

Murrow Field on the Divide Fly-in Briefing

This document is valid for one year after receipt. Afterward request an updated version, or if you receive notice that a new one is available.

I look forward to your visit to Murrow Field on the Divide! Please read all pages of this briefing carefully, follow all instructions, and consider carefully all recommendations and cautions.

This briefing is meant primarily for group fly-ins, but may be used for landings at other times, while understanding that additional or different information may be needed and prior permission is required.

To have permission to land at and to attend any scheduled Fly-In you may be required to fill out a short online registration form we need for planning purposes. You will also be asked to agree with a confirmation statement when you complete the form. Contact me at rol@murrow.info if you need the link to the fly-in registration form. For individual visits no registration is required, just your written agreement that you accept and agree with all portions of this briefing and receive final permission for and prior to each day of landing.

See official sources for authoritative flight information – here are some recommended guidelines:

Essential Flight information: Murrow Field on the Divide NM99 **Use of radio required if able – 122.9 Elevation 7550' MSL** dirt/turf runway 4,000' long oriented 06/24. **~1.25% + slope up to West.**

Plan rwy 24 t/o performance for density altitude, soft field, uphill slope, and 79 foot trees at W end.

Runway is usually, but not always, considered one way – land 24, take off 06. Turn circles at both ends.

Normal pattern, calm or light winds: LEFT turns for runway 24 over 5' fence landing uphill. Take off 06 downhill. **IF strong winds from East – RIGHT** pattern for Runway 6, over trees and downhill.

Normally use short field landings so plane is stopped before midfield tiedown area (less than 2,000').

Midfield is where people congregate and all the planes will be parked near the airstrip. **GO SLOW!**

AVOID the very noise sensitive area one mile southwest – ranch with big white dome.

DO use noise abatement procedures on arrivals and takeoffs. Avoid disturbing wildlife, ranch animals, and people. Watch carefully and do not land if people or animals (deer, elk) are on or near the runway.

All edges of the runway have berms except for the two tiedown area entrances midfield. Tailwheel aircraft in particular must not ground loop because of the likelihood of running into or over a berm.

Use your radio – listen and watch for recommended procedures and signals for operations and parking.

Watch for directions from ground personnel. Do NOT attempt to taxi over any berms. We have a large parking area centerfield. Park close to an aircraft already parked. Avoid blasting folks with dust. We can help you turn and move your plane. First to park in north tiedown area please park in back left corner of area.

DO review official airport info at <http://www.airnav.com/airport/NM99> or other sources.

DO **print out the map** on the last page of this briefing and have it with you in your plane.

DO review the more detailed information and the instructions that follow in this Briefing. Some it is repetitious but it is all important! We recommend that you print and carry at least this first page too.

Driving info: Google maps to Murrow Ranch, 2060 State Highway 595, Lindrith, NM, past mile marker 20.

Turn E onto Forest Road 313 at the mailbox marked 2060 and proceed 1/2 mi to the first road on the right, which leads over to the airstrip. Do not drive on the strip – park at right prior to it. Phone: 505-362-8232



Murrow Ranch is located about 90 air miles North of Albuquerque and ten miles North Northeast of the Lindrith Airport, E32 on the charts, and to the East side of the paved highway running between them.

Use **NM99** on your GPS or search Google Maps for “Murrow Ranch, NM” or “Murrow Field on the Divide,” or use the coordinates
in **degrees/minutes/seconds** **36-25-37.67 N / 107-00-02.97 W**
or in **decimal degrees** **36.4271306 / -107.008903 .**

The ranch is a full section in area - one mile square, 640 acres, and the East fence adjoins the Santa Fe National Forest and on neighbor ranch. The Forest is usually open for trail biking, hiking, and all the other usual outdoor activities. It is occasionally (rarely) closed for recreational purposes because of fire danger, so you may wish to check with the Forest before entering it (especially in dry weather or if you see smoke!).

You must call or otherwise check with Rol Murrow prior to each occasion you wish to land because of the changing conditions on the airstrip. You must obtain permission but there is no charge for landing or for enjoying the ranch recreationally. If practicable you might wish to bring along light camp chairs and other supplies. But do obtain permission before arriving. We usually have plenty of chairs during fly-ins.

The ranch has a central grassy meadow surrounded by Pinion, Ponderosa, and Juniper (Western Red Cedar) trees, with rimrock cliffs and peaks, mostly forested, North and South of the field. Many areas have remarkable rock formations and views, especially out to the South to the Jemez Mountains and San Pedro Peak. There are ruins of several Native American dwellings and lookout towers, from the time of the residency of the Gallina People, circa 900-1300 AD. Look them up on the internet! There is also an excellent display and diorama at the Ghost Ranch museum near Abiquiu that you should study the next time you are in that area.



Do see all the photos and the airstrip map at the end of this document.

Other local Attractions: Forest Road 313 runs across the ranch parallel to the airstrip. There are other good biking and running roads in the Forest adjacent to the ranch, to the east. Forest Road 313 continues ten miles on down a scenic canyon to a side road and trail to the Nogales Cliff House ruins. If you have a mountain bike consider a visit to this site. Google “Nogales Cliff House” for information. Ask me for a map.

Normally hiking is permitted and encouraged, and we can provide information about that. There are nice hikes on the ranch itself. We do have fresh delicious well water but please be self-contained otherwise - this area is very rustic and except for fly-ins we usually have no facilities or rest rooms near the tiedown area so you may need a shovel. However on fly-in days we will arrange for a Port-a-Potty. Bring water bottles and the usual things like good hats, warm layers of clothing, sunscreen, insect repellent, rain poncho, etc. Avoid camping or walking very near any prairie dog mounds to avoid flea bites. Consider spraying your shoes with repellent if you walk near their mounds. Bring a picnic if you like, and food and supplies for camping. Next to our water well on the other side of the meadow we have electrical outlets for charging phones, etc. On fly-in days we will have tables and chairs and BBQ grills, plus water coolers, a bucket or cooler full of ice, and a couple of half-barrel fire rings.

NOTE: sometimes the neighboring Gavilan Ranch has some nice rooms available but sometime the ranch is being used for a group meeting when rooms are not available for our group. Ask if you might be interested.

Please secure all food and garbage when not cooking or eating, and at night. On extremely rare occasions we have seen a bear on the ranch and there are also all the usual little critters that like to get into food stashes. Let us know if you need anything put under cover. Don't leave food in a tent at night.

If interested ask if trail rides might be available from nearby ranches. This is horse country.

SATURDAY FLY-IN BREAKFAST: We will provide coffee, tea, water, ice, condiments, Danish, cereal, and a big bag of breakfast burritos for the Saturday morning breakfast. The burritos will arrive about 8:45 AM. You can indicate on the online registration survey your preferences regarding the type of burritos desired. And indicate any other needs or preferences in the notes section of the form. As mentioned above we will have chairs, as well as tables for food prep.

WX: FYI in May and June we generally have very pleasant weather here on the Continental Divide. At dawn the winds are usually calm, temperature about 40 - 50 degrees F. During the later mornings the temps are often in the 70's and in the afternoons they often climb into the 80's, only very occasionally hitting 90 in the late afternoon in late June, unless afternoon clouds cool things down.

Do be aware the westerly winds often pick up in the afternoons and that is also when it gets hot unless we have clouds (which are usual). If you have concerns about aircraft takeoff performance it is best to wait until the winds die down near sunset before departing, and it is wise to bring a sleeping bag in case an overnight stay becomes advisable so you can depart in the cool morning when winds are usually calm or light.

Very often we have "almost" monsoon like afternoons with higher clouds which can cool things off. Be prepared to tie down your plane if afternoon storms develop, which is also possible outside of monsoon season, as happened this year, 2023. However monsoon season usually begins in early July and runs into September, which means that afternoon thundershowers are common, and that means the strip may get muddy, although it quickly dries out.

Be sure to check weather carefully the day of your flight and you may call if you have any questions. For fly-ins we will work to provide weather updates by email to registered participants.

Permission to land is not granted unless the following items are completed:

You have permission to land on my property, Murrow Ranch, 2060 State Highway 595, Lindrith, New Mexico 87029, if you:

- 1) Carefully study all published and available information concerning your flight, the briefing materials in this document, and any accompanying email messages, obtain permission for each visit, and you complete, sign, and return any requested documents such as an online planning registration form for an event, acknowledgment and acceptance of the conditions in a briefing document, liability waivers, etc.
- 2) Carefully plan your flight, taking into account the weather and the condition and performance of your aircraft and its suitability for landing on or taking off from the ranch. The strip is not paved so aircraft should have sturdy landing gear.
- 3) Inform your passengers (and their parents or guardians if applicable) of these documents and obtain their acceptance of the terms, and
- 4) Agree to the conditions of this and any other required documents and forward an email with a copy of an acknowledgment statement back to me from your own email account. The statement will be included in our event registration form, or just place such a statement in any email back to me.

REVIEW THE SHORT SUMMARY OF PRIMARY AIRFIELD CONSIDERATIONS AT THE BEGINNING OF THIS BRIEFING AND THE MORE DETAILED INFORMATION BELOW:

- 1) Radio Frequency is 122.9. You must use your radio to announce your locations and pending arrival as well as positions in the pattern if your plane is equipped with a radio or if you have a handheld radio available. And please do bring a handheld radio if at all possible. We ask that you use it to monitor all operations and to be prepared to advise other pilots of conditions which may affect their operations.

WATCH CAREFULLY for aircraft without radios. Always be ready for a go around. Animals, people, or vehicles may be on or near the airstrip and your plane engine will likely not be heard coming in because of the noise from other planes, etc. **Going around if there is any question is the mark of a good pilot.**

2) Use noise abatement procedures applicable for your aircraft. Avoid flying near or over ranch houses and buildings and areas marked noise sensitive on the diagram below. Usually constant speed aircraft should keep prop speed in the low to normal green range until on short final or as practicable, and after departure change to low to normal climb prop speed as soon as practicable.

Tip: I always use 2400 rpm as my cruising noise abatement target when flying a particular Cessna 210 but you should follow the best practices as provided in your own aircraft's owner's manual and operating procedures.

3) Low speed low noise flyovers are permitted if needed or advisable to inspect the airstrip for condition and animals, but **no very high speed passes, maximum performance steep takeoffs, or other hot-dogging flying ops are permitted or appreciated.** Again, watch for people or vehicles that may be on the airstrip too! Do not do a low pass below 150' AGL because of several power poles and lines on the north side of the runway which are difficult to see, as well as the nearby trees and higher terrain.

MORE CAUTIONS and RECOMMENDATIONS:

1) The field has lots of higher terrain, especially North, West, and South. Study the terrain carefully. Approach from the South.

In addition there is a 400' high cell tower on the ridge northwest, as well as another unlit communications tower on a peak to the northeast.

2) Consider, reconsider, and consider again density altitude!

3) Taxi with care. Your plane - especially if it is a nosewheel plane and has a constant speed prop, will pick up far less sand and such if you taxi at an appropriate low RPM and manifold pressure, using throttle instead. This will save your prop and folks' ears too. Tip: In a Cessna 210 I reduce RPM to hold it at 1500 - 1700 rpm at low idling manifold pressure for easy taxiing, or at the bottom of green rpm for use with more power. I suggest you do this unless your aircraft manual precludes it. However, only use partial throttle when at the lower RPM. Do not lug the engine. If you need more power to move over soft or rough ground I set the RPM at the bottom of the green arc with throttle as needed and that is usually ok. If you get stuck anywhere we will come and help you. No need to ruin a prop! But - follow the requirements for your plane and engine.

4) Please brief your passengers to watch for planes at all times and to stay off the operating areas. Children should be fully supervised at all times. Airplanes can be essentially silent during a landing glide. And there is no guarantee they will always be landing on just one end of the runway. LOOK BOTH WAYS. Non pilots should always be accompanied by a pilot if they wish to cross the airstrip.

5) The landing area is a restricted use rural or backcountry type airfield so treat it as such.

6) The WINDSOCK is located on the north side midfield, and is orange, or orange and white striped.

7) The usual small tiedown area is on the south side midfield. We will gather on the nearby hill.

A larger aircraft parking area is located on the North side across from the other one, but there is only one lowered entrance to it cut through the berm. Do not try to taxi across the adjacent berm or you will likely have a prop strike. Taxi only through the taxiway opening in the berm, then continue to taxi to an open spot next in the line of aircraft, close to a prior aircraft. Start the line of parked aircraft at the far left (Northwest) corner of this area and swing your plane around to the left so it points South. The large tiedown area is pretty rough so taxi carefully. You may prefer - or we may ask you - to shut down and have your plane moved by hand. We will help. Especially watch out for prairie dog holes

If you land using short field procedures in or near the East end you should likely be able to taxi forward to the tiedown areas without overshooting through the group and then having to turn and back taxi to park.

8) VERY IMPORTANT: COMPLETE YOUR LANDING ROLLOUT PRIOR TO THE TIEDOWN AREAS! Previously we have had a couple of ground loop incidents where the aircraft went off to the side of the airstrip. If this should happen at the tiedown areas the plane could go off and hit parked planes or people near them.

To prevent this please complete your landing rollout PRIOR TO the tiedown areas. You have almost 2,000 feet in which to land prior to the tiedown areas, so use short field procedures and reduce your taxi speed so you taxi up to the tiedown area at a low speed. Pilots of tailwheel aircraft must be prepared to use differential braking if they run out of rudder or tailwheel steering authority. Note 5' fence at east end, hill and trees west.

9) Elevation at the West end of the landing area is about 7,550' MSL BUT there is a hill with trees beyond. To avoid them on departure one must climb steeply or – much better - make a gentle turn a bit to the South over the much lower terrain just to the left of the trees. See photo looking southwest below. That will take you over the highway which descends southwest down a canyon. Don't try to turn left before crossing the notch.

10) East end elevation is 7,500' MSL. The uphill slope to the West is significant - more than 1%. In addition consider the field to be a soft field. Take the density altitude, uphill slope, obstacles, and soft field conditions into account if you must depart to the West. Consult your aircraft manual.

11) HILLS AND OBSTRUCTIONS ARE AT OR NEAR **BOTH** ENDS, ESPECIALLY WEST END OF RUNWAY. POSSIBLE OCCASIONAL TEMPORARY OIL WELL SERVICE DERRICK MAY BE NEAR EAST END. AFTER DEPARTURE FROM EITHER END PLAN TO MAKE A SHALLOW TURN TOWARDS LOWEST TERRAIN AND ON THE PATTERN SIDE (SOUTH). **See the diagram on the last page below and print it for your trip.**

12) In the event of strong winds from the West the rising canyon below and beyond that end of the runway can cause turbulence and wind shear at and beyond the runway end at low altitude. This is common in the afternoons. In this case maintain good airspeed after clearing any obstacles, or wait until the winds calm down if you don't have sufficient performance. Usually the winds die down at the end of the day, and are calm or light in the mornings.

13) Again, the field is soft in places so calculate performance for this and use soft field procedures.

14) The field has been graded and dragged again in 2018 but still should be considered at least somewhat bumpy because some of the remaining grass is bunch grass. Brush on the berm has been cut off recently.

15) Deer, elk, and other animals are abundant and often graze on or near the runway. They are also often found at the edges of the adjoining forested areas, especially in the mornings and evenings. Watch carefully for animals and be prepared to go around on landing or abort a takeoff as you deem best should any potential conflicting situation arise. On radio request we may be able to report any that we see, but that is no guarantee one might not run in from a distance. Again, using short field procedures will minimize your landing speed and shorten your rollout to minimize problems with animals.

16) Prairie dogs have dug burrows in the vicinity of the airstrip, especially near the East end, although they can appear anywhere. Usually any unfilled holes are on the berm or at the edges of the landing area. Also in both tiedown areas. Land as slowly as practicable and use short field landing procedure if practicable. Taxi slowly and watch for and avoid their holes if you see any. We try to keep holes on the airstrip filled when we expect arrivals and if we are on hand. But the little devils can rapidly redig holes. We cannot be held responsible for the careless attitude of these rodents! 2018-9 update: the prairie dog population declined significantly that year so there are far fewer of them since then.

17) Some tall trees are located along the South side of the landing area about midfield. There are several 30 foot power poles north of the strip, near midfield. If you do a fly by to check out the strip maintain at least 150' above ground level to stay well above the poles. They and their wires are hard to see.

18) ALL LANDING AND OPERATING AREA AIRSTRIP EDGES HAVE BERMS - do not attempt to taxi across them. Taxi to the midfield tiedown areas. If there is not room to taxi to a spot to park then shut down and we will move you off the landing area. As mentioned, there is a break in each berm at the midfield tiedown areas.

19) Do not land until the landing area is completely clear of planes, vehicles, animals, and people. USE YOUR RADIO, 122.9.

20) Follow all backcountry flying practices and procedures, including safety and backcountry courtesy recommendations. Review the RAF Backcountry Pilot CODE OF CONDUCT at this link – it also includes a PDF that can be printed and downloaded: <https://theraf.org/content/raf-code-conduct>

21) Please do not blast folks with prop blast! Stop and turn the plane by hand. Our volunteers will help.

22) **Liability Waiver:** Understand that per the New Mexico Recreational Use Statute the landowner and landowner's assigns, agents, and others acting on behalf of the landowner including the New Mexico Pilots Association and its personnel, agents, and others acting on its behalf cannot be held liable for any consequences of your and your guests' use of the ranch or its facilities for recreational purposes, including for the operation of aircraft.

This is wild country with all the attendant hazards from rough terrain, trees and foliage, cliffs, animal burrows, animals, reptiles, and other creatures, plus those hazards associated with the operation of a ranch and the use of aircraft, vehicles, camping equipment, or other equipment, machinery, or ranch animals. All visitors are responsible for their own safety and that of their guests. By accepting this document and/or using the ranch or attending any event there consider this document and your and your guests' use of the ranch for recreational and any other purposes as your and your guests' waiver of any and all liability, and that you and they acknowledge this, which also protects others who promote or are helping out with the fly-ins.

Thank you for your attention to these details, and your participation in the fly-in!

PS – If anything is unclear or any useful information is missing please let me know so I can improve this briefing: rol@murrow.info .

Questions? Call Rol Murrow at 505-362-8232 or send an email.

Carefully study the photos and diagrams below and on the next several pages. Print out the last page and take it with you. I suggest you print the entire document.

[Continued on next page]



Murrow Ranch looking north. Airstrip is next to the trees on the near side of the field, parallel to the road seen on the far side.
See the corresponding map and diagram on the last page.



West 1000' end of runway 24, touching the Continental Divide. Soft field and uphill > 1.5 % !

Note: a shallow turn to the left will avoid the 79 foot high hill and trees on the centerline and take your plane over the highway, which descends down a canyon to the southwest at the notch in the tree line. Do not try to turn left prior to the notch and treeline – the terrain rises to the south left of the trees.

PS – FYI Water on the other side of the trees flows into the Pacific Ocean!

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Print out the last page and carry it with you.



**Looking Northeast over entire runway 6, Cessna in tiedown area. After liftoff turn right some time after trees midfield to follow the meadows and avoid terrain.
Water falling on this side of the Divide flows into the Atlantic Ocean!**



Some of the visitors enjoying the 2016 Fly-in

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Life is about Balance!

PRINT NEXT PAGE TO USE DURING YOUR TRIP :

