



---FUN DESTINATIONS---

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submitted for NRI Flying Club by Sean Calhoun

Soaring in Minden, NV

Brett Young

If you can get away for a longer flight, I highly recommend heading over to Minden-Tahoe Airport (KMEV) to check out the incredible sport of soaring.

Minden-Tahoe Airport is located in the Carson Valley, over the Sierra's from South Lake Tahoe. The vicinity of Minden is a world-renowned location for glider flying and soaring. The combination of terrain, heating and weather patterns create outstanding thermals. When thermals aren't working, wave lift off of the Sierras can be used for flights in excess of 2,000 KM. Soaring NV is the commercial glider operation at KMEV and is staffed by passionate glider pilots and a handful of dogs. (My favorite is "Winglet", who doesn't yip. Much. His nickname is "Trim Tab".) They have rides at a variety of price points. If you're flying over, I'd skip the scenic flights (because you just saw a bunch of the scenery on the way in) and go for either an aerobatic flight or an instructional flight.

If you get hooked, Minden is one of several places you can get your glider add-on to your license. Others include Byron, Hollister and Williams. The sport of soaring is fascinating in its technicality, strategy and scenic beauty.

Some tips on KMEV:

1. Call ahead to SoaringNV for scheduling and soaring weather.
2. Minden-Tahoe is an untowered environment, so monitor the radio for traffic calls for gliders on tow, parachuting and fire tanker operations.
3. Remember that you're mountain flying to get to Minden-Tahoe. Get a weather briefing, plan your route carefully, and carry a mountain survival kit.
4. The density altitude getting out of Minden-Tahoe can mean for a slow climb up to the Kingsbury Grade. Watch your temps and mixture.



Photo of my feet as I await a tow in a single-seat Discus "b".



The FBO dog at SoaringNV. "Winglet", also known as "Trim Tab". He's owned by a tow pilot.



Flying the Discus at 13k feet with oxygen, an InReach transceiver and a parachute.



This is an ASK-21, the primary instruction type at SoaringNV. It has a 35:1 glide ratio



Minden-Tahoe Airport in the Carson Valley.

64S Prospect State Oregon---Sean Calhoun

For a number of years I've made an annual summer pilgrimage of sorts to Southern Oregon where I lived before migrating to California in 1984. Of the many airports in that area my absolute favorite is Prospect State (64S) which offers for me the best of many things I seek in an uncontrolled airport destination.

Situated alongside the Rogue River, a major waterway for that part of the state



and in the shadow of world famous Crater Lake, Prospect town is just a short quarter of a mile from the airport. There you can find a turn of the century bread and breakfast hotel (<http://www.prospecthotel.com/>) including a gourmet restaurant and a lower priced motel section. When it's not closed for renovations there's a local diner serving up what one would expect from a mountain town diner--cheap eats and lots of local loggers and people on a budget where it is friendly and very casual while the restaurant at the B & B usually has tourists from all over the world on their way to or from Crater Lake.



Jenny and Walter Ridge are the airport's caretakers and have lived there for many years. Their humble home is in the photo above adjacent to the busy and congested tie down area. They moved to Prospect years ago from Southern California and each year host a fly in during July and even though he never received a pilot's license Walt can hangar fly with the best of us about all the tail draggers and different types of high wing and low wing, singles and twins that have shown up for his annual event over the many years he's lived there and looked after 64S.

A fly over Crater Lake is not to be missed while visiting the area and Medford airport (KMFR) which is actually Rogue Valley International offers pretty much every type of service anyone flying into the area might need. Grants Pass (3S8) has always very competitive fuel prices and a few FBOs as well. Both airports have instrument approaches and while Prospect State does have pilot controlled lighting and a beacon I would only recommend a visit during good VFR daylight conditions. While it is a mountain airport it's at only 2578' elevation so even on a hot summer day the density altitude isn't prohibitive (assuming adequate horsepower) and with a pitched 4000' X 50' runway the main factor really is the trees surrounding it and the rather quirky way all three windsocks on the field never seem to agree on the wind direction. Preferred arrival is Runway 2 (uphill) and departure downhill on 20.

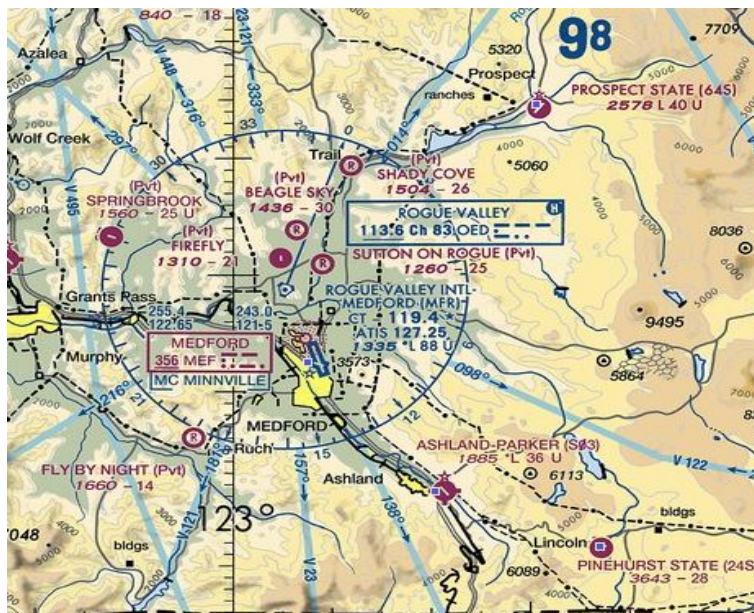
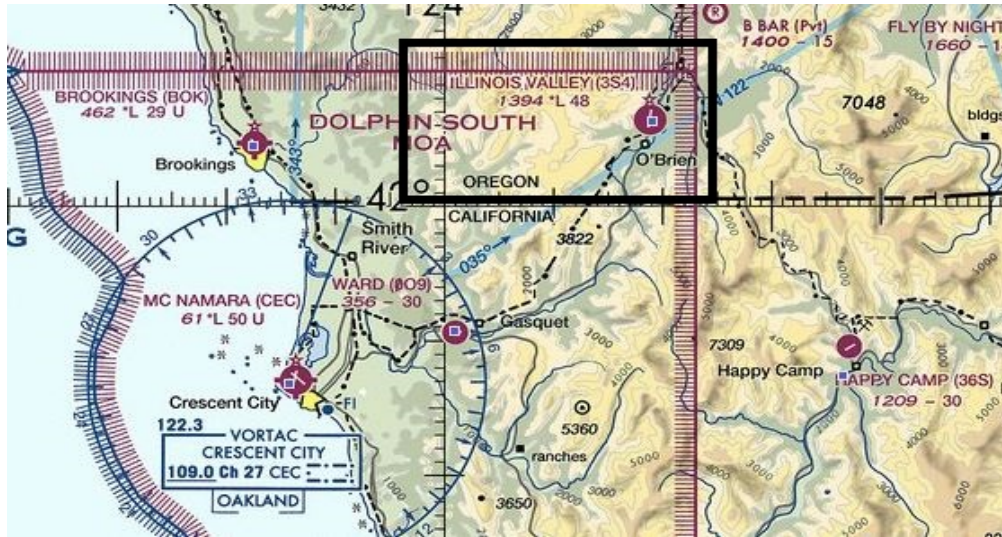




Another really great feature of Prospect State is the fantastic two waterfalls located beneath the downwind leg or just adjacent to the airport property. While from the air it looks like you could easily just make your way through the adjacent woods this is to be avoided. Ask Walter or in town how to get to these waterfalls. If you stay at the Inn they will certainly drive you to the lookout point.



Other interesting airports in the area include Ashland State (S03) where the famous Shakespeare Theatre lives on in the town of Ashland and the airport sometimes has competitive fuel prices. To the West and somewhat near to the coast and adjacent to some magnificent backcountry is Illinois Valley (3S4) near the town of Cave Junction.



This really only scratches the surface as anyone who has flown a bit into this area will tell you but if you have the time and the notion Prospect State is a great little mountain jewel in Southern Oregon. *A final suggestion/word of caution: if you do decide to visit this little airport a flight up to Angwin (203) with multiple landings and take offs is strongly recommended. Angwin closely resembles Prospect State in challenges (trees and narrow pitched runway) and you'd be sure to arrive at Prospect State sharp and ready. If you are uncomfortable doing this then it's best to use some of the other airports in Southern Oregon.*