

Master's Free Flight School

Risk Management Plan for the Mosquito Hill training site.

Overview

The Mosquito Hill training site is owned by Sandy County, California. Master's Free Flight School operates there by permit. There is no unauthorized vehicle access to the area and our school has one of the few passes for vehicular traffic to the area. All students meet at our school headquarters at 47 Elm Street and everyone (instructors and students) all ride to the training site in our large van. Students are never allowed to meet us at the site.

Master's Free Flight School has been teaching at the Mosquito Hill training site for 9 years and has experienced only one accident of any type. That was a sprained ankle that resulted in no claims against the school or any insurance carrier. The site has previously been covered by the local chapter's site insurance.

The usable part of the training hill is 80 ft high with a gradual slope increasing to 4:1 toward the top. It is in a non developed area that is frequented by hikers and mountain bikers. Both hikers and mountain bikers must stay on the designated path which is on the far side of the landing area (but is in the landing area). There has never been an incident or even a close call with a hiker or mountain biker. We have put signs on each end of the landing zone – before the hiker or mountain biker enters the area to make both aware of the flying activity and asking them to transit the landing zone without stopping. Likewise, no wing is allowed to launch while any hiker or mountain biker is transiting the landing zone. The sign asks the hiker or mountain biker who wishes to watch the flying, to please do so outside of the landing zone. We have found practically complete compliance with this request.

Student Preparation and requirements.

We have every student sign all applicable waivers before they can ever receive any type of instruction from us. We have a health questionnaire that is completed by each student before their first lesson. Each instructor is made aware of all health situations that could pertain to their taking lessons. Items like asthma, heart conditions etc are all dealt with appropriately and students are monitored during all activities for signs of problems.

Students are encouraged to bring water and wear breathable clothing as well as shoes that provide ankle support. We also bring out an igloo cooler full of drinking water and paper cups and urge students to drink water often.

A significant first aid kit is kept inside our van at all times and is quickly accessible. (see Emergency Action Plan).

Students are not allowed to hook into the wing without having a helmet on. This is standard procedure. Not even to move the wing .

Students must do a harness connection check before each and every flight. Wheels are required for all training flights. No "overflying" is permitted and

students are not allowed to fly over others in the air or on the ground. Students must clear the landing area before other students can fly.

Since the hill is only 80 ft. tall, the students do not wear emergency parachutes as the use of them would not be effective at the maximum heights achieved over the ground.

We utilize radios for instruction once the student gets to the point on the hill which we can no longer run beside them during the entire flight. Usually this occurs during the second day of their training program.

Acceptable Flying Conditions

Mosquito Hill faces NW, but the terrain in the area makes the predominant SW wind funnel in such a way that it blows up the hill approximately 300 days a year. Thermal activity is present in the afternoon, but because of the proximity to the coast (approximately 2 miles inland) the thermals are mild and we are able to work with students-who are not on their first day-while these thermals are present.

The normal wind speeds in the mornings are 5-8 mph and the afternoon winds will be approximately 10-12mph. Weak gusts of 15-16 mph may exist as a mild thermal passed through. If we see gusts higher than 16, we stop teaching for the day. We do not launch in winds higher than 12mph. Wind speeds are monitored by having streamers in multiple spots in the landing zone as well as on the hill. Instructors have wind meters in their pockets should the velocity of the wind begin to approach our operating limitations. A windsock is permanently installed at the highest point of the hill so that we can monitor what is happening in the atmospheric layer just above the teaching level.

The hill's shape is forgiving of approximately 30 degrees off of straight in – from the SW direction. Winds that are cross from the northerly direction are rare. Any wind from that direction is gusty when it gets over 10mph. We watch the north cross winds very closely and stop teaching if we see 8mph. Again, it is rare and only happens in the winter.

Obstacles

There are few natural obstacles at the site. There are a couple of Manzanita bushes on the north side of the hill. We do not teach in the vicinity of these Manzanita bushes. There is a low brush line on the far side of the landing zone and the only students who go high enough up the hill to be able to reach the brush line on a glide are students who have shown the ability to do mild S turns. Part of each flight plan from this point on the hill (80ft level) includes 2 mild turns, so as to be able to control the projection of the flight into the landing zone.

Vehicular Parking

There is only one vehicle allowed to be in the area and it is our 15 passenger van which we ferry the students and instructors out in. We have one parking spot which we designated for the van and it is on the north end of the landing zone. Because of how we teach and where we teach on the hill, the chance of a student flying to and hitting the van is practically zero.

Spectators

As mentioned above, the only spectators in the area are hikers and mountain bikers who are required to stay on the path which runs on the far side of the landing zone. We have purchased 3 'A frame' plastic signs which we put out on each training day. These signs warn that the hiker/biker is approaching a hg and pg area and that for safety reasons the students will not be allowed to launch while anyone is transiting the landing zone (between the signs). We ask that they watch from outside the landing zone and not stop while transiting the landing zone. We have practically 100% compliance. No student has come close to a spectator in the 9 years we have been teaching at the site.

Glider Control

Because of the mild and predictable conditions at this site, students are taught to turn their hang gliders 'quarter tail' to the wind when they will be leaving the gliders unattended. This is monitored constantly. The county will not allow glider tie downs.

Our glider set up and break down area is located at the base of the hill on the north end of the landing zone. No unattended gliders are permitted within 100 ft of the hiking path.

Site Illustrations



Above is a Google Earth rendering of the hill without any graphics on it.



Google Earth view from above. NW at the top.



