

# SITE GUIDE

## **STORM PEAK HANG GLIDING & PARAGLIDING**

(rev 12.18.2024)

### **GENERAL OVERVIEW AND SITE REQUIREMENTS**

Please read the entire document. There is very important information about site safety and local requirements.

Storm Peak Hang Gliding and Paragliding Assn. (SPHGA) is a non-profit club that supports and maintains standards for hang gliding and paragliding flights in Steamboat Springs, Colorado. Membership fees go towards the maintenance of the launch site off of Mt. Werner/Storm Peak Launch, Thunderhead Launch (aka Gondola Launch), and the Landing Zones in the town of Steamboat Springs. Both Launches are owned or operated by Steamboat Ski Resort Corp. (SSRC) and the US Forest Service (USFS) Routt Medicine Bow District. Commercial, Tandem and Mini-Wing Flights are prohibited.

Storm Peak Hang Gliding and Paragliding members in good standing are permitted to fly from this site provided all rating requirements have been met. Membership requirements can be accessed via the SPHGA website [steamboatairforce.org](http://steamboatairforce.org). All pilots must be accompanied by a SPHGA guide pilot, there is no self-guide status. Access to both launch sites is available by permitted vehicle via the SSRC gated mountain access 4x4 road when operating in the summer season. Winter access is available via surface ski lift. A vehicle permit provided to guide pilots by Steamboat Ski Resort is required. Club officers and SPHGA guide pilots are available by phone or our telegram chat group to provide club paperwork, take in fees, provide site and weather information and serve as mountain guide pilots.

Steamboat / Storm Peak is a high alpine area flying site with thin, dry and occasionally very active air. Launches approximately 10,350' msl and 9100' and are about 3700 feet and 2450 feet vertical from launch to landing. Storm Peak/ Mt. Werner is a northwest facing launch that requires a minimum H4/P4 rating or foreign equivalents due to its topographic/meteorological aspects. It is a high-altitude launch (10'350'), located in close proximity to a surface lift, with a relatively flat slope which requires HA and TUR special ratings. This combined with the fact the LZ(s) are a long glide with intervening topography is why it is an H4/P4 launch where a failed launch or a faulty flight plan can have severe consequences. At the discretion of a SPGHA guide pilot, a H3/P3 with a minimum of 20 hours or 20 flights in the current flying season and a check off flight may be permitted to fly. Paragliders must have a minimum glide performance of 5:1 L/D. Landing Zones (LZs) are the Whistler Park Main LZ and the Haymaker Alternate LZ (North side of HWY 131 adjacent to Haymaker Golf Course.) on the south side of Steamboat Springs (approximately 250 degree bearing).

## **VISITING AND NEW PILOT REQUIREMENTS**

All visiting pilots are required to obtain a membership in the local club. Proof of USHPA rating is required. An adequate helmet (full face is highly recommended), reserve parachute, CORSAR Card or current Fishing / Hunting license, two-way radio that must be tuned to a frequency specified by the guide pilot and current glider certificate are also required. Visiting pilots must check in with a guide pilot. They must demonstrate an understanding of, and willingness to follow, all local site rules (included in this document), in addition to national SOP set by USHPA.

## **ACCEPTABLE FLYING CONDITIONS**

Steamboat / Storm Peak is a high alpine flying site with 3700 vertical-feet-flights. Thermal conditions are common in the summer and some ridge soaring is possible. Weather conditions can be linked via the club website: [steamboatairforce.org](http://steamboatairforce.org).

Monitoring conditions is one of our highest priorities for safety. Conditions at high altitude can change quickly so parameters for flying vary depending on wind speed and direction. In general, we look for wind gusts not to exceed 25 mph for hang gliders and 20 mph for paragliders. We look for a minimum of 5 mph and 10 is ideal for HG. For PG we want a minimum of 0 mph and 10 is ideal. Additionally, for wind direction we will launch from 275 degrees – 310 degrees and 290 degrees – 310 degrees is ideal. A southerly component is common and not ideal due to rotor off of the trees and ridges; also the gust factor historically increases rapidly. Flying is highly discouraged when the winds increase above these levels.

Storm Peak Launch and the SPHGA Main LZ and Haymaker LZ have wind socks and multiple streamers.

## OBSTACLES

There are few natural obstacles at our site. Storm Peak Launch is bounded by trees and a chair lift and is relatively shallow for its altitude (10350'). The chair lift has a mandatory No Fly Zone of 50' in all directions, all the time for all seasons. The glide slope from the Storm Peak Launch to the intervening Thunderhead Gondola is relatively shallow (4.5:1) before becoming more forgiving from there to the Whistler Main LZ. Care must be taken to maintain glide and altitude to be able to clear that topographic obstacle. Landing within Ski Area bounds is prohibited and dangerous. The Main Whistler LZ is in a public park surrounded by trees with public activity and surface obstacles present. Hang Gliders have been landing there for over 40 years so the Whistler Main LZ is sufficient for paragliding and hang gliding operations.

## VEHICLE PARKING

Both LZ,s have adjacent parking. No vehicles are permitted in any SPHGA LZ.

## SPECTATORS

Spectators are welcome and often present. SPHGA guide pilots will keep the Launch and LZ clear of congestion for landing gliders. The Whistler Main LZ has a comfortable and convenient viewing area with bleachers, benches and playground in the summer. The Haymaker LZ has a locked fence gate but viewing and parking are available on the north side of Highway 131.

## DETAILED LAUNCH / FLIGHT OPERATIONS

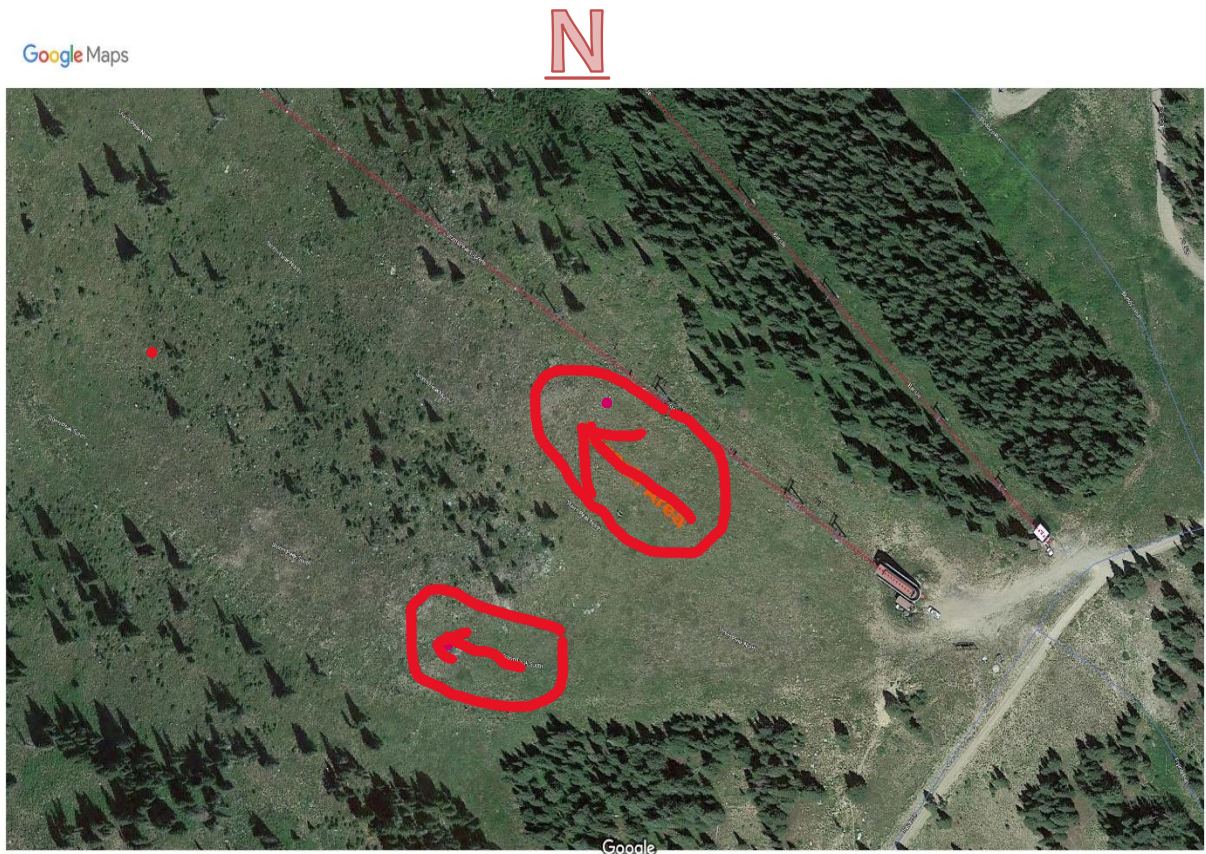
**Note: This site is a high altitude launch that requires strong launch skills and experience flying in high mountain - high altitude flying conditions. Flying with a working oxygen system is highly recommended.**

### Mt Werner - Storm Peak Launch

10350 msl

- No landing within Ski Area Bounds
- Launch Wind Speed:
  - HG: 5mph minimum / 15 mph ideal / 20 mph maximum / 5 mph gust

- PG: 0 mph minimum / 10 mph ideal / 15 mph maximum / 5 mph gust
- Acceptable Direction: 290-310 degrees HG / 275-310 degrees PG
- Guide Pilot must be present at launch and will give site intro and approve launch.
- 1<sup>st</sup> Five (5) flights: lift at launch Ok, work if possible, no 360 turns below launch. If below launch an immediate straight flightline to gondola required to clear ski area bounds. Maneuvers at or past top of gondola permitted. The path to clear the gondola requires a 4 to 4.5 LD and the primary landing area is a 4.5 glide. Care to maintain an efficient glide is the primary concern on the initial flights.



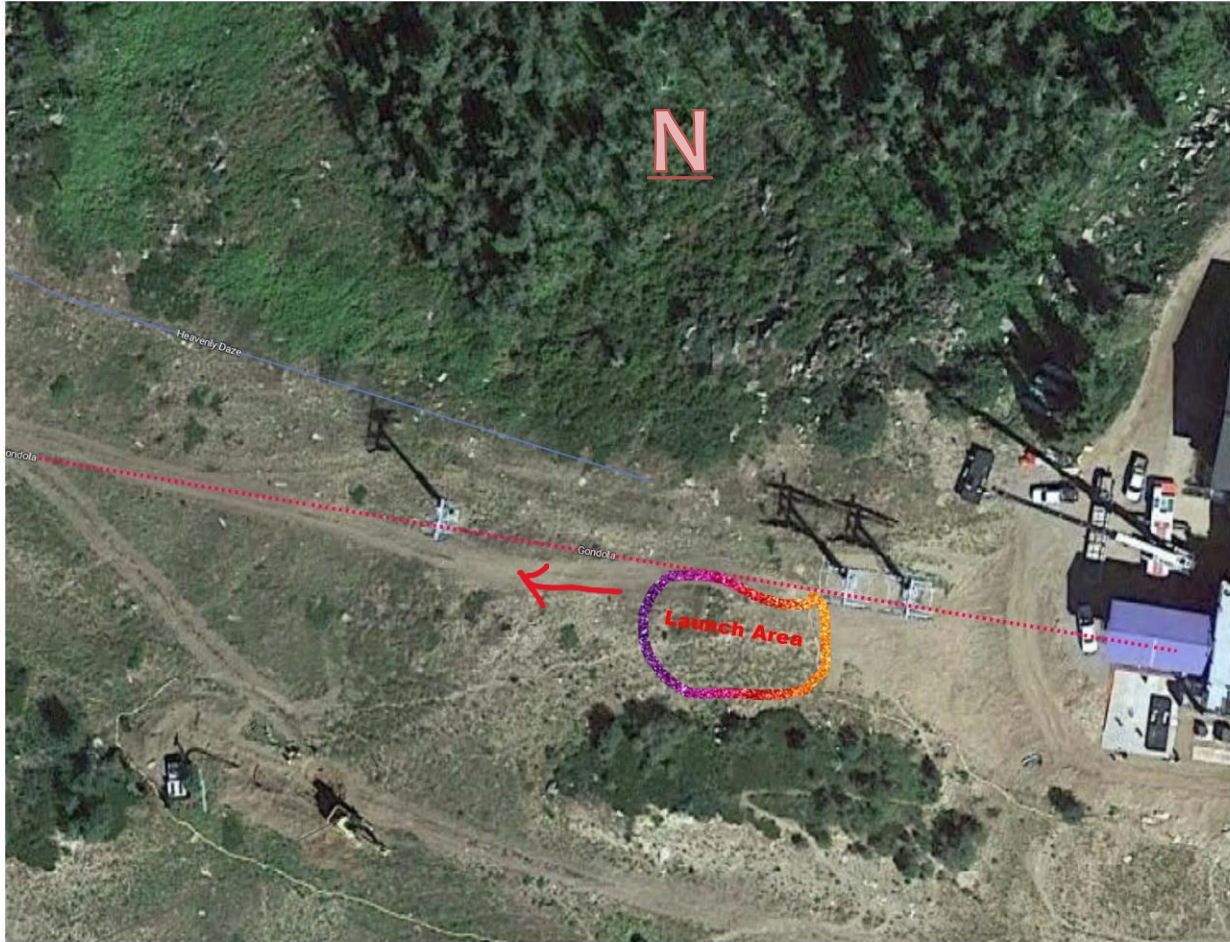
- **Clearance from and Ski Lift Lines / Towers, Overhead Power Lines and Trees, -**  
Launch points should be clear of overhead lines, trees, and towers by 50 feet. Clearance above Storm Peak Lift at launch and while flying Storm Peak Face in proximity to Storm Peak Lift should maintain a minimum of 50 ft clearance. Planned flight path should remain clear of ski lift lines / towers, overhead power lines and trees by 100 feet. Landing target spots should be clear of overhead lines, trees, and towers by 100 feet.

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### **Mount Werner - Thunderhead Gondola – Heavenly Days Launch**

9100 msl

- No landing within Ski Area Bounds
- Launch Wind Speed:
  - HG: 5 mph minimum / 10 mph ideal / 15 mph maximum / 5 mph gust
  - PG: 0 mph minimum / 8 mph ideal / 12 mph maximum / 5 mph gust
- Acceptable Direction: 260-280 degrees
- **Clearance from and Ski Lift Lines / Towers, Overhead Power Lines and Trees, -**  
Launch points should be clear of overhead lines, trees, and towers by 50 feet. Clearance above Thunderhead Gondola at launch and while flying Thunderhead in proximity to the Gondola should maintain a minimum of 50 ft clearance. Planned flight path should remain clear of ski lift lines / towers, overhead power lines and trees by 100 feet. Landing target spots should be clear of overhead lines, trees, and towers by 100 feet.



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## LANDING AREAS

### **Mt Werner - Whistler Park LZ**

6650 msl

- N-S Approach Typical
- Low Wind Speeds Typical
- Attention to tall trees, movable hazards (soccer goals, etc) and spectators / pets.
- Clear LZ after landing. Hang Gliders pay special attention to low no wind conditions. High winds from the west are to be avoided. Proceed to secondary if encountered or uncomfortable.



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## Whistler LZ

### Mount Werner - Haymaker LZ

6650 msl

- Approaches in all directions.
- Typically, higher more consistent speed and direction.
- Exit and enter LZ from gate on south side adjacent to Highway 131. KEEP GATE CLOSED. No vehicles.
- Windsock on S edge of field.
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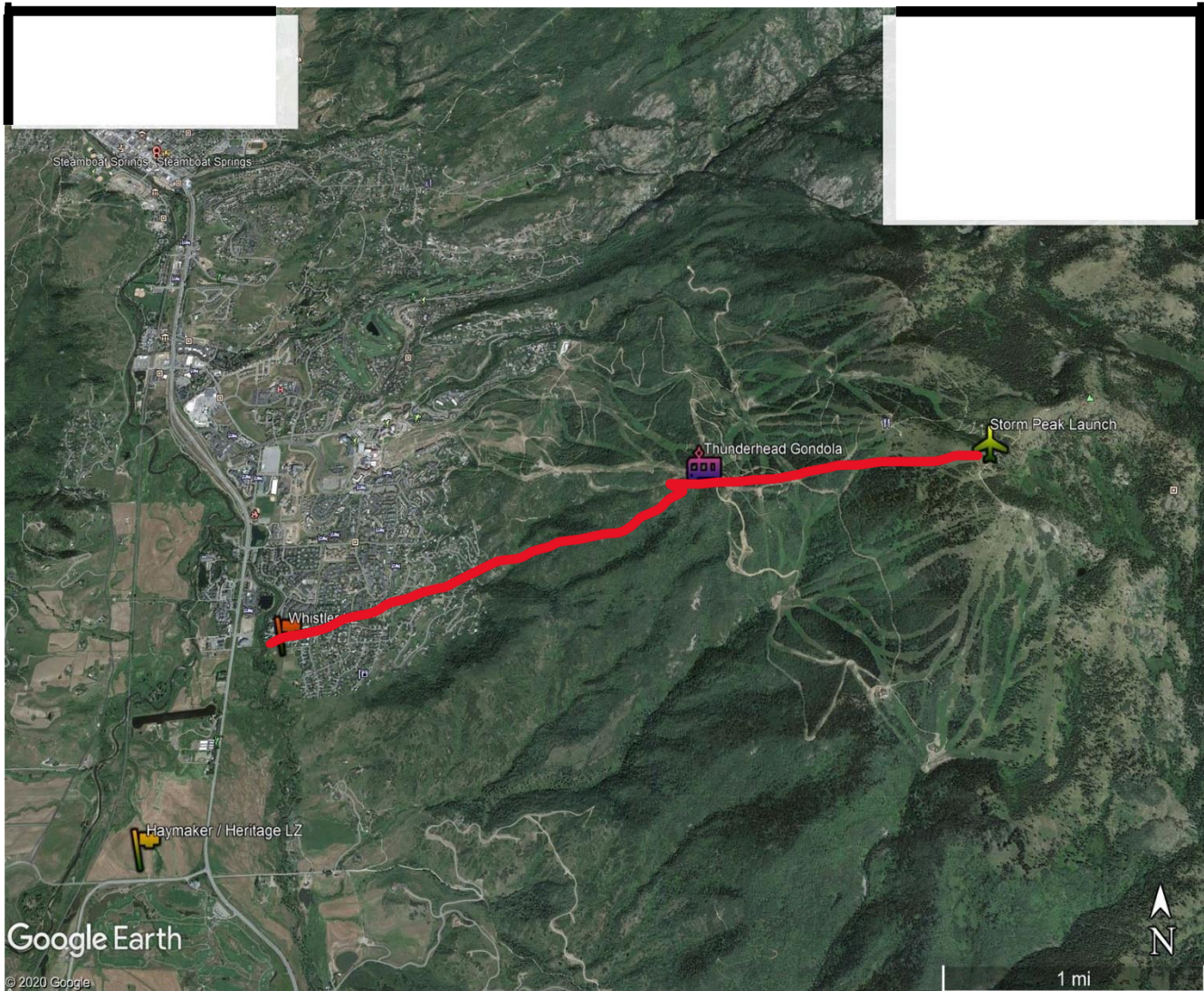


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**Haymaker LZ**



**Overview Map SPHGA Launches and LZ's**  
**(with introductory flight path)**



## EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Pilot Instructions  
(Instruction cards must be carried by ALL  
pilots)

Upon recognition of INCIDENT: ALL PILOTS tune their radios to Emergency Frequency (151.595) and CHECK IN

- A. ONE PERSON takes charge of the incident
- B. ANSWER 4 questions:
  - 1) Is there going to be a delay of more than 5 minutes to make contact with the pilot?
  - 2) Is injured pilot requiring medical attention?
  - 3) Is search and/or rescue required?  
(Tree landing, water or power lines)
  - 4) Are there too few pilots available to handle the situation?

**IF YES TO ANY: ACTIVATE EMS: CALL 911**

- C. PERSON IN CHARGE MEETS EMS at designated location. How can we assist them and integrate our special skills into their procedures?
- D. INFORM ALL PILOTS HOW THEY CAN ASSIST EMS

### **IF NOT TO ALL**

- A. Person in charge coordinates non-EMS recovery
- B. Search teams composed of at least 3 persons
  - \* One of three should be trained in first aid
  - \* All should have radios and monitor emergency frequencies and injured pilot frequency
- C. Each group should have a GPS and know how to use it
- D. Each search team carries a rescue kit containing:
  - a. Rescue ropes
  - b. First Aid Kit
  - c. Flashlight & Compass
  - d. Water

**REMEMBER: EMS CAN BE CALLED AT ANY TIME AS YOU REALIZE THEY ARE NEEDED.**

The person in charge is responsible for complete documentation and incident report to the regional director and submits a USHPA Accident Report at [https://www.ushpa.aero/member\\_emailacc.asp](https://www.ushpa.aero/member_emailacc.asp).

The emergency procedures listed below are provided as a general information document and should not be

considered an all-inclusive procedure. It is most beneficial to consider the worst case scenario when planning for emergency procedures. Always follow USHPA protocol (SOP02-07) when responding to an emergency.

**911 Available at SPHGA launches and LZ's. USE IT.**

**Be Aware of Trauma Kit Location on Launch**

**Emergency Contact Numbers:**

**Routt County Sherrif: 970-879-1090**

**Steamboat Resort Security: 970-879-6111**

**Routt County Search and Rescue: 970-879-1090**

**Bob Adams Airport: 970-879-1204**

**Ken Grubbs: 303-888-1255**

**Garrett Eller: 970-531-9500**