

TAYLOR RANCH FIELD STATION  
Wilderness Research Center  
University of Idaho  
HC 83  
Cascade, ID 83611

July 28, 1994

Clem Pope  
Krassel R.D.  
Payette National Forest  
P.O. Box 1026  
McCall, ID 83638

Dear Clem:

Thanks for your letter (9 May 1994) requesting clarification of our policies concerning use of the Taylor Ranch Field Station airstrip.

The current policy document was approved by the university in 1988, although it mirrors policies that have been in place for about 15 years. I sent a copy of our current field station policies to all relevant state and federal agencies, including the Payette Forest S.O. and Krassel District, about two years ago. Hopefully, you still have it on file, I don't have an extra copy here.

The airstrip is to remain private and only used in support of the Wilderness Research Center's objectives with, of course, emergency uses always permitted. The field station including its airstrip is to be used only in support of wilderness-dependent research and educational activities.

Administrative use by state or federal agencies doesn't meet that criteria. But that doesn't mean that emergency use is the only permitted use by these same agencies. For example, Idaho Dept. of Fish & Game enforcement personnel using the airstrip as an entry point for checking hunters, fishing licenses, etc. would not be compatible with our policy but an IDFG fish crew collecting data on anadromous fish populations in Rush Creek would be compatible, with data shared with WRC. Another example: USFS trail or fire crews using Taylor Ranch as a staging point to either repair trail or suppress a fire, that was not directly threatening the field station, would not be compatible with our policies but a USFS research crew gathering data on fire history adjacent to the field station or USFS personnel giving a presentation to students involved in a class offered at the field station would be compatible.

So I hope I've made our policies more understandable: emergency use anytime, use that supports the wilderness-dependent research and educational objectives of WRC and the field station also,

administrative uses only if they are directly related to the function of Taylor Ranch, recreational use never.

I tried to make this clear when Patti called me. Her description of the request to use our airstrip was that it would be for her convenience to check on the trail crew and so they wouldn't have to hike the additional 7 miles to Cabin Creek or ford Big Creek and fly from Soldier Bar. I hope it's clear why that type of use would not be compatible with our policy.

I'm glad you mentioned the LAC meeting here last summer. I'm still perturbed about that. My understanding was that the LAC group was to stop by here on foot or horse and I'd talk to them about our research and education programs. I'm always pleased to do that with any group. USFS LAC Coordinator did not get permission from me or WRC Director for use of the field station. Something like this happens every year. Part is due to communication delays, some due to ingrained behavior that any backcountry inholding is available for use, and part because some people just aren't responsible or don't appreciate what the objectives of Taylor Ranch are. Every year planes land with the idea that people can fish or hike from here. Or people camp on the field station, in some cases destroying long-term monitoring plots. I put up signs at our east and west gates along the Big Creek trail last year so that people would be clearly aware that they were on field station property and no longer on public lands.

We are reviewing field station policies this year with our board of advisors. If you have some issues that we should address or ideas for assuring that our policies are clearly understood please send them to me. Thanks.

Regards,

Jeffrey J. Yeo  
Resident Scientist/Manager

c: John Hendee, Director