Smiley Creek (U87)
Recommended Standard Operating Procedures
Produced by the Idaho Division of Aeronautics  Revision 14-01
Introduction

Welcome to Smiley 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 Smiley 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 Smiley Creek Airport.

Mike Pape, Administrator
Idaho Division of Aeronautics
SMILEY CREEK

LOCATION

LAT 43°54.73' LONG 114°47.76'

LAYOUT

LOCATION

SMILEY CREEK

FUEL

NO

SERVICES

TIEDOWNS, COURTESY CAR, FOOD & LODGING ADJACENT AREA, CAMPGROUND, SHOWERS AND PHONE AVAILABLE WHEN ATTENDED. WI-FI AVAILABLE AT LODGE.

COMMUNICATIONS

CTAF 122.9

MANAGER

208-334-8775, STATE OPERATED
208-774-2984 (AIRPORT)

FBO(s)

NO

NAV AIDS

NO

LIGHTS

NO

ATTENDED

NO

REMARKS

NORMALLY LAND RWY 14, DEPART RWY 32. CHECK AIRCRAFT PERFORMANCE FOR HIGH DENSITY ALTITUDE. BE ALERT FOR SPRINKLER STAND PIPES ON EDGE OF RWY. RWY 14-32 EDGES AND THRESHOLDS MARKED WITH WHITE ROCK. NO WINTER MAINTENANCE.

ELEVATION 7160

CTAF 122.9

SMILEY CREEK

U87

4-14
Preflight Planning

Smiley Creek (U87) 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 Smiley 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 Smiley Creek Airport. The Idaho Aviation Association (IAA) now has a page where instructors list their services and specialties:

www.idahoaviation.com/instructors.php

Route Planning

Arrivals

Landing Runway 14

It is **recommended** that you land runway 14, wind permitting. Make your initial arrival call on 122.9 at least 5 miles from Smiley Creek Airport. Announce your distance, direction and altitude from Smiley Creek Airport. Maintain 1500’ above field elevation (AFE) as applicable or minimum (8650). **Configure your airplane to canyon maneuvering speed. Begin a descent to a traffic pattern altitude of 1000’ AFE.**

**(Smiley Creek Airport) N43 54°73’ W114 47°76’**

**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 Smiley Creek Airport.

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. Be alert for sprinkler stand pipes on edge of runway and sprinkler heads in parking area.

Landing Runway 32

**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.*
WARNING

Be familiar with your aircrafts performance characteristics for **high density altitude operations**. Example: PA of 7000 and OAT of 30C = Density Altitude of 10,480’.

*See Density Altitude Chart - Appendix A*

**Straight in Landing**

Straight in landings to Runway 14 or 32 are strongly discouraged.

**WARNING**

By not joining the pattern, there is increased risk of a midair collision.

**Landing Abort Procedures**

Runway 14 and 32

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**

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 32

North Departure-Example: “Smiley Creek traffic, Cessna 20836 departing runway 32 climbing north bound”.

Departing Runway 14 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 Smiley Creek.

**CAUTION**

_Southerly winds prevail mid-morning through the afternoon. Aircraft should remain on the ground until more favorable conditions exist._
SAFETY ALERT

Arrivals

Be alert for high-density traffic en-route to Smiley Creek Airport during fly-ins

Runway 14: 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: “Smiley Creek traffic, Cessna 20836 is 5 miles northwest of Smiley Creek airport inbound at 9500. We will enter an upwind for landing runway 14 Smiley 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

Be familiar with high density altitude operations. Use full runway for takeoff.

- Make a radio call on 122.9 prior to taxiing.

Runway 32: Preferred runway for departure towards descending terrain.

Example: “Smiley Creek traffic Cessna 20836 is taxiing for runway 32 north departure Smiley Creek.”

- Formation departures are highly discouraged.
Smiley 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 Blaine Co. Sheriff’s dispatch at (208) 788-5555, and the Boise FAA Flight Standards Office at (208) 387-4000.
- Be very 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.
- Sprinkler heads located in parking area
- Consider remaining in parking until aircraft on final has landed.
- Pilot training is discouraged at Smiley Creek Airport during organized fly-ins.
- Aerobatic maneuvers, formation flying, and low passes are all highly discouraged over Smiley Creek Airport.
- Fuel is not available and no winter maintenance.
- Non-radio equipped aircraft are not recommended during Smiley Creek Airport fly-ins.
- Wi-Fi service available at the lodge.
- Webcams facing northwest/southeast are accessible at www.idahoaviation.com/webcams.php
- During the summer months, sprinklers are active throughout the day.
- Camping located west side adjacent runway.

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.
- Fly neighborly over town.

Important Phone Numbers

Idaho Division of Aeronautics 208-334-8775
Lockheed Martin Flight Service 800-992-7433
Blaine County Police Dispatch 208-788-5555

Download the latest version of this SOP at:

www.itd.idaho.gov/aero

Click on:
- Publications,
- Airport Operating Procedures
IDAHO DIVISION OF AERONAUTICS
(Recommended Airstrip Operating Procedure)

Legend

----> Smiley Creek Airport Traffic Pattern

Airport Elevation 7160 ft

Traffic Pattern
1000 ft above field elevation
IDAHÓ DIVISIÓN DE AERONÁUTICAS
(Recomendado procedimiento de funcionamiento de aéродromos)

Legend

⚠️ Smiley Creek Airport Abort Path

Airport Elevation 7160 ft

0 0.5 1.0 Nautical Miles

0 0.25 0.5 1.0 Nautical Miles
DENSITY ALTITUDE:
Have you checked your performance today?

Outside Air Temperature (OAT)

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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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