



# *Wyoming Mountains Adventure*

Version 2

By  
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Aussie Star Flight Simulation

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With spectacular scenery and challenging flying conditions, the Wyoming Mountains Adventure should prove to be a fun and enjoyable flying adventure. At 470 nautical miles and 2½ hours flying time, based on a Beechcraft Baron 58, this should well provide for a decent afternoon or evening's flying. With runways as short as 4000 feet, and elevations up to 8000 feet, this adventure would suit a range of aircraft from small props to regional jets.

The flight plan covers areas of the Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks and the Mesa and Wild River Mountain Ranges. The main challenge will be to get from one airport to the next without a too real up close view of the rugged mountain ranges! GPS direct won't necessarily always be possible, depending on the aircraft type chosen. Therefore, some imaginative VFR flying will be necessary to gain sufficient altitude to climb over the ranges which in parts are in excess of 10,000 feet.

#### **Departure – Wenz Field (KPNA)**

The departure point will be the Ralph Wenz Field (KPNA) in Pinedale, Wyoming. [Pinedale](#), population 2030, is located in western Wyoming, approximately 125 kilometres (78 miles) south of Jackson Hole and 145 kilometres (90 miles) south of Yellowstone National Park. It is in the heart of the Upper Green River Valley, surrounded by three mountain ranges, which include two wilderness areas. Pinedale proper sits at 7,100 feet elevation. The airfield [website](#) has some good tips on mountain flying which are worth checking out prior to departure.



Ralph Wenz Field, Pinedale  
Photo: [Pinedaleonline.com](#)

#### **Jackson Hole (KJAC)**

Sixty-three nautical miles north-west is [Jackson](#), a town located in the Jackson Hole Valley of Teton County, Wyoming. With a population of 9,577, it is a major gateway for millions of tourists visiting nearby Grand Teton National Park, Yellowstone National Park and the National Elk Refuge. Jackson is also in close proximity to several ski resorts. The Jackson Hole [Airport](#) is situated 11 kilometers (7 miles) north of the town. It is the only airport in the United States to be within a national park.



A view of Jackson from nearby Snow King resort

Photo: Wikipedia | Mlewis2005

A number of major US airlines service Jackson Hole including American Airlines, Delta Airlines, SkyWest Airlines, Frontier Airlines and United Airlines. The largest aircraft to operate to the airport on a regular basis is the Boeing 757-200. Other jetliner types operated into Jackson Hole include the Airbus A319 and A320 as well as the Canadair CRJ-700 regional jet.



The ramp at Jackson Hole, Wyoming

Photo: Wikipedia | Acroterion

A number of air crashes of note have occurred at Jackson Hole. In August 1996 a US Air Force C-130 Hercules supporting the US Presidential Secret Service, unable to clear Sheep Mountain, crashed into it killing all nine on board. In December 2000, Hollywood star, Sandra Bullock survived the crash of a chartered business jet. The aircraft hit a snowbank instead of the runway, shearing off the nose gear and nose cone and damaging the wings.

Jackson Hole Airport came third in a survey conducted by PrivateFly.com in 2011 to find the world's best airport approaches.

### **West Yellowstone (KWYS)**

Sixty-seven nautical miles north and just over the Wyoming/Montana state border is the town of [West Yellowstone](#) in Gallatin Country, Montana. The town has a population of some 1,177. For many it is a place to stay while traveling through to the adjacent Yellowstone National Park. The airport (KWYS) here is small, having only one runway and open in the summer season only from June the end of September. The AirNav [website](#) provides some useful airport information including instrument approach and departure procedures (terrain obstacles).



West Yellowstone airport from the air

Photo: Guy A. Edwards

### **Mission (KLVM)**

Further north by sixty-seven nautical miles and nestled on the banks of the Yellowstone River, the city of [Livingston](#), Montana, is surrounded by three mountain ranges: the Crazy, Absaroka and Bridger Mountains. For train buffs, see the YouTube [video](#) of the model railroad in Livingston which also shows a bit of Livingston city and surrounds. The airport servicing Livingston is [Mission Field](#) (KLVM). Mission Field is home to several small to intermediate sized aircraft whose owners rent hangars from the Airport Board. There is also a ground lease rental program upon which individuals may construct their own hangars to fit their needs. In 2012 Mission Field Airport received Montana's Department of transportation "Airport of the Year" award. Twenty-five planes are based at Mission Field, and the runway services approximately 9000 take-offs and landings per year. Livingston HealthCare uses the airport as a base for emergency flights. The National Park Service, National Forest Service and the Army Corps of Engineers also use the airport. For a bit of fun see the YouTube [video](#) of an FSX 737-600 landing on runway 22 at Mission Field. Airport information can be obtained from [AirNav.com](#).



Mission Field, Livingston, Montana

Photo: Park County website, [www.parkcounty.org](http://www.parkcounty.org)

### Red Lodge (KRED)

Bordering Wyoming's northern border and fifty-eight nautical miles east of Mission, [Red Lodge](#), Montana is a quaint alpine town offering a slower and peaceful pace of life to its locals and yearly visitors who come to enjoy this outdoor paradise. Red Lodge [Airport](#) is located 1.5 kilometres northwest of the town. The 4000 feet runway is available for private and non-commercial, chartered aircraft. Commercial airlines do not service the Red Lodge community but a local airline company, Absaroka Airways, Inc. provides a seasonal service for locals and tourists by offering scenic flights around the Beartooth Mountains.



Red Lodge Airport, Montana  
Photo: Maria Guy

### Yellowstone (KCOD)

Travelling south now, Yellowstone Regional [Airport](#) in [Cody](#), Wyoming is forty-one nautical miles from Red Lodge. Located just minutes away from Yellowstone National Park and offers a full range of services to the traveller. The airport provides year-round regional airline flights operated by Sky West/ Delta Airlines, Mesa Airlines and United Airlines. See a Cessna 310 landing on runway 22 at Cody in this [YouTube video](#).



Yellowstone Regional Airport, Cody.  
Photo: Wingmanslog.com

### Dubois Municipal (U25)

Further south by sixty-five nautical miles, Dubois is an authentic western town located along the Wind River, rimmed by the Absaroka and Wind River Mountains. In [Dubois](#) time seems to move at a slower pace. The rustic log buildings that line the main street look much as they did when the town was first settled in the late 1800's. It's an area of striking contrasts from the badlands to the high peaks. Dubois Municipal [Airport](#) is a town-owned public airport located 6 kilometers (3 nm) northwest of the town. It is categorised as a small general aviation airport. Private charter jet operators such as Private Jets Charter and Charter Jets use this airport.



A Private Jets Charter aircraft approaching Dubois  
Photo: PrivateJetsCharter.net

### Lander – Hunt Field (KLND)

Sixty-one nautical miles south-east, the city of [Lander](#) is located in central Wyoming, at the foot of the Wild River Mountains along the Middle Fork of the Popo Agie River. The traditional agriculture and grazing economy, is supported by substantial tourism. Lander serves as a point of departure for camping, hunting, fishing, wilderness travel, climbing, and mountaineering. Lander's [Hunt Field](#) is Wyoming's busiest general aviation (GA) airport. It services charter jets and is home to over fifty local aircraft. See the [video](#) of a local flight. It holds an annual fly-in. See the [video](#) of the fly-in. From Lander it is a forty-seven nm flight west back to Wenz.



GA aircraft at the Hunt Field fly-in, Lander  
Photo: www.pitchengine.com

## Freeware scenery

[BlueSkyScenery](#) offers high resolution photorealistic freeware sceneries for both FS9 and FSX of areas of the United States. Their special technique gives a realistic flying experience not seen before. In 2011 BlueSkyScenery won the AVSIM Readers Choice Award in the 'Freeware Scenery' category.

BlueSky's recently released freeware scenery downloads featuring the mountains of Wyoming and Montana. Together they cover the flight plan area for this adventure. A ChiliView quality [map](#) on their website shows the extent of the Wyoming download package.

A comparison of screen captures highlights the difference between default FSX scenery and the BlueSky freeware. Both screen captures were taken near Jackson Hole, Wyoming.



FSX default scenery



BlueSky scenery

## It's worth it!

It's worth spending the time to download this freeware package. It is big at 1 GB per section; about 11GB in total. To get full coverage, it's best to download both the Wyoming and Montana packages. If you can afford it, I'm sure BlueSkyScenery would accept a donation.

## Flying this adventure

This adventure could be flown in one session or over an extended period of time. The flight plan specifies 2½ hours of flying time over 470 nautical miles. With ground time, this could easily extend to considerably more hours.

It could also be flown a number of times but under differing meteorological conditions to make it more interesting and challenging, as has been done in a previous series – The IFR Europe Challenge.

So often with flight simulation we fly into and out of a myriad of different locations. Unless we are armed with local knowledge we often know little of the places we actually come into contact with. This publication then is intended to provide yet another dimension to the experience of simulated flying among the mountains of Wyoming and Montana. Not only are you able to experience the scenic beauty of the region, but also gain some insight into the places and communities that we visit as virtual tourists.

## Acknowledgement

Inspiration for the development of this adventure came from a new Aussie Star member, Lee D (Techno357FLY) who I had the pleasure of flying with in this region recently. It was Lee who alerted me to BlueSkyScenery. Thanks Lee.

I hope you find exploring this article and the flight plan path the adventure it is intended to be.

Greg Whiley (CaptAus)  
September 2012





## FLIGHT PLAN

<b>Wyoming Mountains Adventure: Pinedale – Wenz &gt;&gt;&gt; Pinedale - Wenz</b> Distance: 469.8 nm Estimated fuel burn: 90.3 gal / 541.8 lb (Beechcraft Baron 58) Estimated time en route: 2:34 Note: Direct track may not be possible due to terrain.							
Waypoints	Route	Alt (ft)	Hdg	Distance	GS (kts)	Fuel (gal/lb)	Time off
				Leg	Est	Est	ETE
Pinedale – Wenz (KPNA)				469.8	Act	113.6	ATE
Jackson Hole (KJAC)	-D->	12500	308	63.4	180	12.3 / 74.0	0:21
				406.4		/	
Yellowstone West (KWYS)	VFR*	12500	333	66.9	180	13.0 / 78.1	0:22
				339.5		/	
Mission (KLVM)	-D->	11500	012	66.9	180	13.0 / 78.1	0:22
				272.6		/	
Red Lodge (KRED)	VFR	11500	108	58.4	194	10.5 / 63.2	0:18
				214.2		/	
Yellowstone Regl. (KCOD)	VFR	11500	153	41.3	186	7.7 / 46.5	0:13
				172.8		/	
Dubois Mun. (U25)	-D->	12500	194	65.0	180	12.7 / 75.9	0:21
				107.8		/	
Hunt (KLND)	-D->	11500	124	60.8	180	11.8 / 71.0	0:20
				47.0		/	
Pinedale – Wenz (KPNA)	VFR	12500	257	47.0	180	9.1 / 54.9	0:15
				0.0		/	

### Airport information

Airport	Nav frequencies	Rwy	Length	Surface	ILS freq	ILS Hdg
Pinedale – Wenz (KPNA) Elevation 7086 FT	NDB 392 PNA	11 29	7090 7090	Asphalt Asphalt		
Jackson Hole (KJAC) Elevation 6451 FT	VOR 115.40 JAC	1 19	6451 6451	Asphalt Asphalt	109.10	186
Yellowstone West (KWYS) Elevation 6644 FT	NDB 338 ESY	1 19	6644 6644	Asphalt Asphalt	110.10	001
Mission (KLVM) Elevation 4660 FT	VOR 116.10 LVM	4 22	5692 5692	Asphalt Asphalt		
Red Lodge (KRED) Elevation 5763 FT	NDB 203 RED	16 34	4000 4000	Asphalt Asphalt		
Yellowstone Regl. (KCOD) Elevation 5102 FT	VOR 111.80 COD	4 22	8258 8258	Asphalt Asphalt		
Dubois Mun. (U25) Elevation 7291 FT		10 28	7291 7291	Asphalt Asphalt		
Hunt (KLND) Elevation 5586 FT		3 21	5000 5000	Asphalt Asphalt		

# Route Map



