Woodstock Site Guide (WS)

If questions contact flight_director@chgpa.org

Last Updated: May 11, 2025

Minimum Rating: P2 / H2 (with HG observer) / H3
Site Direction: NW
Flyable Directions: Ideal: 280° - 330° Acceptable: 240° - 350°

Wind Speed

Wind Speeds	Min	Ideal	Max	Gust
Hang Glider	**5**	**15**	**30**	**10**
Paraglider	**5**	**7**	**18**	**5**

Glide Slope to main LZ: about 5.5:1
Vertical: 1100’
Type of Launch: Grassy steep slope in medium slot
Type of LZ: Grass field
Soarable: Ridge, thermal, and wave

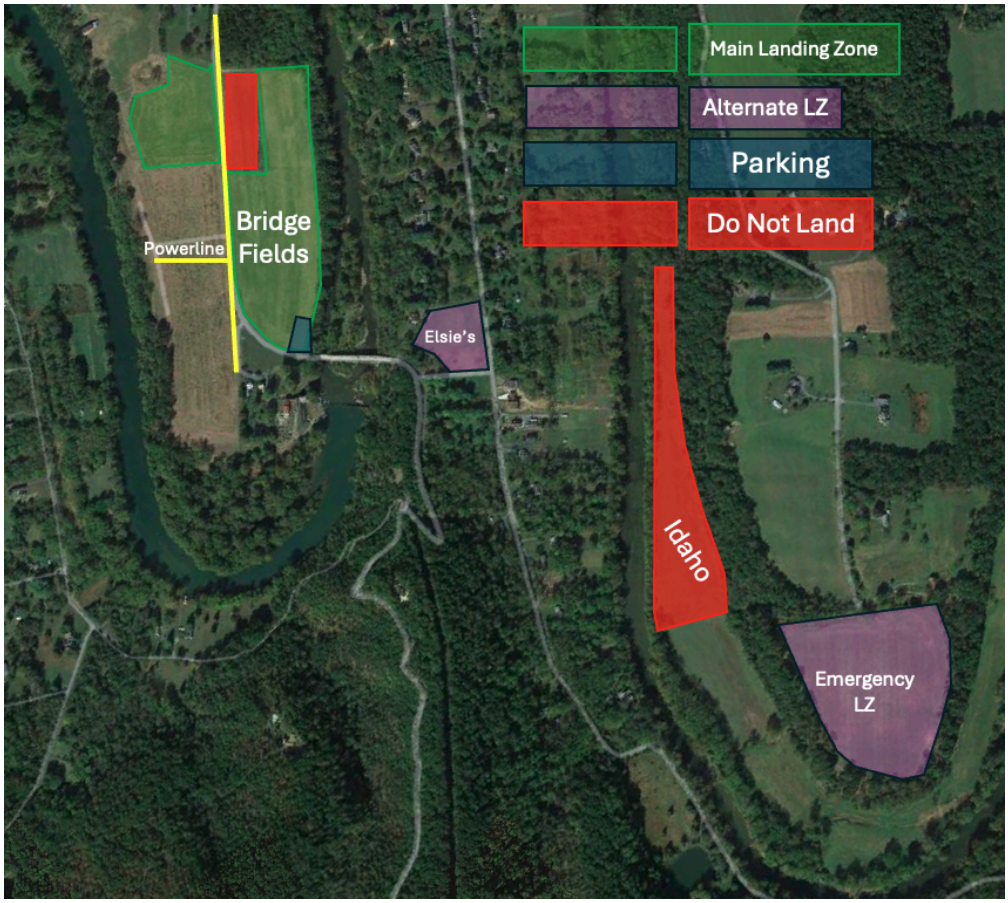
Location: At foot of Woodstock Tower, overlooking Woodstock, VA
Miles from: DC: 95 (2 hrs.)
Turnaround: Time: 20 Min drive
Launch Coordinates: 38.8706, -78.4500
LZ Coordinates: 38.8777, -78.4694
Parking: 20+ cars at Launch/ 10 cars near LZ
Owner Launch: USFS - George Washington & Jefferson National Forest, Lee Ranger District
Owner LZ:
Setup/Breakdown: 6-8 gliders /LZ unlimited
Road Conditions: gravel/asphalt

WARNING: The descriptions of typical flying conditions listed in this site guide reflect the experience of the authors of the guide. The conditions that you encounter at the site may differ, sometimes substantially, from those encountered by the authors. The descriptions of their experiences may not be relevant to the likely experience of any other pilot, particularly one who is relatively inexperienced or new to the site.
A decision to launch is always that of the individual pilot. When deciding whether or not to fly, a pilot may wish to take into account the descriptions in this site guide but must also consider numerous other factors including the pilot's training and experience, familiarity with the site, equipment, physical and mental condition and the specific weather conditions in existence at the time of the decision along with what the conditions may change to.

IMPORTANT!

- USHPA membership required.
- Seek a site introduction and walk the LZ to be sure you understand the preferred landing approach.
- Ball up your glider and move off the LZ as soon as possible. Particularly if there are Hang Gliders flying that day, but it is a good practice every time.

- There have been several short landings in the LZ due to misjudgement of distance to the LZ, thermic conditions, or improper landing approach. If you're below launch, go to the LZ following the spline. Many pilots get caught below launch and have been unable to reach the LZ due to sinking air.
  The Idaho field down below to the right at the inside is OFF LIMITS, we have been asked not to land in the field by the landowners.
  Therefore the flight plan must allows be to get to the official Bridge Field LZ or go XC and elsewhere.
  The Elsie's LZ and Emergency LZ are only for purposes of landing when the main Bridge Field LZ has become unreachable.
  - **Elsie's is only useable by paragliders**
  - **Emergency LZ may be used by hang gliders and paragliders. If landing here, pack up immediately and move off the property. Permission to land may be granted ahead of time by contacting the owners.**



- Be aware of turbulence from trees and boulders in front of launch, even when wind on launch is light. Several PG pilots have gotten wing collapses over the boulders over the last few years. Fly out of the slot before getting into your harness!

Emergency Help

- Woodstock Fire Department (540) 459-3242
- Shenandoah County Department of Fire and Rescue (540) 459-6167
- 911

Directions to Site

- Google (Maps); search for Woodstock Hang Gliding Site or Woodstock Tower
- From Washington DC: 95 miles, 2:00 hoursThe road up the mountain called Tower Road might be closed due to bad road conditions (ice, snow).
  Search for Rd. 758 on the following webpage to find out more
  https://www.511virginia.org/mobile/?menu_id=conditions

General Description

Woodstock underwent MAJOR renovation to complete revamp and expand launch thanks to Patrick Terry's multi-year long effort. The launch has been re-sloped and resurfaced with help from the CHGPA and USHPA's Foundation for Freeflight contributions to have a nice grass slope at top, and smoother launching surface. The whole slot has been widened and cleared as well allowing for safer launches. Construction totalled $40k! Half was paid for with membership dues and the other half was a grant from the Foundation for Free Flight. Please become a member to support projects like this. Launch is entirely surrounded by high trees.

The main landing zone (Bridge field) was recently purchased by a HG pilot and offers plenty of space for landing.

First Flight Preparation

Before the first flight, new or visiting pilots must get an in person site briefing and walk the LZ to identify various potential issues and obtain an explanation of the landing approach.

Acceptable Flying Conditions

Woodstock Launch faces NW and is flyable from WNW to NNW wind directions. Thermal activity can be present starting mid day. This site is acceptable for pilots with a P2 rating and have sufficient experience with thermic conditions.

The normal wind speeds for flyable days are between 4 to 15 mph. The site allows for both ridge soaring and thermalling and is known for good glass off conditions. Weak gusts of up to 14 mph may exist as mild thermals pass through. Flying is not recommended if gusts are higher than 10 mph differential.

Launch can be very turbulent on a West cross due to the spine to the left of launch.

Obstacles

The launch is surrounded by tall trees and is considered a typical East Coast slot launch.

The LZ is surrounded by tall trees on the North (right), and a power lines to the S and S East side. The site allows for an S-pattern landing path into the prevailing wind direction and when with enough altitude a standard airport approach landing is recommended. The site is within glide of launch, however pilots often misjudge the distance to the LZ with potential sink along the way. This has caused many pilots to land short in the past. If you're below launch you should be heading to the LZ.

Vehicular Parking

There is plenty of parking next to the trail access (Massanutten trail), as well as plenty of parking near the LZ.

Spectators

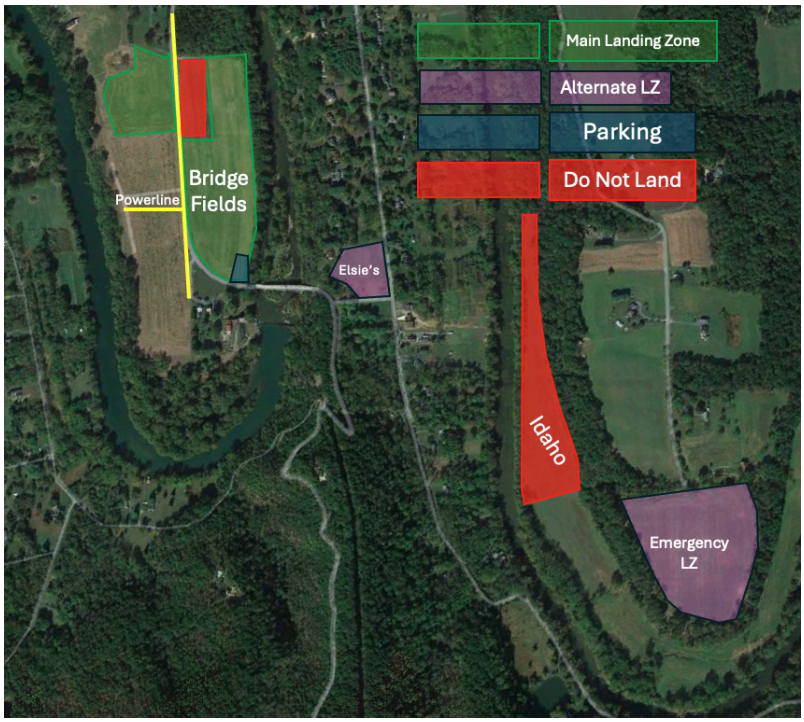
The site can have some spectators due to the Tower and the Launch location next to the Massanutten trail. Spectators are required to stay behind launch and do not create conflict.

Glider Control

Pilots are advised to have their wings either folded or balled up with their harness on top of it when not in use. Ample space to spread out several wings at the launch site.
At the LZ the pilots should take their wing to the side and pack it up.

Site Images

Overview of Woodstock Launch (bottom right) and glide line towards Main LZ/Bridge field (blue dots).





Recommended Landing Approach

Recommended landing approach into the LZ (in blue dotted line). From launch follow the spine before crossing the river. Do figure's 8 or S-ing is depending upon altitude. If enough altitude, proceed to the W side of the field (usually planted) to set up for a Standard airport approach landing.

There is no official bail out, so if you are not sure to make the official LZ, **DO NOT FLY.**

- The tall trees to the North (right) of the Bridge field have been known to create turbulence and wing collapses on PGs when flying over them.Do not land in the red zones on the map
- Visit LZ and be aware of where the powerlines are (along the road W-E line)

Elsie's front yard (small purple square in the middle) should only be used by experienced pilots that have heard and understand the proper approach.

The parking areas are off road on either side of the bridge.

Hiking Up info

There are 3 routes from the LZ to launch
Time is around 40-60min.

Following the road and trail and back the road
https://www.livetrack24.com/track/1793399

Following the road and trail
https://www.livetrack24.com/track/1793414

Following the road and trail and woods
https://www.livetrack24.com/track/1790423

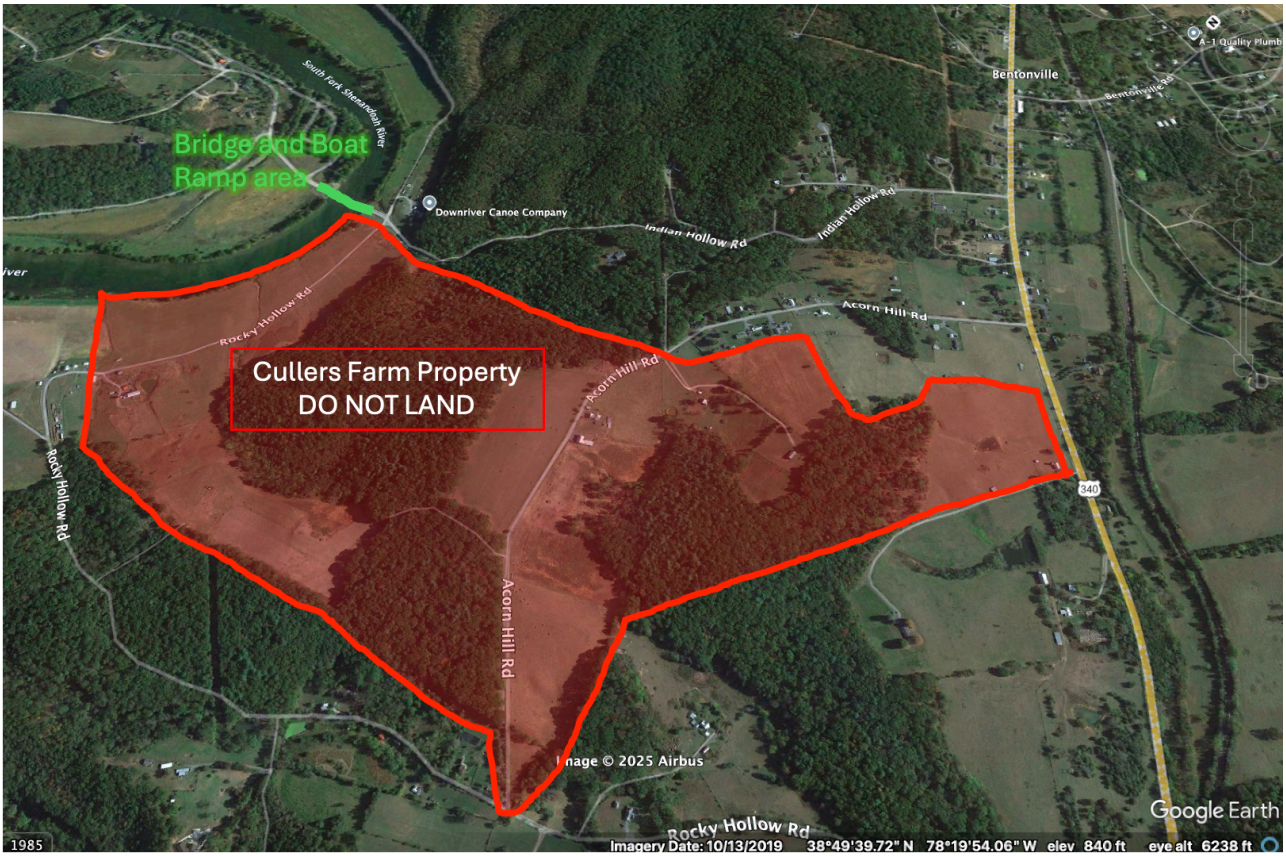
XC info

Next some info on how to safely cross Edinburg Gap going south on a soaring flight, not going very high.
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1PcmXOVzNw1vru40wEwb7eLCPisDy-BlO/view?usp=sharing

Prohibited XC Landing Areas

Do not land in the areas outlined below as Landowners have explicitly expressed gliders are not to land on their property. The Cullers' property looks very inviting to those running out of ridge lift north of Edith's Gap. Avoid their property by landing on the land parcels inside of the river.





Coming from Woodstock and trying to cross the SNP, do not land in this field (view on SNP at height Hogback) => Best to land West of 34



Video Links

Playlist WS
https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLjRquM9TSWxEzcCpYBgDb5IrVnb8M36B1

Incident History

2021/03/07
Event: Pilot landed in a strong sink and hit a tree while landing, no damage, no injuries.
Advise: Opt ahead of time for a landing option with enough margin and least obstacles

2021/03/07
Event: Pilot launched and got picked up by a cross gust. Glider ended up in the trees to the right looking down with the pilot on the ground. No injuries but the glider got damaged by the trees.
Advise: Bad luck , but launching when weak cycle blows through is advised

2021/12/12
Event: Pilot launched and got picked up by a cross gust. Glider ended up in the trees to the left with the pilot on the ground. No injuries nor glider damage.
Advise: Bad luck , but launching when weak cycle blows through is advised

2023/08/13
Event: P4 Pilot on a day with higher as usual wind (parked above the ridge with no speedbar on) landed short of official LZ next to river in front of Dam and glider ended up in the trees. Needed to be extracted, pilot not harmed.
Advise: Opt for bailout (old LZ)

Maintenance Info

Point of contact Forrest Service (contact via Felix Figuerao)

Grooming protocol
We have permission to trim and cut any trees that will improve safety of the launch site.

Cutting trees at bottom info see here
https://groups.google.com/g/chgpa/c/Yg5gm2-7fvQ
https://groups.google.com/g/chgpa/c/BanIlyBCSl0/m/dqvcNcnEBAA
J

Grooming Info

2021 05 Trimming the grass on launch by Joe Shad

2021 04 info via FB contacting FS

- We have permission to trim and cut any trees that will improve safety of the launch site.
- Some of this we could do ourselves, but I think we will have to hire someone for the bulk of it.
    - I'll be handling the paperwork necessary with the FS.
    - We need to mark the perimeter/trees that we want cut. - We can try to do this next time we head to WS. The more hands on deck, the easier and faster it should go.
    - We need to get some quotes - if anybody wants to help contacting contractors, please let me know, it will be a lot of help!
- No logging allowed - This means that trees can be cut, but not transported out. However, if a week later someone (with a proper permit/license? comes and takes the fell tree, that is ok.

WE LOST THIS FILE AND CONTINUED WITH AN OLD BACKUP, HENCE A GAP

2023/3/26

P4 pilot does not pay enough attention and lands in trees below launch. Only glider damage, USPHA preliminary incident report filed