk. We are bound by the questions “If not us, who? If not now, when?”

## HOW WE DO IT

Our strong relationships with general aviation partners, fellow conservation groups that share our values about public land and private land owners are critical to our success. We advocate our form of light-footprint access, under the skilled control of individuals in aircraft under Federal Aviation Administration oversight.



# THE RAF'S CULTURE

**Definition** | RAF's personality, how RAF is described; Bring RAF values to life in member-focused terms.

**Purpose** | Drives style of all marketing and communications.





# ATTRIBUTES OF THE RAF'S CULTURE

## PASSIONATE

If aviation is part of our DNA, then recreational aviation is part of our soul. These life-changing experiences are powerful and we seek to share them with others.

## COMMITTED

We're focused on what we care about. We speak and act with intention. We are committed to the growth of aviation, to the maintenance and protection of the privilege that aviators already enjoy and to the addition of new airstrips and airfields.

## ACTIVE

RAF members are not armchair enthusiasts. We live our dreams. There are many people who enjoy flying. That's us! There are also many who enjoy outdoor recreation. Count us among them, too. RAF members have combined both lifestyles, creating a very active, engaged and energized membership.

## RELEVANT

RAF members are polite, professional and persistent because we believe the impact of our work is relevant to everyone.

## SHARING

Our passion for flying is to be shared. And we do it with gusto! So many RAF members excitedly choose to share their passion with family, friends, soon-to-be friends, colleagues and partners. Our lives are collectively richer because of our ability to create indelible memories.

## INCLUSIVE

The RAF is inclusive and we want to bring into our membership people — whether they are pilots or not — who share our passion for both natural landscapes and backcountry flying as well as our concerns for public and private land access.

# THE RAF'S VOICE



**Definition** | How the RAF communicates to others; RAF's tone of voice.

**Purpose** | Provides guidance for the language we use in all channels of communication... not just the words, but the overall message including imagery. Members' contributions unify the voice and increase impact.



# THE RAF'S VOICE

## CONFIDENT

---

The RAF speaks with clarity and enthusiasm. Our collective character and personality draws people to us.

## ENTHUSIASTIC

---

When we are asked what we do and why we do it...we are "true believers." We love to share our passion!

## ROMANTIC

---

Yes, that's the word. The romance of aviation is alive and well at the RAF. The kind of flying we enjoy most is low, slow and fundamental. Backcountry flying stirs emotions that are basic to aviators. RAF members know that the journey is just as important as the destination.

## REFLECTIVE

The access we seek to protect and the experiences we seek to promote lead to moments of deep reflection. They are exceedingly personal and often spiritual. That inner conviction is what drives our passion.



# THE RAF'S VOICE

## INVOLVED

---

RAF members are not spectators. Along with our friends and families, we are active, on-site participants.

## INFORMAL

---

RAF members are easygoing, approachable and inclusive. We'll take a campfire gathering over a boardroom meeting any day of the week.

## VIGILANT

---

RAF members are watchful. We pride ourselves on being up-to-speed on local issues, proposed legislation, emerging research and land management discussions that could have an impact on aviation access.

## URGENT

We know that the access and privileges we seek to protect are facing pressures from economic, social and political interests. Without the work we do, those opportunities could disappear. So there is a need for urgency and purpose in funding and supporting our efforts.

# THE RAF ANTHEM

**Definition** | The RAF's personal story.

**Purpose** | Shares the RAF's essence simply and with impact.



# THE RAF ANTHEM | “YOU’VE FOUND YOUR TRIBE”

**“We are the sum total of our experiences. Those experiences... make us the person we are, at any given point in our lives.”**

*- B.J. Neblett*

You are an aviator. And, along with your fellow pilots, you've come to aviation through a variety of paths. Maybe you learned to fly through military service. Perhaps it was for greater success in business efficiency or more contact with family. Maybe it was simply because you've loved planes since you were a kid.

Or maybe you're an outdoor adventurer who learned to fly so you could soar into remote places that could not be reached by other modes of transportation. And because you worked hard for the privilege of being an aviator, you came to appreciate the vistas that can only be seen out the window of an airplane.

That's what ultimately led you to the Recreational Aviation Foundation. We were formed when a group of western pilots decided that the airstrips that provide this unique, low-impact access - and the incredible aviation experience of visiting them - needed protection. That message resonated with many others and today the RAF is more than 10,000 members strong.

Among these members, you've shared stories of very personal experiences and formed deep connections with many of them. Like you, they've all understood there's flying...and then there's recreational backcountry flying.

But the RAF is also the steward of these off-the-beaten path places. We know that our enjoyment of these remote locations comes with a responsibility to preserve airstrips and, where possible, to add to them...so more pilots can enjoy more access to these spectacular spots. And then pass that privilege on to others.

At our core, the Recreational Aviation Foundation is about an individual's commitment to leave the experience of personal aviation better for others than we found it.

Yes, we're pilots and we support aviation and our unique ability to enjoy these lands. But the real issue is access, not the method by which we gain it. And we stand ready to work with others who share our values and our passion.



“ The purpose of life, after all, is to live it, to taste experience to the utmost, to reach out eagerly and without fear for newer and richer experience. ”

– Eleanor Roosevelt

