

Windy Hill Site Procedures

Wings of Rogallo

June 12th, 2022

Introduction

The Wings of Rogallo (or “WOR”) is designated by the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (MROSD) through a special use agreement to administer paragliding and hang gliding activities within Windy Hill Open Space Preserve (herein referred to as “Windy Hill”). The purpose of these procedures is to describe the site characteristics to pilots, and to inform pilots of their responsibilities while flying at Windy Hill.

Site Overview

Windy Hill is a Northeast-facing paragliding and hang gliding site that is suitable for advanced rated pilots only. It is primarily flown in the fall, winter, and early Spring, when Northeast winds are most common. The launch area is accessible by a short hiking trail only, and there are parking areas at the bottom of the hill adjacent to the LZ, as well as along Skyline Blvd near the launch area.

[Interactive Google Map](#)

There is no water available in the park.

Launch

The launch area at Windy Hill is at the summit of the mountain. There is room beside and behind the bushes at the top to set up and stage hang gliders and paragliders.

The launch area is only accessible on foot by hiking up the Anniversary Trail from the upper parking lot, or by hiking up the Betsy Crowder Trail, Spring Ridge Trail, and Anniversary Trails from the lower parking lot.

There are 2 chain gates in the launch area to prevent hikers from using a bootleg trail and causing erosion. Pilots are allowed to temporarily take down the gates (clipped on with a carabiner) while launching. After the last pilot has launched, the gate must be put back up. Pilots must return to launch after flying to replace the gate, or may ask bystanders to replace the gate after the last pilot has launched.

Recommended wind limits and glide ratio to landing zone

Launch	Wing Type	Min	Ideal	Max	Glide ratio to LZ
Launch	HG	0 mph	10 mph	30 mph	5.32*
	PG	0 mph	8 mph	20 mph	

*There is a shallow section near the top. A minimum glide ratio of 6:1 is required to clear the tree line.

Landing zone

The LZ is surrounded by high trees on 3 sides. There is a fence and a winery on the North side of the LZ (the one side of the LZ that is not lined by high trees). All pilots should carefully set up their approaches with a downwind-base-final approach, and be prepared to overshoot their desired landing spot if the LZ is thermic. The prevailing wind in the LZ is usually from the North.

Windy Hill is open to equestrians, and there are horse stables North of the LZ. Be mindful of this, when flying low, or coming in to land.

Top landing

Top landing is permitted if the summit area is clear of people and obstacles, though it is not recommended due to the confined space.

Airspace

There is a 4000ft ceiling above Windy Hill from SFO's Class B airspace. The airspace limit rises to 6000ft immediately south of Windy Hill Open Space Preserve.

Windy Hill is in close proximity to 3 small airports (Palo Alto, San Carlos, and Half Moon Bay), several hospitals with helipads, and it is also very close to the Woodside VOR. There is a significant amount of general aviation traffic in the area. Although there is a glider symbol on the map, GA pilots are unlikely to know that gliders are in the air.

Here is a VFR map of the Windy Hill area:



Flying Requirements

Insurance and memberships

All pilots flying at Windy Hill under WOR's Special Use Agreement must be members of WOR (either full membership or visiting pilot membership) and must also be members of USHPA, in order to have appropriate 3rd party liability insurance.

MROSD Permit

Pilots must also possess a special use permit from the MROSD before flying at Windy Hill. A Windy Hill Site Committee member can obtain permits on members' behalf.

Visiting pilots

Visiting pilots should sign up for a free visiting pilot WOR membership, which allows flying at Windy Hill for a limited number of days per calendar year. Additional details are provided in the club's bylaws and on the club's website. Foreign pilots must also obtain a 30-day temporary USHPA membership, which can be issued by any USHPA instructor or tandem pilot. Foreign pilots must follow the pilot proficiency requirements for the USHPA rating level that is equivalent to that of their foreign license.

Visiting pilots must also possess a MROSD permit, and should follow the same procedures for obtaining one as full members.

Signing in

Every pilot flying at Windy Hill must sign in before flying. An electronic sign-in page is available on the club's website. As of this writing, the URL is <https://wingsofrogallo.org/windy-hill-sign-in/>

In case the page is not accessible, email web@wingsofrogallo.org.

Tandem flights

Tandem flights are strongly discouraged at Windy Hill due to the long glide to the LZ, frequent challenging flying conditions, and limited size of the LZ. Tandem flights are only permitted with the explicit permission of the Windy Hill Site Chairperson.

Park hours

Windy Hill Open Space Preserve hours are from sunrise to one half-hour after sunset. The lower parking lot is gated, and locks when the preserve closes.

Flying day limitations

Flying is prohibited on Independence Day, Memorial Day, and Labor Day.

Capacity limitations

There can be no more than 10 gliders present in the preserve at any time, and no more than 5 at launch (HG + PG).

Flying area restrictions

Pilots should not fly low over or adjacent to Skyline Blvd., in order to minimize distractions to drivers.

If possible, pilots should not fly low over the Sequoias seniors' residence (immediately South of the LZ), or Portola Road, in order to minimize distractions to drivers.

Safety

Pilots must

- Wear a helmet when flying.
- Fly with a reserve parachute.
- Adhere to all Federal Air Regulations (FARs).
- Land in the designated landing zone when landing within the park boundaries, unless it is unsafe to do so.
- Get a site introduction from an experienced local pilot prior to flying the site for the first time.
- Comply with all terms and conditions indicated in these site procedures, as well as with any additional terms and conditions formally communicated by MROSD staff, WOR officers, or the Windy Hill Site Chairperson.

Pilots must not

- Smoke anywhere in the park.
- Use or be under the influence of drugs or alcohol anywhere in the park.
- Perform acrobatic maneuvers (for example: infinite tumble, SAT, helicopter, loops, barrel rolls) at an altitude which does not allow for a safe reserve deployment.

Pilots may

- Temporarily erect streamers in the LZ temporarily, and remove them at the end of the day.

Pilots should

- Fly with a radio and phone.

Radio Comms

The common radio frequency is **147.405 Mhz** and should be used for safety and logistics with respect to other pilots and non-pilots as this is a simplex frequency that is available to all ham radio users.

Use the common radio frequency to alert other pilots of any related to a possible accident or imminent EMS situation.

Vehicle Operations

When driving up to launch, Route 84 must be taken, rather than Old La Honda Road, in order to minimize residential traffic. Old La Honda Road is a one-lane road for part of the way, and often has heavy bike traffic, particularly on weekends.

Data sharing with the MROSD

When a member of the Windy Hill site committee applies for a permit for you, the following data will be shared with the MROSD

- Your name
- Your USHPA number

Emergency Procedures

Communications

- In case of an emergency, for fire, ambulance, police, or ranger dispatch, call **911**

If an accident occurs

- If first aid is required, and you are sufficiently trained in administering first aid, please do so.
- Any serious injuries and accidents shall be reported as soon as possible to the Windy Hill Site Committee Chairperson who will notify the MROSD as soon as possible.

Pilot Proficiency Requirements

PG requirement	HG requirement
P4	H4. RLF skill recommended

Pilot Identification

Pilots must carry a copy of their WOR membership card (either electronic or a physical copy) which shows their current USHPA rating, as well as a copy of their MROSD permit. Pilots must be able to provide evidence of valid USHPA and WOR membership and their MROSD permit when requested by any WOR officer, Windy Hill Site Committee member, or MROSD staff member.

Instruction

Instruction is prohibited at Windy Hill Open Space Preserve

Violations

Windy Hill Site Committee members and WOR club officers may issue warnings or suspensions to pilots who violate any site procedures or jeopardize the flying site. All disciplinary action that is taken by Site Committee members must be reported to the Windy Hill Site Chairperson as soon as possible. The Windy Hill Site Chairperson must then report the disciplinary action to the Executive Board as soon as possible. Additional disciplinary action, or a dismissal of the original disciplinary action, may be taken by the Executive Board upon further review of the incident.

MROSD rangers have the authority to issue warnings and citations to pilots and spectators who violate laws and ordinances including but not limited to parking, speeding, disorderly conduct, flying without a permit, and flying past park closing times.

Any pilot who witnesses a violation of any of these site procedures should report the incident to a Windy Hill Site Committee member as soon as possible. Serious violations of park ordinances, bylaws, or laws, should also be reported to a park ranger.

Site Committee

The Windy Hill Site Committee is in charge of ensuring safe flight operations at Windy Hill. A list of current Site Committee members and contact information is posted on the [club's website](#).