

# Buffalo Mountain Flyers, Inc.



903 NE Bob White Rd  
Lawton, OK 73507

Tel: 580-354-0390

U.S. Forest Service  
P.O. Box 577  
Talihina, OK 74571

November 13, 2004

Dear Ms. Russell,

The Buffalo Mountain Flyers, Inc., in cooperation with the Forest Service, currently maintain and operate a Hang Gliding Site within the Ouachita National Forest near the Panorama Overlook on Talimena Drive.

When first established almost 20 years ago, the Landing Site for this site was an oval clearing maintained within a large clear cut. Over the years our Landing Site served us well, however, with each passing year, the growth of the pines on its perimeter has gradually caused our landings to become problematic due to constriction. Our average glide path on final approach is about 10 feet forward for each foot of decent. A 20 foot pine tree with an additional, minimum, 20 foot safety margin tightens the potential landing area by 400 horizontal feet. The end result is less and less flying activity as the surrounding trees have grown taller. Only pilots with the most advanced landing skills feel confident flying this Site.

Therefore, in an effort to achieve the goal of eliminating the potential hazards posed by our restricted Landing Site, Buffalo Mountain Flyers, Inc. proposes the following:

1. The Forest Service sell the timber surrounding the current Landing Site. Clearing approximately 100 yards on the SW end of the oval (see diagram) will increase our effective "runway" length, and widening it approximately 50 yards deep on the NW and SE sides will widen the Landing Site allowing more options for crosswind conditions.
2. Buffalo Mountain Flyers, Inc. will clean and maintain most of the resulting clear cut area for the Landing Site. The current Landing Site is approximately 6.2 acres. The resulting maintained area would be closer to 10 acres. This should be within our allowable area of 10.8 acres as provided for in our Special Use Permit.
3. If, for some reason, the timber cannot be sold, Buffalo Mountain Flyers, Inc., would request permission to expand the Landing Site within mutually agreed boundaries.

The improvements requested above will, most importantly, greatly improve the safety of this Hang Gliding Site. Having a larger number of qualified hang glider pilots safely enjoying the beauty of the Ouachita National Forest from the unique vantage point of a Hang Glider, and larger numbers of visitors having a better chance of witnessing the beautiful sport of Hang Gliding benefits us all.

The officers and members of Buffalo Mountain Flyers, Inc., wish to thank you for your consideration of this matter and hope for continued, friendly cooperation with the US Forest Service.

Sincerely,

Thomas R. Graham  
President  
Buffalo Mountain Flyers, Inc.

