

## T-CRAFT BACKCOUNTRY FLYING POLICY

**PURPOSE:** Flying in the Idaho and Northwest Backcountry provides a unique opportunity to access some of the world's most spectacular mountains, rivers, and canyons. This type of flying also has some of the most challenging and hazardous flying for the untrained or overconfident.

Backcountry flying requires a more advanced skill level than the private pilot practical test standards. The T-Craft Aero Club policy establishes entry levels of experience, training, and currency required to use our aircraft in the backcountry. These types of standards are widely accepted by backcountry flight schools and backcountry flight instructors.

Although our policy establishes entry level standards, the backcountry flight instructor has the final decision on matters of safety and pilot proficiency during the backcountry checkout process. It is also the responsibility of the individual T-Craft pilot to meet and maintain proficient standards.

The following policy has been developed to help members safely fly the backcountry.

### BACKCOUNTRY FLYING PRIVILEGES:

- Minimum hours (with instructor checkout and T-Craft Board approval) to fly in the backcountry:
  - 150 total hours
  - 50 hours PIC in make and model
  - 5 hours PIC in the past 60 days in make and model required for the initial instructor backcountry checkout for each level. This flying should have emphasis on mountain flying techniques including slow flight, short field takeoffs and landings, go-arounds, weight and balance, and airplane performance charts. The 5 hours PIC may be included as part of the instructor directed checkout.
  - After completing instructor checkout/approval for any of the three backcountry levels, pilots are expected to maintain currency (at least one hour or more of proficient mountain flying techniques practiced in the previous 30 days before returning to the backcountry.
  - All members participating in mountain flying are required to complete an annual (calendar year) mountain flying ground school, taught by a certified flight instructor.
- Experienced backcountry pilots may be grandfathered in by receiving a one time backcountry check flight from a club approved CFI or with the approval of the T-Craft Board of Directors.
- The Board of Directors may revoke a member's use of club aircraft for backcountry flying, if deemed necessary.

**BACKCOUNTRY PILOT QUALIFICATIONS:**

**Three levels of pilot qualifications** for three levels of progressively more difficult backcountry airstrips.

- ❑ **Level I:** 150 total hours, 50 hours PIC in make and model.
  - 5 hours PIC in the past 60 days in make and model for the initial instructor checkout. This experience should emphasize mountain flying techniques. The 5 hours PIC may be included as part of the instructor directed checkout.
  - Satisfactory completion of Level I backcountry check flight or Board approval.
  - Fly to any Level I airport that the pilot has been approved to fly by a club appointed CFI.
  - Maintain currency after checkout/approval before returning to the backcountry (at least one hour or more of proficient mountain flying techniques practiced in the previous 30 days).
  - All members participating in mountain flying are required to complete an annual (calendar year) mountain flying ground school, taught by a certified flight instructor.
  - **May not fly as PIC to any other backcountry airports** exceeding RHI Level 9 except with a club approved CFI.
  
- ❑ **Level II:** 250 total hours, 75 hours PIC in make and model, 20 takeoffs and landings at a minimum of 8 different Level I backcountry airports.
  - 5 hours PIC in the past 60 days in make and model for the initial instructor checkout. This experience should emphasize mountain flying techniques. The 5 hours PIC may be included as a part of the instructor directed checkout.
  - Satisfactory completion of Level II backcountry check flight or Board approval.
  - Fly to any Level I or II airport that the pilot has been approved to fly by a club approved CFI.
  - Maintain currency after checkout/approval before returning to the backcountry (at least one hour or more of proficient mountain flying techniques practiced in the previous 30 days).
  - All members participating in mountain flying are required to complete an annual (calendar year) mountain flying ground school, taught by a certified flight instructor.
  - **May not fly as PIC to any other backcountry airports** exceeding RHI Level 19 except with a club approved CFI.
  
- ❑ **Level III:** 325 total hours, 125 hours PIC in make and model, 50 takeoffs and landings at a minimum of 8 different Level II backcountry airports.
  - 5 hours PIC in the past 60 days in make and model for the initial instructor checkout. This experience should emphasize mountain flying techniques. The 5 hours PIC may be included as a part of the instructor directed checkout.
  - Satisfactory completion of Level III backcountry check flight or Board approval.
  - Fly to any airport that is reasonably within the capabilities of the pilot and the airplane.
  - All members participating in mountain flying are required to complete an annual (calendar year) mountain flying ground school, taught by a certified flight instructor.
  - Maintain currency after checkout/approval before returning to the backcountry (at least one hour or more of proficient mountain flying techniques practiced in the previous 30 days).

**BACKCOUNTRY AIRPORT CLASSIFICATION:**

- ❑ Backcountry airport definition: an airport that poses higher than normal danger due to its runway surface, runway length, location in mountains, canyons, and/or high altitude.
- ❑ One commonly used reference for airport classification is the **Fly Idaho!** book which is available from [www.flyidaho.com](http://www.flyidaho.com) or by calling 800-574-9702 (Hanselman, Galen. **Fly Idaho!** Hailey, Idaho: Q.E.I. Publishing, 1998).
  - This book assigns a Relative Hazard Index (RHI) number to each airport, and also provides a worksheet (see page I-23) to calculate the RHI for any airport.
  - The airport classifications used in this policy are based on the RHI numbers published in **Fly Idaho!**
  - This information is reproduced here with the permission of the author.
- ❑ Note that we have not published a “non-approved” airport list since it is not possible to list every airport that is considered unsafe. **T-Craft members are prohibited from operating at airports that exceed the capabilities of the pilot or the aircraft.**
- ❑ The RHI number is just a guideline. The actual difficulty of an airport could increase based on changing runway conditions, weather, aircraft loading, pilot performance, etc.
- ❑ Off-airport landings are prohibited except in the case of emergencies.

Level I Airports* RHI 1-9	Level II Airports* RHI 10-19	Level III Airports* RHI 20-28
3 Priest Lake (67S)	10 Slate Creek (1S7)	20 Weatherby (52U)
4 Smith’s Prairie (2U0)	10 Memaloose (25U)	20 Graham (U45)
4 Murphy Hot Springs (3U0)	10 Landmark (0U0)	20 Cold Meadows (U81)
5 Cavanaugh Bay (66S)	11 Twin Bridges (U61)	21 Deadwood**
5 Magic Reservoir (U93)	12 Chamberlain (U79)	22 Bernard (U54)
6 Elk River**	12 Magee (S77)	22 Krassel (24K)
6 Midway (U37)	12 Pine (1U9)	22 Upper Loon Creek (U72)
6 Bear Trap (1U0)	13 Elk City (S90)	23 Rogersburg**
6 Fairfield (U86)	13 Flying B**	24 Moose Creek (1U1)
7 Laidlaw Corrals (U99)	13 Greene Valley Ranch**	24 Thomas Creek (2U8)
7 Grasmere (U91)	14 Big Creek (U60)	26 Dixie Town**
7 Cox’s Well (U48)	14 Johnson Creek (3U2)	26 Fish Lake (S92)
7 Big Southern Butte (U46)	15 Lord Flat**	27 Dug Bar**
7 Stanley (2U7)	15 Sulphur Creek**	27 Pittsburg**
7 Garden Valley (U88)	15 Indian Creek (S81)	27 Wilson Bar**
7 Idaho City (U98)	17 Warren (3U1)	28 Shearer (2U5)
7 Smiley Creek (U87)	18 Orogrande**	28 Big Bar**
7 Antelope Valley (U92)	18 Cayuse Creek**	28 Mahoney Creek (0U3)
8 Hollow Top (0U7)	18 Mackay Bar**	28 Cabin Creek (I08)
8 Copper Basin (OU2)	19 Dixie USFS (ID05)	
9 Warm Springs (0U1)	19 Atlanta (55H)	
9 Henry’s Lake (U53)		
9 Bruce Meadows (U63)		

\* Listed in order of difficulty. \*\* No Airport Identifier