



Puget Sound Soaring Association

About Puget Sound Soaring

Puget Sound Soaring Association (PSSA) is an organization comprised of people that share a common interest in soaring. Established in 1974 as a non-profit club, PSSA is staffed and operated solely by its members. Our mission is to promote soaring by providing flying facilities, gliders, towplane, flight training and the various support equipment necessary to operate an active glider flying club. If you are interested in learning to fly gliders or would just like to have the opportunity to experience the beauty and excitement of soaring, it can be done through PSSA's Introductory Flight Program. Full memberships are available for those interested.

Introductory Flights / Flight Certificates

For those who would like to experience soaring, PSSA offers a 30-day introductory membership that includes one glider flight. Reservations are recommended during the busy flying season. Without a reservation, introductory flights are made on a first come first served basis. Depending on the conditions of the day introductory flights typically last twenty to thirty minutes. The 30-day temporary membership gives the member the opportunity to return and make an additional flight at a reduced rate. Introductory glider flight gift certificates make for a unique and unforgettable experience ... perfect for most any occasion.

Many people take introductory soaring flights in anticipation of obtaining a private pilot glider license. Instruction flights are flown with FAA certified flight instructors that allow the beginner to progress from novice to private glider pilot and beyond. Flight instruction is available on a limited basis.

Where and What We Fly

PSSA operates from Bergseth Airfield, a beautiful private airport nestled in the Cascade foothills just four miles north-east of the town of Enumclaw, Washington. Flight operations are held March through October on weekends and occasional weekdays. Depending on weather conditions flying is generally conducted from mid-morning until dusk. In addition to local flying, annual trips to other soaring sites in Washington, Oregon, California and Nevada provide a wide variety of soaring experiences for our members.

PSSA aircraft include two 2-seat gliders, one single seat glider and one towplane. In addition, several members fly their privately owned gliders.



Bergseth Airfield and Mt. Rainier

About Soaring

Soaring is simply sustained flight without the assistance of manmade propulsion. Initially a powered towplane is used to tow the glider to an altitude where the glider pilot releases from the towplane. The energy necessary to sustain flight comes from the ever changing atmospheric and weather conditions created by the sun. The types of lift we find are thermal lift, ridge lift, convergence lift created by the collision of differing airmasses, and the amazing mountain waves that often create lenticular clouds at higher altitudes. It is up to the glider pilot to find and utilize the various lift conditions that are presented throughout the day. Depending on the weather, and the pilot's goals and abilities, flights can last anywhere from a few minutes, to many hours, climbing tens of thousands of feet and covering hundreds of miles. If there is no lift to be found the glider will simply slowly and quietly descend to landing.



First Flight in the PW6



REQUIREMENTS FOR GLIDER PILOT CERTIFICATION

Student Pilot Certificate:

Minimum age to obtain a Student Pilot Certificate is 14. Generally 30 to 40 flights with an instructor are necessary prior to solo. This is roughly equivalent to 10-12 hours of flight time and is dependent upon the progress of the individual student. A student pilot certificate must be endorsed by an FAA-Certified Flight Instructor-Glider (CFIG) prior to flying solo.



Private Glider License:

After solo, student pilots generally continue working toward their private pilot glider license. The minimum requirements to obtain this license are: be at least 16 years of age and have logged at least 10 hours of flight time in a glider. That flight time must include at least 20 total glider flights, with 2 hours of solo flight time in a glider. The prospective pilot must also pass an FAA written examination, and pass the practical flight exam administered by an FAA Examiner.



Commercial Glider License:

Applicants for Commercial Pilot-Glider must be at least 18-years of age, hold a Private Pilot license with 25 hours of flight time in gliders and 100 glider flights as pilot-in-command, or a total of 200 hours of flight time in heavier-than-air aircraft.



Add Glider Pilot Rating to Existing License:

Holders of a valid FAA powered aircraft license with 40 hours as pilot-in-command need a minimum of 10 solo glider flights to qualify to take the FAA glider flight test. No written exam is required to add a glider rating to a power license. In all cases, refer to the current Federal Aviation Regulations for details on pilot licensing.



Come Fly with Us

For a truly unique experience come join us for a flight. Bergseth Airfield is easily accessible from the greater Seattle Tacoma area. The drive through the uncongested, rural farmlands offers stunning views of Mt. Rainier as you approach the foothills near the airfield. On your cell phone or GPS just type in Bergseth Airfield to find the easiest route from your location.

Glider flying is dependent upon having acceptable weather conditions. Each day we are planning to fly, a recorded message will be placed on our Operations Line by approximately 9:30 AM. Please call the number below and listen to the full message for the status of flight operations for the day.

PSSA Recorded Flight Operations Line

Call for daily flight operations status

206-660-0019

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