



Heli-Tour Information Sheet

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BACKGROUND

- The Jackson Hole Airport must comply with both Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) regulations, and its agreement with the Department of the Interior (DOI) under which the Airport operates in Grand Teton National Park (GTNP).
- Among other things, FAA requires that the Airport be open to “all types, kinds and classes of aeronautical uses.” Exceptions exist for safety, but safety decisions are reserved to FAA alone.
- In most cases, under the DOI agreement no scenic flights may originate at the Airport and fly over noise sensitive areas of GTNP, as defined in the agreement. The Airport Board is prohibited from otherwise regulating the routes of aircraft which land at or depart from the Airport.
- With the exception of take-offs and landings, scenic air tour flights may overfly GTNP only if they comply with the federal Air Tour Management Act of 2000 (ATMA).

HOW WE GOT HERE

- In August 2018, the Airport received an application from Wind River Air LLC (WRA) to provide out-and-back helicopter flights to and from the Airport. This original application proposed dedicated ramp space and flights over GTNP.
- Since dedicated space could not be provided by the Airport, and clearance under the ATMA would be required for flights over GTNP, WRA modified its application.
- The modified application excluded dedicated ramp space and avoided any GTNP overflights. The Airport Board recommended that WRA consult with GTNP, the National Elk Refuge, the Town and the County regarding noise concerns before pursuing its application. That consultation is ongoing.
- Over the years, there have been several entities that have attempted to provide scenic flights from JH Airport. The FAA clarifies that scenic flights that fly over Park Service land merely for the purposes of landing and taking-off did not trigger The National Parks Air Tour Management Act of 2000 (ATMA).

MOVING FORWARD

- Three entities that have authority to prevent these scenic helicopter operations are Congress, the FAA and the applicant.

WRA has not yet asked for its application to be placed on the Airport Board's agenda. While the Airport Board has not officially taken up the application, it has heard the concerns of the community and elected officials regarding this issue. Operating in Jackson Hole and inside GTNP is a responsibility we take seriously. We strive to operate with best practices for our environment, its wildlife, our community and guests.

**ADDITIONAL INFO & VIDEO
OF THIS MEETING MAY BE
FOUND HERE:**

