

Wilderness Airstrip Management Plan

Cabin Creek Airstrip (I08)

Payette National Forest

Introduction

This management plan is intended to provide a framework for management intent, desired conditions and opportunities at the Cabin Creek Airfield. It covers annual routine operations and maintenance needs for the airstrip. Any non-routine activities or emergency actions will be managed as needed and in the context of the Minimum Requirements Decision Guide – Airstrip Maintenance, for the Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness (FCRNRW Plan, Standard E-6, pg 2-12; FEIS, Appendix).

Cabin Creek airstrip is classified “primitive” under the Idaho Airstrip Network classification matrix (May 2010).

Location

Cabin Creek airstrip, an FAA designated public use airstrip, is located near the junction of Cow and Cabin Creek within the Big Creek drainage of the Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness in Central Idaho. It is administered by the Krassel Ranger District, Payette National Forest, Intermountain Region. The airstrip is located at Township 21N, Range 12E, Section 24, with a Latitude of 45° 08.61' and a Longitude 114° 55.74'. The FAA identifier is I08 and it lays at an elevation of 4,289 feet.

History of the Airstrip

The original Cabin Creek airstrip was located on the bench above the current airstrip location. In 1956 a bulldozer was walked overland, into site and the airstrip was relocated, improved and lengthened. This entailed re-routing and channelizing Cow Creek. The Forest Service purchased the ranch, which included the airstrip, in 1973 and has managed the site since that time. In 1988 the Forest Service requested FAA re designation of the strip to provide for public use, from its previous private use status.

- Consistent dimensions started around 1990.
- Runway 02/20 Surface = 1750' X 40'
- Average historic use for the past ten years is 571 landing per year, (with 389 estimated landings in 2011)
- A search of the National Transportation Safety Board's Accident Database identifies no known aviation accidents at the airstrip.

Characterization of past maintenance or projects:

- Raking, grading, and leveling with mules has occurred at Cabin Creek, but does not occur annually. This more intense work is usually reserved to address specific needs and situations or when funding is available and work the needed.

Water diversion structures (rubber belted strips) are replaced and maintained as needed on Cabin Creek airstrip in attempt to minimize and control surface erosion due to the surface gradient and lack of surface vegetation.

- A windsock is provided and maintained at the strip.
- Rebuilt entire airstrip with mule team due to blow out of Cow Creek - 1996 to 1998
- Rebuilt turn around and parking/tie down area with mule team- 1999
- Replaced water bars 2006

- Cabin Creek's proximity to other airstrips:
 - Lemhi CO (KSMN) 44nm to the E
 - McCall (KMYL) 52nm to the W
 - Soldier Bar (85U) 6nm to the W
 - Big Creek (U60) 17nm to the E

Objectives for Management of the Airstrip

1. R-1/R-4 Regional Aviation Plan Ch. 2.2 Aviation section C 3 & 4
2. Forests will develop and maintain an *Airstrip Management Plan* for each Forest owned and operated airstrip within their responsibility.
3. Forest owned and operated airstrips will be maintained in accordance with FSM 7730.
4. FSM 7735.22 #2
 - Develop minimum maintenance standards for airfields in the forest transportation system, and maintain them to at least those standards.

FCRNRW policy

- Maintain the airstrip to a safe operating standard but not enhanced over conditions typical at the time of the passage of the Central Idaho Wilderness Act and in compliance with the Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness Management Plan.
- Cabin Creek Airstrip will be managed for unrestricted public and commercial use until use levels and evaluations dictate a need to establish use limits.
- Recognize the needs and values of multiple users while ensuring the overall goal of maintaining these facilities to a safe operational standard is accomplished.

Physical Description of the Airstrip (include all FAA inspection info)

- The airstrip is located within the Big Creek drainage, near the junction of Cow and Cabin Creek, approximately 9 nm west of the Middle Fork of the Salmon River.
- Elevation of the airstrip is 4289'
- Dimensions of runway 02/20 are 1750' X 40'

- Runway 02 is used for landings and runway 20 is used for take- off.
- Go-arounds are not possible due to high terrain at the end of runway 20.
- There is no winter maintenance. The airstrip may be snow covered in the winter months, and big game are common on and around the airstrip.
- The runway surface is grass turf/dirt in fair condition, but does contain rocks and occasional holes, and has a history of wind/prop caused erosion which adds to the deterioration of the surface, especially on the upper end where prop wash is most prevalent.
- Runway Dimensions / Information:

Runway 02/20			
Dimensions		1750' X 40'	
Surface		Turf/Dirt	
Alignment		northeast - southwest	
End Markers		White	
Side Markers		White	
Runway 02		Runway 20	
Traffic Pattern	Left	Traffic Pattern	Left

- Obstructions:

Runway 02: 65' tree, 280' from runway, 100' right of centerline
4:1 slope to clear

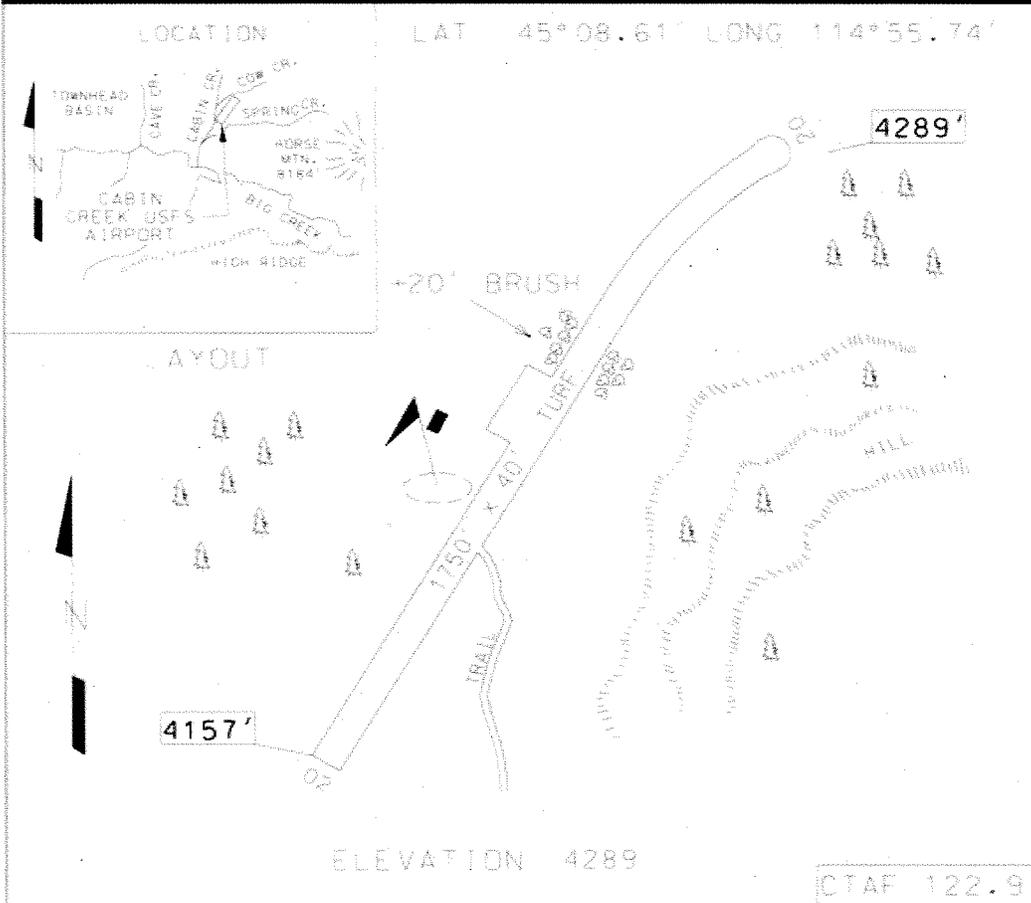
Runway 20: 300' hill, 400' from runway, 1:1 slope to clear

- A 032 RWY 02/20 15' wide bare dirt strip down center of runway
- A110-1 Land runway 02, take off runway 20, Go around not possible due to high terrain at end of RY 20
- A110-2 No phone available at airport
- A 110-3 Rubber water bar strips on runway
- A 110-4 Big game animals and livestock on and around runway

Airstrip diagram produced by the Idaho Transportation Department –Division of Aeronautics

CABIN CREEK USFS

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LOCATION	37 MILES W OF SALMON	FUEL	NO
VOR FREQ	113.5	RAD NM	26.5 36.5
COMMUNICATIONS	CTAF 122.9	SERVICES	NO
NAV AIDS	NO	MANAGER	208-634-0700
LIGHTS	NO	FBO(s)	NO
ATTENDED	NO		

REMARKS LAND RWY 02. DEPART RWY 20. LANDING OR TAKEOFF WITH UNFAVORABLE WINDS NOT RECOMMENDED. CHECK AIRCRAFT PERFORMANCE FOR HIGH DENSITY ALTITUDE. CO-AROUND FROM FINAL NOT POSSIBLE DUE TO HIGH TERRAIN. STEEP ENCLOSING TERRAIN. RECOMMEND USE ONLY BY MOUNTAIN PROFICIENT PILOTS. WILDLIFE OR STOCK FREQUENTLY ON RUNWAY. NO WINTER MAINTENANCE.

11/09

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Airstrip Surface Improvements

- Tie-downs are not available in the aircraft parking area midfield on the northwest side of the runway.
- An aircraft turnaround point is located on the threshold of runway 20. This area is not intended for aircraft parking.
- A windsock and standard is located on the west side of the runway near the aircraft parking area.
- Rubber waterbars traverse the runway surface across much of the airstrip to reduce erosion

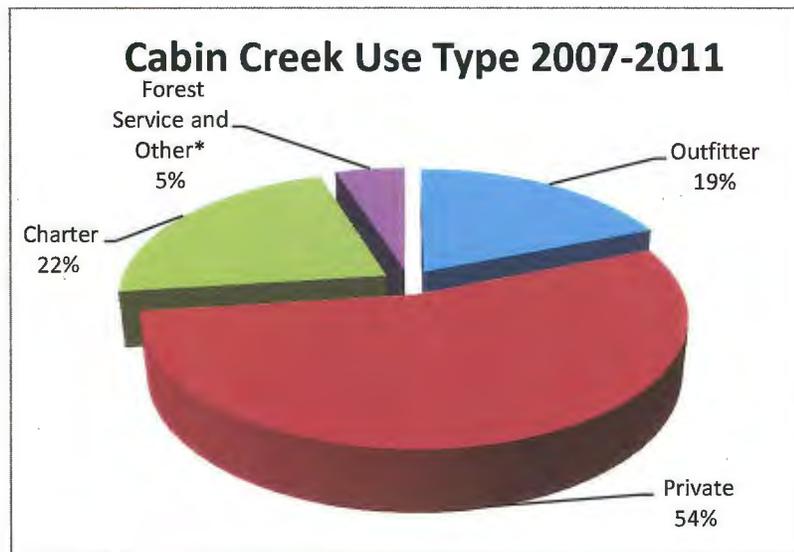
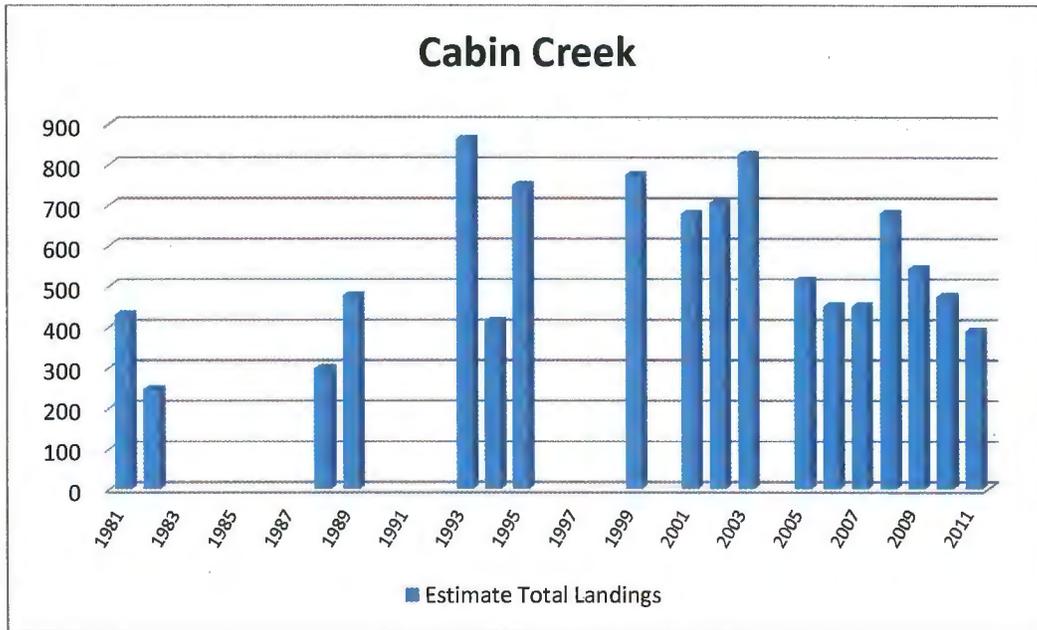
Airstrip Facilities

- There is a pit-style out house located near the airstrip.
- There is an information board and visitor sign in station located at the strip.

Use of the Airstrip

- The FAA designation is public ownership, public use.
- The Forest Service listing per FC-RONRW direction is: *“The seven (7) designated public use airstrips operated and maintained by the Forest Service will be managed for unrestricted public and commercial use until use levels and evaluations dictate a need to establish use limits.”* (FC-RONRW Ch. 2-11)
- The IAN current classification is “Primitive.” (IAN classification matrix 2010)
- General season of use is May through October
- The Forest Service utilizes the airstrip to move personnel and supplies into the backcountry to support a variety of agency activities.
- Private pilots use the airstrip for wilderness access, camping, hunting and fishing. Pilots must be experienced in backcountry flying and instruction on proper approach procedures is needed due to terrain making go-arounds impossible.
- The airstrip is utilized by a variety of aircraft makes and models. Due to the density altitude experienced at Cabin Creek during summer months, higher performance aircraft are required. Aircraft ranging in size from small single engine to high performance twins like the Islander and Twin Otter have used the airstrip occasionally in the past.
- Commercial use of the airstrip occurs to deliver people and supplies for hunting, fishing, camping, research, state and federal agency administration and hiking trips.
- Two outfitter operations use Cabin Creek for client and equipment movement in and out of the wilderness.
- Trail 044 runs parallel and along the airstrip.

Comparison with past years based on estimate of total landings for a sample season:



* Other agency administrative and mail flights

Restrictions and Requirements for Use of the Airstrip

- Generally open from May – October, depending on snow.
 - Use at own risk – High density altitudes during summer months
 - Recommended for use by mountain proficient pilots using high-performance aircraft.
 - While a relatively small amount of twin engine aircraft has used this site, primarily Agency aircraft in support of recent large fire events, the airstrip is maintained for the type of light, generally single engine, aircraft use that was occurring at the time of acquisition and designation as public use (1988) per guidance of the Wilderness Plan.
 - Runway has potential surface water present in the spring.
 - Rising terrain north of the airstrip make go-arounds impossible.
 - Multiple airstrips are located within the Big Creek drainage. Standard backcountry announcement procedures on 122.900MHz should be employed.
 - Big game animals on and in the vicinity of airstrip.
 - No winter maintenance.

- Cabin Creek Airstrip lies within the Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness. Users of the airstrip must practice appropriate Leave No Trace ethics at the airstrip and surrounding areas.

General Operating Procedures for Landing, Take-off, and Parking

- Announce intentions on 122.900
- Watch for other traffic; the Big Creek drainage receives a significant amount of up and down canyon air traffic throughout the field season.
- Remember, the airstrip has a history of water running across the runway in the spring and may be unusable until conditions change.
- Park aircraft in approved areas and utilize turn around areas appropriately.
- Be aware of closures communicated through NOTAM's and/or by use of yellow X's placed on both ends of the runway.

Wilderness Education/Visitor Contact

- When the Cabin Creek Administration Site is staffed, Forest Service employees perform visitor contacts and conduct use surveys. This occurs in the spring, summer and fall.
- Information boards are also available at the airstrip for sharing information and education materials.

Law Enforcement/Search Rescue/Life Flight

- There are no routine or scheduled federal Law Enforcement activities planned involving the use of Cabin Creek Airstrip.
- Search and rescue (SAR) or life-flight activities would follow standard communication protocols on 122.9 during airstrip use.
- If agency aircraft are missing or known to have had an accident, Payette Dispatch is to be notified of the incident immediately and will coordinate the rescue/search according to the Interagency Aviation Mishap Response Guide and Checklist.
- If non-agency aircraft are involved in an accident or missing in the vicinity of the airstrip, Payette Dispatch can be notified and they will contact the Idaho Division of Aeronautics and/or the Idaho County Sheriff's Department who will then coordinate the response.

Support to Other Forest Service Programs

- Multiple Forest Service disciplines, such as recreation, wildlife, fisheries and fire utilize the Cabin Creek Airstrip in support of agency's mission and goals.

Maintenance Needs for the Airstrip

Maintenance is dependent on the availability of funding and need. Work conducted will be appropriate with the minimum necessary needs for the administration of the area. All maintenance will be conducted by non-motorized/non-mechanized means unless authorized by the Regional Forester and supported by a Minimum Requirements Decision Guide recommendation of the District Ranger and Forest Supervisor. The matrix below defines what items will be addressed at Cabin Creek Airstrip. The Management Plan will be updated as needed to provide the level of maintenance required to meet the plans objectives.

Recent Cabin Creek Airstrip inspections have identified following items:

- There is potential for brush encroachment on both sides of the airstrip northeast of the aircraft parking area. This needs to be monitored and action taken to retain adequate clearance for the light aircraft operating on this strip. Operational objectives will be to clear brush to a width of approximately 75' to facilitate safe operations of small, single engine aircraft.
- The airstrip surface could use leveling (filling in major holes and removing larger rocks which have worked their way to the surface of the airstrip). Maintain a slight crown would be desirable but is difficult.
- Maintaining a vegetative cover on the Cabin Creek landing surface is virtually impossible due to the dry conditions and high use levels. Prop wash on the upper 1/3 to 1/2 of the airstrip blows off the surface fines and impacts surface smoothness, especially with twin engine or larger aircraft.

NOTE: If maintenance activities could affect aviation operations are scheduled to occur, the Forest Aviation Officer (FAO) or Dispatch must be notified in advance so a NOTAM can be issued.

Action Area	Specific Need or Location	Type of Action (standard)	Action Frequency, How often completed	Time of Year	Quantity, Amount, or Area Treated	Estimated Cost (for reference only, costs may change)
Mowing			<u>Not mowed</u>			N/A
Leveling	a. Entire airstrip as needed	Maintain a rut free level surface	As needed Estimate every 5-10 years.	As needed	Airstrip surface is approx. 12 acres	Wilderness: \$10,000 per event (contract)
	b. Spot leveling ruts and holes	Fill holes and level ruts when aircraft safety is compromised	3-4 times per season	As needed	Entire airstrip	\$600 per season, 1 person day per month
Seeding	Bare areas	Seed bare areas with native seed as needed to prevent erosion	As needed	Fall	As needed. Use 2 lbs seed per 100 sq ft:	\$150 per airstrip
Drainage	a. Clear & maintain water bars	Keep water bars clear for free flow of water	Check for obstructions annually maintain as needed	Pre-season	As needed, typically annually and after storm events	NO CULVERTS
Painting	a. Windsock pole	Keep windsock pole paint in good condition	Every 3-5 years as needed	As needed	One pole	\$250 per pole
	b. Runway markers					N/A No Action

Action Area	Specific Need or Location	Type of Action (standard)	Action Frequency, How often completed	Time of Year	Quantity, Amount, or Area Treated	Estimated Cost (for reference only, costs may change)
Vegetation Control	a. Clear vertical approaches	Remove vegetation that intrudes on approach glide slope, consistent with standard at time of acquisition	as needed, typically once every 5 years	Pre-season	Maintain an appropriate glide slope from runway end markers, which provides for safe operations (terrain permitting)	\$100 per event when combined w/ scheduled maint., Costs can be significantly more not routinely maintained.
	c. Clear sides of runways	Remove vegetation that intrudes on side clearing	typically once every 5 years	Pre-season	Maintain appropriate side clearance which provides for safe operations, typically not more than 75' wide	\$100 per event when combined w/ scheduled maint., Costs can be significantly more not routinely maintained.
	d. Clear encroaching vegetation on runways	Remove vegetation that encroaches on runway dimensions	Annually as needed	Pre-season	Remove any woody vegetation within runway dimensions;	\$200 per event when combined with scheduled maint.
Clearing obstructions	Remove obstructions (fallen logs, rolled rocks)	Remove obstructions from runway surface	Annually, as needed	Pre-season and as needed	Entire airstrip	\$100 per event when combined with scheduled maint.
Rock removal	Remove rocks	Remove rocks of size that pose hazard	Annually, as needed	Pre-season and as needed	Entire airstrip	\$100 per event when combined with scheduled maint.

Action Area	Specific Need or Location	Type of Action (standard)	Action Frequency How often completed	Time of Year	Quantity, Amount, or Area Treated	Estimated Cost (for reference only, costs may change)
Navigation Marker Maintenance	a. Maintain windsock	Ensure windsock turn freely and are in fair or better condition	as needed; typically replace every 2-3 years	Pre-season	Typically, 1 windsock per airstrip	\$50 annually, \$250 per replacement of windsock standard (frame)

Weed Control	Control invasion and spread of noxious weeds	Remove noxious weeds, thru hand pulling or spraying	Annually, as needed	Spring, prior to seed set.	Entire airstrip	\$700
Rodent Control	Control rodent impacts	Smooth and fill rodent mounds & burrows	throughout the season	As needed – several times during season	Entire Airstrip	N/A
Airplane Tie-downs						None located at this strip
Inventory and Monitoring	Annual inspection of airstrip conditions and facilities	Annual inspection of facilities, airstrip conditions and monitoring of plans	Annually	Pre-season	Each airstrip	\$Cost incorporated in maintenance activities above

Identify Estimated Annual Budget Needs:

Approximately \$2,000 per year and an additional \$10,000 when a stock team and teamster is contracted to level the entire surface (every 5-10 years)

Assumptions:

- Routine maintenance is conducted by the personnel based at & operating out of the Cabin Creek Station, and volunteers as needed, under the direction of the District Recreation and Wilderness Mgt. Branch with support from the District and Forest Fire & Aviation organization.
- There is no horse drawn blade at Cabin Creek Airstrip, this activity is contracted or equipment moved to the site.

- Maintenance will be dependent on funding, need and competing priorities.
- Cabin Creek airstrip requires scheduled maintenance throughout the season.
- The Idaho Aviation Association, Recreation Airfield Foundation, Idaho Aviation Association and the National Smokejumper Association are all organizations with potential to assist with maintenance work, but require direction and sign up under appropriate authorities.

Identify Tools for Maintenance

- Shovels
- Pulaski's
- Axe
- Crosscut saw
- Paint brushes
- Grass whip
- Tamping tool

Identify any Inspections and Monitoring

R-4 pilots will inspect the airstrip annually. Feedback from field staff and local pilots will supplement the monitoring process.

The State of Idaho also conducts airstrip inspections and communicates their findings.

Airstrip inspections will be conducted to involve the District Ranger and / or his designated staff whenever feasible.

Inspection reports will be provided to the District Ranger and designated District staff.

Identify Responsibilities and Skills

R-4 pilots are a reliable subject matter expert group for airstrip condition evaluation. The McCall light fixed-wing contract pilots are an experienced group for appraisals.

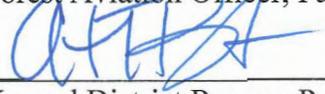
Krassel R.D. Recreation & Wilderness staff will be responsible for routine operational maintenance of the Cabin Creek Airstrip.

District & Forest Contacts:

- Krassel District Ranger – Anthony Botello; (208) 634-0601
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- Krassel Recreation Staff Officer – Clem Pope; (208) 634-0616
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- Forest Aviation Officer – Matt Shaddle; (208) 634-0768
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- Krassel Fire Mgt Officer – Tom Bates; (208) 634-9290
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Krassel District Ranger, Payette NF

Date: 3/20/12