

Parapente Aspen SITE GUIDE

Executive Summary and Site Requirements

Please read the entire document. There is very important information about site safety and local requirements on page 5.

Parapente Aspen is a non-profit club that supports and maintains standards for paragliding flights in Aspen, Colorado. Membership fees go towards the maintenance of two launch sites off of Aspen Mountain, aka Ajax, and two Landing Zones in the Aspen area. All launches and LZs are owned or operated by The Aspen Ski Co, Pitkin County, The City of Aspen and The Steve Vance Family Estate (Ruthie's Launch site).

Parapente Aspen members in good standing are permitted to fly from these sites provided all rating requirements have been met. Access to both launch sites is available via the Silver Queen Gondola when operating in the winter and summer season. Further access is available via a 4x4 road, when open to the public, in the summer. The local school and tandem operation, Aspen Paragliding, has special access through the ASC (Aspen Ski Co) in the early season before public access is available. Parapente Aspen members can ride on the school truck for a fee provided space is available. Aspen Paragliding's shop is at 426 South Spring St. during the summer months and members can meet there to pay/renew their dues and get weather information from the local instructors or club officers. In the winter, club officers are available by phone to provide club paperwork, take in fees, and provide site and weather information.

Aspen is a high alpine area with thin, dry and occasionally very active air.

Launches are about 3000 feet vertical from launch to landing. There are 2 launch sites Walshes (East Facing) and Ruthie's (West Facing) that require a minimum of a P3 to fly as a visiting pilot. (MINI WINGS are only permitted on Walshes with proper USHPA M2 signoff.) P2 can fly but only with Aspen Paragliding instructor supervision. Landing Zones (LZ) are the Northstar Nature Preserve on the east side of town that has limited access for paragliding and all other activities. Limits for commercial and recreational paragliding have been set by a master plan for the area. The Marolt Ranch Open Space on the west has a portion that is a flight park/memorial for the late hang glider pilot Scott Bloom. Some mountain bike traffic goes through this area but has signage advising users to be aware of flight activity

Visiting and New Pilot Requirements

All visiting pilots are required to obtain a membership in the local club. Proof of USHPA rating is required. Visiting pilots must check in with a club officer or local tandem instructor. 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

Aspen is a high alpine flying site with 3000 vertical feet flights. Thermal conditions are common in the summer and some ridge soaring is possible. Parapente Aspen has provided a weather station ("Debbie") that can be accessed via the internet. Extensive weather data from current winds and direction to 5 minute, daily, monthly, yearly graphs with gust factors and temperature are available.

Some of the tandem instructors have dual band radios and monitor the airport frequency for current winds speeds, gust and direction. Many other large-scale weather services can also be checked for radar, winds aloft, and current winds to the west of our location.

Monitoring conditions is one of 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 gust not to exceed 12 mph with gusts no higher than 18. A southerly component is normally not a good direction so these numbers are reduced because the gust factor historically increases rapidly. Aspen's valley winds are also a concern due to the Venturi effect from the multiple valleys so we make sure winds at the airport stay below 15 mph. Flying is highly discouraged when the winds increase to these levels. All pilots in the air are requested to land when conditions reach these levels.

All launches and LZ's have wind fins and multiple streamers.

Obstacles

There are few natural obstacles at all of our sites because they are in open space but trees and imperfections on the ground exist. The Marlot LZ does have power lines and trees on the east side around 75% of the open space. Historically, hang gliders have been landing there for over 30 years so the Marlot LZ is sufficient for paragliding operations

Vehicle Parking

Both LZ's have street parking that is away from the main landing area. All Aspen area LZ's are designated Open Space. No motorized vehicles are allowed in any Aspen LZ area.

Spectators

Spectators are welcome and often present when the school is operating and tandem instructors are flying. Club officers or tandem instructors will keep the LZ clear of congestion for landing gliders. Spectators are not allowed in the North Star LZ area, however there is ample viewing area along the East-End Trail. The Marlot LZ has a comfortable and convenient viewing area with benches. There are also walking paths that run through the property that are marked with signage saying, "Caution Paraglider Landing Zone".

Site Illustrations and Details

LAUNCH: RUTHIE'S This is a P3 skill-level launch site

Elevation: 10,570 FT
Latitude: 39° 9'50.97"N
Longitude: 106°49'38.19"W

This west-facing launch bowl sits underneath Ruthies chair lift about 100 yards below the unloading station at the top. Windssock is on the North side of launch.

REQUIREMENTS:

Rating: **USHPA P-3 or equivalent**
Parapente Aspen Membership: (\$50/year or 30-day Visitor (\$25))
Site Briefing from a Parapente Aspen Club Member
Helmet, Radio & Reserve Parachute
Paraglider with a minimum performance of 5:1 L/D

RESTRICTED AIR SPACE:

All flights from Ruthies require clearance from the Aspen Airport Tower before flying in the Restricted Class "D" Airspace. Call the airport tower to close clearance after all pilots have landed: **970/925-6898**.

WEATHER:

AWOS: 970/920-0759

ACCESS:

Shuttle: \$10 – Aspen Paragliding: 970/379-6975. Check the website to see when the trucks going up next.

4x4 Road: Take Original St. to the foot of Aspen Mountain. Continue up on Richmond Hill Rd (CR 14 – dirt road) to Bonnies Restaurant. Turn right and continue straight to launch.

Chair Lift: Parapente Aspen credentials and lift pass are required to board chair lifts & must be available for inspection by SkiCo employees.



LANDING ZONE: MAROLT OPEN SPACE

Elevation: 7,950 FT
Latitude: 39°11'33.41"N
Longitude: 106°50'16.52"W

This Landing Zone (LZ) is in a large field located southeast of the roundabout on land designated as the "Marolt Open Space".

Under the Open Space Land Management Plan, **pilots landing at the Marolt LZ MUST:**

- Have clearance,
- Be current Parapente Aspen members and
- Record their landings in the logbook.

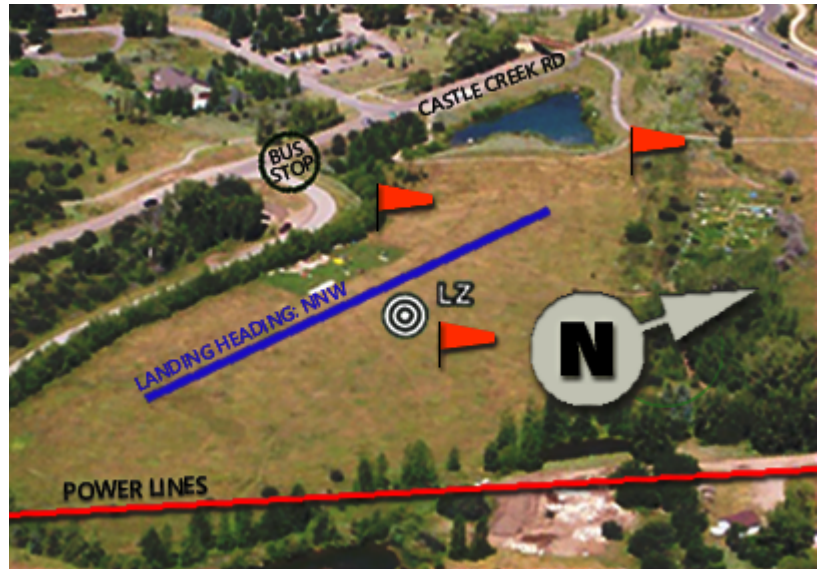
RESTRICTED AIRSPACE:

The Marolt LZ is the only paragliding landing area located within the Class "D" airspace.

Landing elsewhere in this airspace is prohibited.

RETRIEVAL: From the roundabout take Castle Creek Rd and turn left on the first paved road. Park and walk East across ditch into LZ.

BUS ROUTE: RFTA buses stop every 20 minutes on Castle Creek Rd. with free transportation back to the Ruby Park Bus Station and elsewhere.

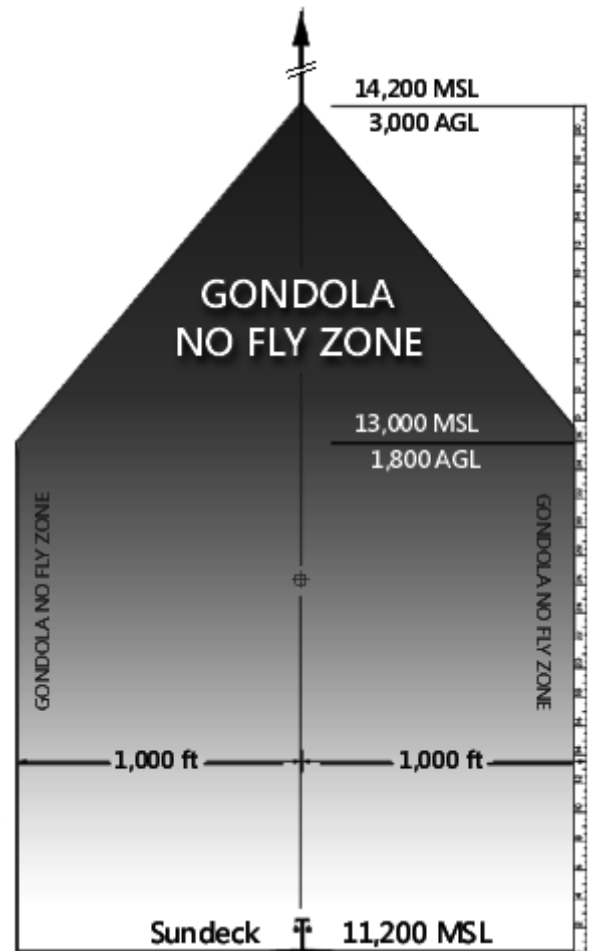


NO FLY ZONE: GONDOLA

The gondola has a No Fly Zone that extends 1,000 FT horizontally on all sides of the lift line. At 13,000 FT the No Fly Zone angles inward until it bisects the gondola plane at 14,200 FT. If you think you are too close, fly away from the gondola! The penalty for violating the Gondola No Fly Zone is a 3 month suspension of flying privileges for local pilots, or one year for visiting pilots.

PILOTS ARE PROHIBITED FROM FLYING OVER THE GONDOLA REGARDLESS OF YOUR ALTITUDE

ANY VIOLATION OF THESE RULES MAY RESULT IN THE LOSS OF YOUR SKI PASS, FLYING PRIVILEGES &/OR YOUR U.S.H.P.A. RATING



WINTER SEASON NO FLY ZONE: CHAIR LIFTS

When the chair lifts are running, pilots must fly outside the ski area boundary as soon as it is practical for the duration of the flight. Temporary Flight Restrictions (TFR) are in effect over the lift for the duration of its operation, requiring pilots to maintain a flight path 45° away from the lift line. The horizontal distance must be greater than the altitude above the lift.

If Walshes ski run is closed, pilots must receive permission from Ski Patrol before going to launch. If permission is granted, access the launch via the summer side trail so that you do not leave tracks that other skiers will follow.



RESTRICTED AIRSPACE: FEDERAL AVIATION REGULATION

Aspen Airport's Class "D" Restricted Airspace extends in a 5-mile radius from the airport with a ceiling of 2,500 FT AGL (approx. 10,500 FT MSL). **All flying in this airspace requires telephone clearance from the Aspen Airport Tower.**

Airspace clearance is needed for all flights from Ruthies launch and flight paths into Aspen, Highlands, Buttermilk and Snowmass. When requesting clearance, state the number of pilots that will be occupying the airspace. When all pilots have landed, notify the tower to close the airspace clearance. Aspen Airport Tower: 970/925-6898

Pilots must comply with NOTAMS and FAR 103 regulations concerning daytime operation, visibility limitations and altitude restrictions governing ultra-light aircraft.



LAUNCH: WALSHES PARAGLIDING SITE This is a P3 skill-level launch site

Elevation: 10,570 FT
Latitude: 39° 9'50.97"N
Longitude: 106°49'38.19"W

This west-facing launch bowl sits underneath Ruthies chair lift about 100 yards below the unloading station at the top. Windssock is on the North side of launch.

LOCATION: The area East of the tree island with the Ski Patrol phone, down to the break-over, extending South to the ski area boundary rope.

REQUIREMENTS:

Rating: **USHPA P-3 or equivalent**
Parapente Aspen Membership: (\$50/year or 30-day Visitor (\$25))
Site Briefing from a Parapente Aspen Club Member
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WEATHER:

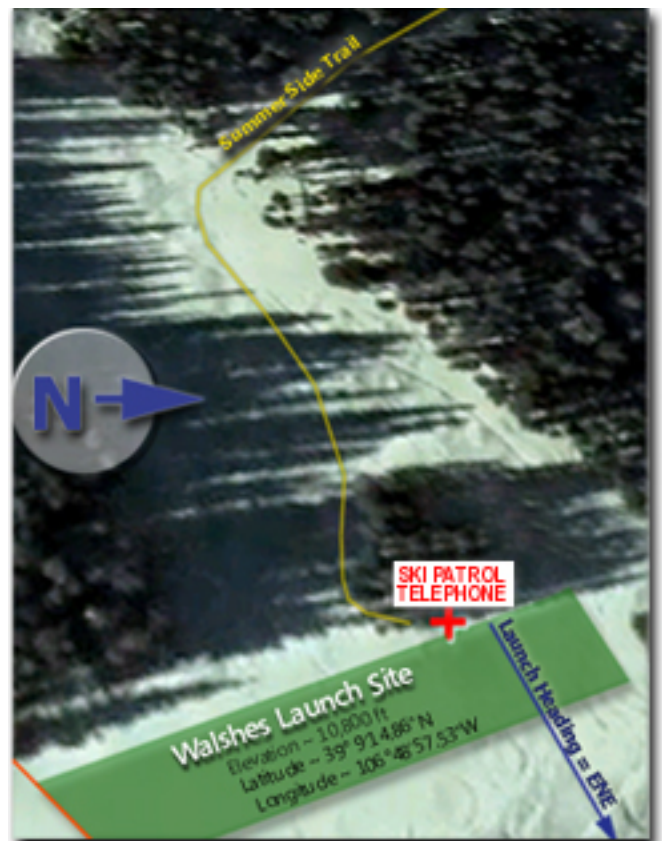
AWOS: 970/920-0759 (Location: Ruthie's Launch)

ACCESS:

Shuttle: \$10 – Aspen Paragliding: 970/379-6975. Check the website to see when the trucks going up next.

4x4 Road: Take Original St. to the foot of Aspen Mountain. Continue up on Richmond Hill Rd (CR 14 – dirt road) to Walshes.

Chair Lifts and Gondola: Parapente Aspen credentials and lift pass are required to board chair lifts & must be available for inspection by SkiCo employees.



LANDING ZONE: NORTH STAR NATURE PRESERVE

The Landing Zone (LZ) is a clearing between Hiway 82 and the East side of the Roaring Fork River, North of the ditch. The LZ is in the North Star Nature Preserve, **a protected wildlife habitat**, that we are very fortunate to have access.

In consideration of the sensitivity of the environment, pilots are not allowed to fly within 650 FT (200M) of Great Blue Heron colonies; nor may pilots land at the North Star LZ before 7:00 AM or after 5:00 PM.

Under the directives of the Nature Preserve Management Plan, pilots landing in the North Star LZ must be current Parapente Aspen club members and record their landings in the log book at the Paraglider's access gate.

RETRIEVAL: Head East on Hiway 82 towards Independence Pass for about 2½ miles and park in the small pull-off on the right.

