

## **SOPs for Morgan County Airport – 42U**

Morgan County Airport is located in the unincorporated township of Mountain Green Utah. It is approximately eight miles west of the town of Morgan, Utah. It is a public airport, owned and operated by Morgan County. The airport is situated on a 3% slope and the airport elevation is charted at 5020MSL. The airport location is N41.1488 W111.7666. Airport information can be found at the FAA digital – Airport/Facilities Directory website: [http://aeronav.faa.gov/index.asp?xml=aeronav/applications/d\\_afd](http://aeronav.faa.gov/index.asp?xml=aeronav/applications/d_afd)

### **Facilities:**

There are limited public facilities at the airport. Water, electricity and restrooms are only available from individuals who own hangers on the airport, so access may be unreliable. The convenience store at the corner of Old Highway Road and Trappers Loop Road, one and a half miles west of the airport, is the closest option for food and reliable public restrooms. Eight miles to the east, full services are available in the town of Morgan, Utah.

### **Communications:**

The Unicom frequency of 122.8 is used for all traffic and position reports while soaring in the area. While soaring at altitude you will receive radio calls from the Logan, UT airport. Gliders in the Logan area use the same frequency as Morgan County, and the names sound similar on the radio. A suggestion is to use the phrase “Morgan County Airport” for all position reports.

Many local operators do not use a radio while flying. Make position reports as necessary and watch carefully for no-radio traffic. There is also considerable traffic passing through the valley enroute to north or south destinations, including the occasional F-16 from Hill AFB.

### **Runways, taxiways and windsocks:**

Morgan County airport has one runway, oriented at the mouth of Cottonwood Canyon. Runway 03/21 is 3900 feet long and 50 feet wide. There are no runway lights. Runway 03/21 slopes downhill to the southwest at a 3% grade. Takeoff and landing performance considerations must include this runway slope, otherwise a longer or shorter landing rollout can occur, depending on your landing direction. Runway 21 is the primary runway for takeoff and landing due to canyon obstacles to the north and the predominant winds from the southwest.

#### *Runway 21:*

Runway 21 has a displaced threshold, take note that there is a 5-foot fence located 45 feet from the approach end. All power and glider operations on runway 21 use left traffic. The pattern will track over a housing development on higher terrain to the south of the airport. Final approach enters a small canyon initially with higher terrain on both sides. Use caution and a slightly higher approach speed when the airport is experiencing southerly winds. Note that there can be considerable mechanical turbulence on arrival that will continue until approximately one half of the distance down the runway. An additional factor is the downhill slope when landing to the southwest.

#### *Runway 3:*

With calm winds, runway 3 is useful for repeat glider landing during training operations. Runway 3 uses left traffic. The runway slopes uphill to the northeast. As noted above, all tow operations operate on runway 21, so an arrival on runway 3 with a rollout to the end typically allows for subsequent takeoffs to the southwest. The only obstruction for arrivals on runway 3 is a fence located 120 feet to the southwest of the arrival threshold. Most glider operations will land long on runway 3, so the fence is not a factor. Runway 3 also has a displaced threshold located at 212 feet from the end of the runway. Private gliders and

other aircraft tie down spots are located at the arrival end of runway 3, paralleling the runway on the south side. There are private hangers on the north side of the arrival end of runway 3. Newer hangers are located on a ramp just to the east of the arrival end of runway 3.

There are three windsocks. One on the north side of the approach end of runway 21, one to the southwest of the approach end of runway 3 (near the heliport) and a third on the south side of the runway approximately one quarter of the way down runway 3. Typically the local winds will create a strong breeze through Weber canyon from east to west in the early morning.

Elk Mountain Soaring operates the tow plane (Call Air AN-9) and provides glider support operations at the airport. In order to receive a tow, the PIC of the glider needs to hold a membership in the club. Details for joining the Elk Mountain Soaring may be found at the Elk Mountain Soaring website: <http://www.emsoar.com/>.

### **Towing and staging:**

Towing on Saturdays during the gliding season does not require a reservation. To set up a tow at other times, one of the three tow pilots are available with prior notice. While the tow pilots are diligent about consulting the USA glider reservations website, a telephone call or e-mail contact (and response) is necessary to confirm a tow. Arrive early so to complete your pre-flight and aircraft positioning before your scheduled takeoff time. As always, if a cancellation is necessary, advise the tow pilot as soon as possible and if using a club bird, update the USA reservation website.

The USA gliders are tied down next to the departure end of runway 21, across from the main parking lot. It is necessary to tow your glider the length of the runway when positioning for takeoff. Use great care while entering the runway and towing the glider to the staging position. If you notice a conflict with an arriving or departing aircraft, depart the runway immediately. If possible use a handheld radio to announce your intentions and for traffic awareness. A visual watch for traffic will be necessary due to the amount of no-radio traffic at Morgan County.

The runup area at the departure end of runway 21 is used for glider staging. Utilize the extreme northeast corner to prepare for launch. If there are more than two gliders preparing for departure it will be necessary to initially stage in the grass on the south side of the runway. There are tie down spots available near the fence if you will be leaving the glider unaccompanied. There is also a cement weight in the runup area used to secure one wing of a glider. Please remember that the winds at Morgan County are highly variable in direction and intensity. Do not leave a glider unattended without securing it first.

Do not stage in the center of the runup area. The towplane pilot will drop the rope in the middle of the runup area and will return to park on the south end. Plan to leave the area clear. Remember that the tow pilot will have to drop the rope somewhere. If there are many gliders blocking the real estate at the departure end (runup area, runway, grass) he or she will be required to drop the rope farther down the runway. This will delay successive launches.

When you are ready for departure, make sure you are completely prepared prior to pulling onto the runway and you have made one final scan for traffic. If a ground crew is willing to assist, it is best to complete all preparations in the glider and have someone pull you out onto the runway. When all checklists are complete and you are ready, give your wing runner the thumbs up and he or she will raise your wing. The tow pilot will not start the

takeoff roll until you make a radio call that your canopy is closed and locked, the spoilers are closed and locked and you are ready for departure:

*"Morgan County traffic glider 554, canopy closed and locked, spoilers closed and locked, ready for departure runway 21, Morgan County"*

For an added measure of communication, waggle your rudder to the tow pilot as a signal you are ready. The tow pilot will then make the radio call for departure.

Once on the runway if you notice conflicting traffic in the pattern, get out of the glider and move it off of the runway. Do not allow arriving traffic to land over the top of you. Morgan County airport has a wide variety of unavoidable hazards with which you and other pilots will have to contend. Creating your own hazard is just a poor idea.

One final note; while taking off and landing, be aware how your actions will impact any traffic in the area. Any time you are on the runway, pay very close attention to the radio and the traffic pattern. If you notice conflicting traffic, vacate the runway immediately. If you attempt to land on runway 03 and fail to roll to the staging area for another departure, plan to remove the glider from the runway as soon as possible if others are waiting for departure. The same is true for automobile operations. Please use the dirt road on the north side of the runway to drive autos to the departure end of 21. Do not drive on the runway unless you are towing/retrieving a glider. Courtesy and safety go hand-in-hand.

#### **Premature tow termination:**

All glider operations use runway 21 for initial tow. The emergency land-out field selections are limited. Immediately to the west (slightly right) of the departure end of runway 21 are two fields usable for emergency landings. These fields contain irrigation pipes and livestock. While neither one is a perfect choice, they are the only options available. As mentioned previously, use caution and pay attention to wind drift after takeoff. The winds at the runway surface can be much different than the winds at 300 feet.

Once airborne and away from the immediate vicinity of the airport, the available landing opportunities increase. Use caution when surveying possible fields for use. Much of the terrain is not flat. After passing east of Mahogany ridge, and the north/south line that defines it, there are little, if any available fields. Be careful.

#### **Tow Patterns and operations:**

The typical tow will depart runway 21 with a left turn after crossing the I-84 freeway. The tow will continue to another left turn toward the northeast, parallel to the runway. After passing the approach end of runway 21, the tow will proceed in a right turn to parallel the ridge that eventually will place you on Mahogany Ridge. If you desire a higher tow, the pattern continues with a left turn after Mahogany Ridge to points on Durst Peak.

Obviously many options are available if you choose to discuss them when you talk to the tow pilot prior to departure. Right turn departures are not accomplished under normal circumstances due to residential concerns and published FAA traffic pattern descriptions.

#### **Local weather and soaring activity:**

The predominant winds in the local area are from the southwest. The Wasatch Mountains rise to 9700 feet approximately 4 miles to the west of the airport. Weber canyon cuts through the Wasatch Range immediately to the west of the airport and winds can be considerable through the canyon. The effect of the winds can be felt on initial tow after departure to the southwest. Occasionally, weather patterns will produce a strong south wind, which can have a dampening effect on thermal activity in the area.

As temperatures warm, this flow will reverse. During the morning hours the winds will be light and variable at the airport changing to winds from a southwest to westerly direction in the afternoon.

Additional wind indications are obtained from a windsock located at a house to the south of the runway one third of the way down from the approach end of runway 21. There is also a flag on the lawn of Browning Arms Inc. to the north of the midpoint of the runway.

Be aware that considerable changes in wind direction and speed occur in the local area, changing rapidly with altitude. It's not unusual to experience calm winds at the surface, yet ascending through 1500 feet turbulence associated with a shear zone is felt and the winds pick up 15 to 25 knots. The same wind variation is also found closer to the surface. While the winds at the surface may be light and variable, immediately above the ridge to the south it is not uncommon to experience 15 knot winds from the south. Create your premature tow termination plan carefully.

The Morgan County airport and the surrounding area will provide you with ample opportunity to explore the local area and points beyond. With southern facing slopes and numerous fields, excellent ridge soaring and thermal opportunities abound. Wave soaring is not uncommon when strong winds from the west strike the Wasatch mountains. The airport itself is challenging and the surrounding terrain can create rapidly changing weather conditions. These conditions will cause an unsuspecting glider pilot to land out short of the airport. As with many other airports that support glider operations, there have been accidents in the local area, some with tragic consequences. Fly smart and safe.

### **Airspace:**

The airspace surrounding the airport is a mix of class B, E and G. Class B airspace starts on the west side of the freeway, located off of the departure end of runway 21. The floor of the class B starts at 9000 MSL and the ceiling is at 10,000 MSL. (Airspace change pending 1/18/2011)

Class E airspace starts at 700 AGL from the center of the airport and to the west, while to the east the floor is at 10,500 MSL. There is a large block of Class G airspace below 10,500 to the north, south and east of the airport.

### **Directions to the airport:**

From Salt Lake City:

I-15 north to US-89 north (also signs for I-84/South Ogden). After approximately 10 miles turn right on ramp to I-84 east. Take exit 92 towards Mountain Green. The exit turns left at the bottom of the ramp and passes under the freeway, turn right. After approximately 2.5 miles turn right on Cottonwood Canyon Road. Follow the road until you see the airport on the right.

From Park City:

I-80 east to intersection I-84 west, exit 168. Then take exit 96 to Mt. Green. Follow Old Highway Road west. After approximately 2.3 miles, and on a slight downhill grade look for a sharp turn to the right on to Cottonwood Canyon Road. Follow the road until you see the airport on the right.

Thanks to Stan McGrew and Dan Thirkill for their contributions to this document.

**MORGAN CO** (42U) 8 NW UTC-7(-6DT) N41°08.93' W111°46.00'

SALT LAKE CITY  
COPTER  
L-9C, 11D

5020 S2 OX 3 TPA-600Q(980) NOTAM FILE CDC

RWY 03-21: H3904X50 (ASPH)

RWY 03: Thld dsplcd 212'. Road.

RWY 21: Thld dsplcd 214'. Trees.

**AIRPORT REMARKS:** Unattended. Extensive glider and ultralight activity on and in/ovf arpt. Deer and moose in/ovf arpt. Trees, fences and hangers 125' from centerline both sides Rwy 03-21. Hangars north Rwy 03 thld, 5' fence 120' north Rwy 21 thld and trees north Rwy 03-21 midfield. Rwy 03-21 breaking action fair. Rwy may be slippery when warm or hot.

**COMMUNICATIONS:** CTAF/UNICOM 122.8

**RADIO AIDS TO NAVIGATION:** NOTAM FILE OGD.

OGDEN (L) VORTACW 115.7 OGD Chan 104 N41°13.45'

W112°05.90' 096° 16 NM to fld. 4223/14E.

