



BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Natalia D. Macker, Chair
Greg Epstein, V-Chair
Mark Barron
Mark Newcomb
Luther Propst

December 9, 2019

Jackson Hole Airport Board
Rick Braun, President

Dear Members of the Jackson Hole Airport Board,

The Teton County Board of County Commissioners (BCC) would like to express to the board our concerns regarding the 2018 amended application for a helicopter tour operation based at the Jackson Hole Airport by Wind River Aviation, LCC.

We understand that the Jackson Hole Airport Board has not officially taken up the application, nor has Wind River Aviation asked to be placed on the board's agenda. However, you have heard the concerns of the community and are therefore holding a special meeting regarding the issue.

We also understand that the Jackson Hole Airport Board must adhere to Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) rules and regulations as well as agreements between the FAA, Department of Interior (DOI) and Grand Teton National Park (GRTE).

However, given the outpouring of community opposition of the helicopter tours, along with our own concerns, the Teton County BCC respectfully requests that those concerns be addressed before moving forward with the Wind River Aviation Helicopter proposal.

Nearly twenty years ago, our community was faced with a similar operation from a different company. During this time, the Town of Jackson Council, Teton County Commissioners and a coalition of organizations requested that the FAA complete a study on the environmental and wildlife impacts, and safety concerns, of a helicopter taking off and landing in a national park, and touring across many miles of U.S. Forest land that serves as a sanctuary for wildlife and valuable recreational resource for resident and tourists.

To our knowledge, that study has never been done.

Mr. Chambers, owner of Wind River Aviation, LCC, has proposed three flight paths, all of which fly along either the Teton Mountain Range, Caribou-Targhee National Forest's Jedediah Smith Wilderness, or the Town of Jackson and Bridger-Teton National Forest.



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Before moving forward, it is imperative, to our community, that the FAA complete a comprehensive study, that will examine the pressure and impacts these flight paths will have on our public lands.

Additionally, the Common Value No. 1 of the Jackson/Teton County Comprehensive Plan, which was established in 2012 after five years of extensive public input, emphasizes ecosystem stewardship of wildlife, natural resources and scenery, along with climate sustainability through energy conservation. Appendix B-7 clearly states the communities desire to be a community first, resort second. Frequent private heli tours over significant parts of the county do not comport with that clearly stated vision.

Furthermore, inviting an operation that produces emissions that far exceed other modes of transportation and scenic tours, goes against our environmental vision to minimize our carbon footprint.

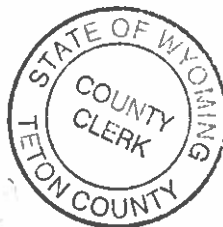
The heart of the Jackson/Teton County Comprehensive Plan is to preserve and protect the area's ecosystem in order to ensure a healthy environment, community, and economy for current and future generations. Without a comprehensive study to fully identify how a helicopter tour operation will impact the health, safety, and welfare of our community and the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem, it is our duty to respectfully ask that you refrain from taking any action toward allowing helicopter tours to operate at the Jackson Hole Airport.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Natalia D. Macker".

Natalia D. Macker
Chairwoman



A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sherry L. Daigle".

Attest: Sherry L. Daigle
Teton County Clerk