



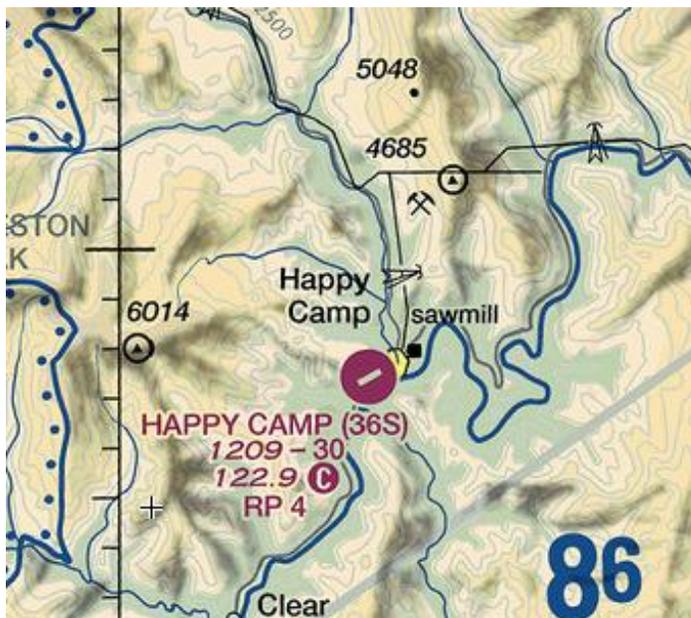
## FUN DESTINATIONS NRI Flying Club

Fun Destinations  
Ben Ginsberg

Howdy fellow NRI members. I want to relay details of three great trips I've taken over the past 6 months in the hopes that other Club members look into traveling to these destinations themselves!

### Happy Camp (36S) - July 2021

Happy Camp is located in Siskiyou County west of I-5 and just south of the Oregon border. This trip revolved around my son and I taking this [OARS Lower Klamath River rafting trip](#). OARS is a very well known rafting trip operator throughout the Western US and I've been on several of their trips before. I highly recommend them. This specific trip caters to young children (minimum age 4) and is the perfect intro to rafting and camping.



The meeting location for this trip was only 5 minutes down the road from the airport. Given we had a strict meeting time for the beginning of the trip, I was prepared to jump in the car in the middle of the night for the 6 hour drive up if the weather forecast didn't look promising but luckily the weather was forecast clear all week. The only issue was that it was forecast to be in the mid-90s all week so density altitude would have definitely been an issue in a normally-aspirated plane.

For routing, I decided on KCCR-086-A30-36S and stayed at 10,500 feet for nearly the entire flight. This allowed me to stay within gliding distance of an airport for almost the entire flight and didn't add much time. I didn't start descending until practically over the little valley to the northeast of the airport and did some descending 360s as I scoped out the airport and the valley so I knew my options. I had called the county airport manager before my flight to learn as much as I could about the field, and he said they might cease operating it at some point in the next few years as the Forest Service owned it and didn't want to take over management. He said the runway appeared pretty old and beat but that was a bit of an understatement. I should have taken some pictures of the runway because there were a lot of weeds growing in cracks. There was one transient C182 there when we arrived. The surrounding area had been devastated by wildfire recently and you can see a bit of that in the pictures below. I had arranged transportation with the very friendly owner of the Klamath River Resort Inn so he came to the airport to pick us up.

The rafting trip worked out perfectly and we had a blast. The majority of the visitors to the Happy Camp area come to either raft or fish on the Klamath River. There are several other rafting companies and fish-guiding services that operate in that area and a quick internet search will provide a bunch of information. There isn't much in the way of fine dining and nightlife in the area, but it's a fun place to get outside and disconnect a bit.

The most important lesson I learned on the trip was to look in the transient parking envelope boxes before reaching my hand in. Right before departure, I was reading the sign above the box so I knew the parking fee and lifted the cover before putting my hand in. Inside was a wasp's nest and I got stung a few times on my hand!! I never had an allergic reaction to getting stung as a kid but since it had been 20+ years since the last time I got stung, I decided to wait a while before taking off to make sure I was fine. I think the fact a wasp's nest was in the envelope box highlights how often this field has visitors. After take-off, I did some climbing 360s over the little valley until I reached 11,500 and then flew the same path home. On the way home, we saw the giant pyrocumulus cloud of the Dixie Fire - which had just started. It was a great trip and I recommend it to anyone who has young kids and is also proficient in mountain-flying and short-field operations. I plan on probably doing the same trip again this summer or doing this [Rogue River trip](#) - and possibly flying into Grant's Pass or something. Let me know if you're interested in joining.



Runway is in the middle of above picture. The forest next to the airport was all burned from a fire the previous year.

### **Mammoth Yosemite Airport (KMMH) – November 2021**

For years I've driven up and down Highway 395 on various outdoor trips and after passing KMMH (right next to the highway), I've promised myself at some point I was going to fly in there. I finally did this past Thanksgiving break as I took my son skiing. The Tioga Road (Highway 120 through Yosemite NP, from Crane Flat to Tioga Pass) is usually closed from November through late May or early June. That turns the drive to Mammoth from ~3.5-4 hours to ~5.5-6 hours. The 1hr and 15 minute flight sounds much more attractive! I was prepared to cancel the trip if the weather didn't look promising and/or if there wasn't enough snow. Luckily everything checked out on both fronts. We had that large atmospheric river earlier in November, which provided a decent snow base, and the recent weather had been cold enough at night for Mammoth to make snow. I chose Mammoth instead of Tahoe because it sits about ~1,000 feet higher than Tahoe and has better snowmaking capabilities – so they will normally open before Tahoe. Sure enough, none of the Tahoe resorts ended up opening by Thanksgiving. The weather the week of the trip was clear and near perfect flying weather. I was excited to fly over Yosemite NP – which had also been a goal of mine. The flight out there was great as I took a KCCR-KMPI-024-KMMH route, which allowed us to fly directly over the valley and then follow Highway 120 out to Lee Vining Airport before turning south. Fellow NRI member Oren Cheyette took N21348 out over to this area recently as well so the 182s can handle the flight if the weather is right. KMMH is known for some gnarly crosswinds due to some hills right next to the approach end of RWY 27

but the wind was calm when we landed. Be sure to check out the FBO website – [Hot Creek Aviation](#) - for tips and information. There is no general transient parking and you must park at the FBO. We reserved a rental car from the Enterprise at the airport but taxis/Ubbers into town are also available. We stayed on the mountain and it was an awesome trip. We skied the whole time but there are also hot springs, hiking, boating, fishing, etc., all available depending on the season. The flight back was just as easy as the flight out there. We took a more northerly route over Hetch Hetchy. I'd recommend the trip to anyone who is comfortable with mountain flying over Yosemite and wants to mix it up from the usual Tahoe jaunt. Note that you also have the ability to fly up to Tahoe and then south to fly at a lower altitude and avoid some of the higher peaks of the Sierras.



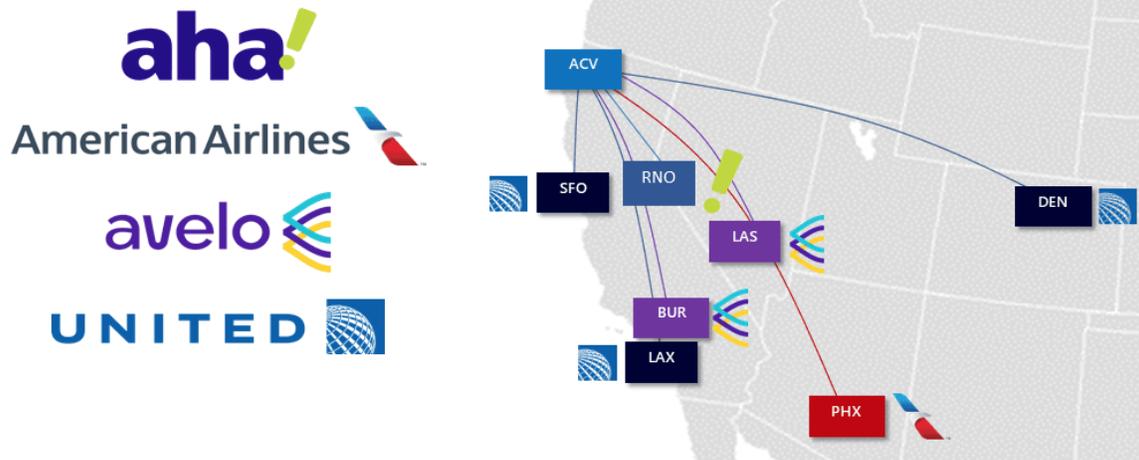
### **California Redwood Coast-Humboldt County Airport (KACV) - January 2022**

My most recent trip was this past weekend up to KACV. The motivation behind this trip was visiting Redwood National Park as my son and I are trying to visit as many National Parks as we can. I knew KACV was the main airport for the most northern part of CA, but I didn't realize quite how many scheduled commercial flights there are there. Check out the graphic below. Given it is a real airport with rental cars available, I again opted to get a car from Enterprise. KACV sits right on the coast at an elevation of ~222ft so it's subject to the coastal mist/fog and visibility can be pretty low at times. It does have a couple of instrument approaches with low minimums and a MALSR for the regional jets – combined with a 6,000-foot runway. Winds most of the time favor RWY 32 - which has you over the ocean on a missed approach – so you don't need to worry about any obstacles if you need to go missed at least! If the weather didn't cooperate, my plan was to land at one of two nearby

airports that appeared to usually have better weather and either take a taxi or have Enterprise come pick us up.

KEKA (Murray Field Airport) – 17mins drive from KACV

KFOT (Rohnerville Airport) – 48mins drive from KACV



The weather each day leading up to the trip seemed to show the mist/haze/fog burning off mid-morning. I pushed the departure time back a bit the morning of the flight as it was Low IFR all morning and figured I'd probably be good for VFR by the time I got there. The METAR was still showing Low IFR when we were about 30 minutes out so I was getting nervous but once we got over the last mountain and could see down towards the coast, the airport was visible from 7-8 miles and there was a very light haze. The ASOS was reporting 4 mile visibility and BR/HZ at this time. An Embraer 175 regional jet from Denver landed just after we did and it was cool to see the approach and taxi up close. Pictures below. There was a short 2 minute walk from GA parking to the rental car booth. For this trip, I decided to stay north of the airport up in the small, coastal town of Trinidad. We stayed at [Emerald Forest Cabins & RV Park](#) because I wanted the "cabin in the woods" feel instead of the Holiday Inn Express, Comfort Inn, etc. available in McKinleyville. The neighboring cities of Eureka/Arcata pretty much have everything you'd need if you were looking for a little more action. I highly recommend Emerald Forest. The beach time on the trip and the redwoods were phenomenal. It's always crazy to see the tallest trees in the world – some of which are 2,000 years old! Breakfast at Beachcomber Café in Trinidad was so good and the chowder at Seascope and Trinidad Eatery was so tasty I think I can't have any local chowder again. We went and checked out the tide pools at Luffenholtz Beach where my son caught hermit crabs and counted starfish. There is a plethora of ocean charter fishing operations out of the area (not currently in season) as well as river fishing options (Steelhead was currently in season). I plan to go back at some point to do some fishing – and ocean kayaking with [Kayak Trinidad](#). Throughout the trip, I was checking Foreflight

for the METARs, TAFs, MOS, etc. I'd have to say the weather changed a lot and seemed to report more severe conditions than actually turned out to be the case. The biggest issue was horizontal visibility but oftentimes you could see blue sky if you looked up. Transient parking was \$13/night and they stuck an envelope on your tie down. Anyway, another fun trip and that I'd recommend!





