

March 24, 2009

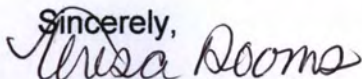
Dear Postal Patron,

I have been notified that the air taxi contract will not be renewed . Arnold Aviation will no longer be flying to your ranch after June 30, 2009. The decision to cancel this contract was made by the US Postal Service Head Quarter's Office; it was neither my decision nor my supervisor's.

You will be eligible for a no-fee post office box at the Cascade Post Office. If you have any concerns or questions, please call me at (208)-382-4148.

I am very sorry for any inconvenience this may have caused.

Sincerely,



Teresa Dooms
Postmaster
Cascade, Id 83611

April 8, 2009

Dear [sent online to Senator Crapo, Senator Risch, US Rep Minnick, and Governor Otter]:

I live in central Idaho and receive my mail through the US Postal Service contract with Arnold Aviation. I am concerned about the Postal Service decision to effectively eliminate my mail service on June 30, 2009. I will not be able to receive mail on a regular basis without the air contract through Arnold Aviation. The Postal Service proposed "free post office boxes" at the Cascade Post Office, but that is not a viable alternative for those of us who have permanent residences and businesses in the Idaho backcountry. I live and work year round in the central Idaho wilderness managing a research station for University of Idaho. I cannot drive from my home and workplace to the Cascade Post Office, which is over 100 miles away. My permanent residence on Big Creek is a 30 minute flight to the Cascade Airport or 32 miles by mule trail (2 days travel) to the end of the road at Big Creek. When winter snows close the road to Big Creek it is another 20 miles without vehicle access to get to Yellowpine, a community of 50 people. **The once-per-week mail service is essential** to those of us who live and work in this remote part of Idaho. Our lack of road access and lack of telephone service means that, compared to most people, we must rely more heavily on the mail service, instead of in-person or phone communication. One prime example of the need for mail service in the backcountry is Idaho's Vote-by-Mail program. One of the purposes of Idaho's Vote-by-Mail was to improve rural citizens' opportunity to vote, particularly at times of year when travel is difficult. I have voted in every Vote-by-Mail election – because I could! The lack of mail service will deny me the means to vote, because I will be unable to make the 52 mile trek on foot over a snow covered 9,000 foot pass to my voting precinct in Yellowpine in November, and I cannot afford to charter an airplane to take me to Yellowpine so I can vote!

I realize the US Postal Service decision was an economic one to address a large budget deficit. But I am concerned that the choice to eliminate once-per-week mail service by air to Idaho's most remote residents will create direct adverse economic impacts to rural Idaho communities and the state because it will increase operating expenses and decrease profit margins for remote businesses like hunting and boating outfitters that fuel the tourism industry in Idaho. I believe that a better and more equitable alternative for the US Postal Service budget cuts would be to slightly decrease services to a greater number of people, rather than completely eliminate delivery to remote residents who are especially dependent upon mail service. Please help us retain our once-a-week air mail delivery service.

Sincerely,

Holly Akenson
Taylor Wilderness Research Station
HC 83 Box 8070
Cascade, ID 83611

JOHN E. POTTER
Assistant General Counsel



The Honorable Mike Crapo
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510-1205

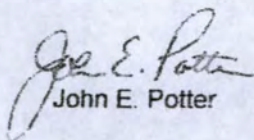
Dear Senator Crapo:

Thank you for your letter regarding the air contract with Arnold Aviation for the delivery of the mail into the Frank Church wilderness area. As you know, the Postal Service is experiencing serious financial difficulties and we are expecting to lose \$6 billion by the end of this fiscal year. That is why we have been examining all contracts nationwide to reduce our expenditures.

In reviewing the contract for mail delivery to the customers in the Frank Church Wilderness area, we determined that we were spending \$46,000 for mail service to approximately 20 families. We considered other alternatives, including surface routes, and determined that none would provide acceptable service levels to us or our customers.

Therefore, I have decided that in view of the obligation to provide service to the American public, this contract should continue in its present form. I appreciate the concern you expressed for your constituents and I am pleased that you brought this matter to my attention.

Sincerely,


John E. Potter