



\$100 Off!
New Stove or Fireplace
Installation
Veneta, OR (541) 729-7508

Sat Sun Mon

H: 76° H: 75° H: 78°

News (/) Weather (/weather) Sports (/sports) Politics (/politics) Outdoors (/outdoors) COMMUNITIES (/COMMUNITIES)

EVENTS (HTTP://EVENTS.KVAL.COM) KVAL TV (/ABOUT) HEALTH CONNECTIONS (HTTP://WN.KVAL.COM/GLOBAL/CATEGORY.ASP?C=162653)

Pilots fear losing Oregon airspace to drone tests

By HILLARY BORRUD The Bulletin | Published: Jan 18, 2011 at 12:39 PM PDT (2011-01-18T19:39:55Z)

Recommend 7

0

Tweet 6

ml&Title=Pilots+Fear+Losing+Oregon+Airspace+To+Drone+Tests&Random=0.6262695088128704&PartnerID=134071&Cid=114151739)



BEND, Ore. (AP) — Some local pilots are concerned that a proposal to open a remote area of Central Oregon to aerial drone testing

An unmanned U.S. Predator drone makes a landing after completing a flight. (AP Photo/Armando Babani)

<http://www.kval.com/news/business/111138414.html>) could mean they're shut out of the airspace.

"We're concerned that whole large area not be closed to private aircraft all the time," said Don Wilfong, a pilot in Bend.

RELATED CONTENT

[Central Oregon explores opening airspace to aerial drones](http://www.kval.com/news/local/111138414.html)

[Free snowshoe tours at Mt. Bachelor](http://www.kval.com/outdoors/active/111942339.html)

[Welcome to Bend, Ore.: 'Poverty with a view'](http://www.kval.com/news/local/50949767.html)

And while a spokesman for a national organization that represents general aviation pilots said he has not heard of any such problems at other areas where unmanned vehicle testing takes place, some local pilots remain worried. "We're not against drones (<http://search.kval.com/default.aspx?ct=r&q=%22drones%22>), we're against this proposal, which ignores a large number of existing users of that airspace," said Gary Miller, president of the Central Oregon chapter of the Oregon Pilots Association.

The group behind the proposal, Economic Development for Central Oregon (<http://search.kval.com/default.aspx?ct=r&q=%22Economic%20Development%20for%20Central%20Oregon%22>), says the intent is not to close the entire military operations area to general aviation pilots. Volunteers with the group are meeting with local aviation groups and officials, and will revise the proposal to address their concerns.

"It's a fairly complicated proposal and in general, when we can get in front of them and explain it, they're in support of it," said Collins Hemingway, chair of EDCO's aviation recruitment committee.

Hemingway and other members of the committee are seeking support from federal lawmakers and the Federal Aviation Administration to open a military operations area currently used by the Air National Guard for testing of the drones' operations, including surveillance technology. Testing would not include munitions, which would have to be tested at a bombing range.

The unmanned aircraft are currently prohibited from flying in general airspace, and testing is usually allowed only in restricted military airspace, unless companies obtain special certificates.

The military operations area where testing would occur under the proposal covers a large expanse of land in eastern Deschutes County, southern Crook County, western Harney County and northeastern Lake County.

Do you support putting fluoride in Eugene's drinking water?

- Yes
- No
- Undecided

Submit

MOST POPULAR



[The week's best photos](http://www.kval.com/news/national/The-weeks-best-photos-220738361.html)

<http://www.kval.com/news/national/The-weeks-best-photos-220738361.html>)



['I couldn't imagine going through what he's going through'](http://www.kval.com/news/local/I-couldnt-imagine-going-through-what-he-s-going-through-220887231.html)

<http://www.kval.com/news/local/I-couldnt-imagine-going-through-what-hes-going-through-220887231.html>)



[Paramedics describe finding girl's lifeless body](http://www.kval.com/news/local/115758604)

<http://www.kval.com/news/local/115758604>)



[Photos: Wildfire sends ash and smoke into the air, creates a haze](http://www.kval.com/news/local/Photos-The-Columbia-River-Gorge-wildfires-220670141.html)

<http://www.kval.com/news/local/Photos-The-Columbia-River-Gorge-wildfires-220670141.html>)

Miller was initially upset that Hemingway's group did not contact some pilots earlier about the proposal. On Friday, Miller said he was hopeful EDCO would work out a proposal that would satisfy pilots, but he is waiting to see that in writing.

"We'll be working with them more (this) week, and hopefully we can make sure everyone is happy," Miller said.

Miller said he flies a dozen times a year through the airspace where unmanned vehicle testing might occur, and many pilots cross it going from Bend to Idaho.

The economic development group's initial proposal led some pilots to believe the entire military operations area would be temporarily closed at times for testing, Miller said, although the group has also said it only wants a portion designated for testing.

"It's solvable; we just want to solve it," Miller said.

Wilfong said he was mostly concerned about the safety of drone testing and how much of the military area would be closed off. However, Wilfong was encouraged about EDCO's intentions after meeting with them last week.

"I just think it needs some definite consideration of making the airspace safe for all users," Wilfong said of the proposal. "I feel like we've got their attention now."

For AirLink Critical Care Transport, the biggest question is how drone testing would affect its medical helicopter operations from Bend to Burns.

Although the area is sparsely populated, the emergency air ambulance service responds to incidents that range from car collisions to ATV accidents.

Dustin Duncan, AirLink services manager, said he has the same questions as private pilots, such as how big the testing area will be. AirLink staff also need to know who to contact, in the event that they need to respond to an incident in the area while drone testing is under way, Duncan said.

"I'm not against it, by any means," Duncan said. "(But) there are still some questions that need to be answered."

So far, testing of unmanned aerial vehicles has not closed off large amounts of airspace to private pilots, according to a spokesman for a national organization that represents general aviation owners and pilots.

"To the best of my knowledge, we have not heard, as an association, of significant problems with use of airspace being denied to pilots," said Chris Dancy, a spokesman for the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association.

If a large area were closed off to general aviation pilots, that "could cause significant deviations to get around the space," Dancy said. Pilots would use more fuel, and the length of the flight would increase.

Dancy said he also hasn't heard of collisions or close calls between general aviation aircraft and drones.

"As long as someone is making sure the remotely piloted vehicle is in sight and not creating a hazard for civilian aircraft, it is possible for them to mix," Dancy said.

Hemingway said Economic Development for Central Oregon has addressed most of the concerns raised by pilots, including that testing not occur around U.S. Highway 20 and U.S. Highway 395.

"Primarily, it comes down to keeping the proposed test area away from the airports, away from the cities, away from the standard navigation routes and away from the roads that are generally used by pilots using visual navigation," Hemingway said.

The economic development group's volunteers probably didn't explain the complex proposal as well as they could have early on, Hemingway said. But he said going public with it brought in a lot of feedback that will improve the proposal. One change will be to make it less specific.

"We're just going to say, 'This is what we want to do, figure out how to make it work,'" Hemingway said.

In Bend, two peace activists said they oppose the military use of unmanned aerial vehicles and do not want them to be tested in Central Oregon.

"We're spending all this money on the military and by doing it in Central Oregon, we're endorsing what we're doing nationally," said Meg Brookover, who is a member of Code Pink and the peace and justice team at First Presbyterian Church. It doesn't have to be that way, she said. "We can have our own philosophical higher ground."

Thiel Larson, a member of the same groups, also opposes the testing proposal.

"I am against that because I really do feel there's a really, really small percentage of drones used for nonmilitary work," Thiel said. "I just believe that we should not be in the business of encouraging a war tool to be tested in our own airspace."

Hemingway was familiar with Larson and Brookover's concerns.



Sheriff: Missing teen's car found in Douglas County

<http://www.kval.com/news/local/Sheriff-Missing-teens-car-found-in-Douglas-County-220826951.html>



Instead of brake, driver hits gas - and then store

<http://www.kval.com/news/local/Instead-of-brake-driver-hits-gas---and-then-store-220839371.html>



Police: Officer shot man who refused to drop guns

<http://www.kval.com/news/local/Police-Officer-shot-man-who-refused-to-drop-guns-220831571.html>

"They're raising probably the most complicated question man has ever dealt with, which is how do we use our technology only for good," Hemingway said.

Early in the history of aviation following World War I, airplanes were mostly used by the military, Hemingway said. Now, they are predominantly used by civilians, and the same evolution could take place with drones, he said.

Information from: The Bulletin, <http://www.bendbulletin.com> (<http://www.bendbulletin.com>)

Copyright 2011 The Associated Press.

MORE TO EXPLORE



Want \$500? Help OSP find out who killed these 2 elk

(<http://www.kval.com/outdoors/Want-500-Help-OSP-find-out-who-killed-these-elk-220586571.html>)



Police make arrest in random fatal attack of



Police: Officer shot man who refused to drop guns

(<http://www.kval.com/news/local/One-of-2-teens-accused-of--220822261.html>)

SPONSORED FROM AROUND THE WEB

(<http://www.kval.com/news/local/Police-Officer-shot-man-who-refused-to-drop-guns-220831571.html>)



Bald eagles bad news for seabird on Oregon Coast



France Plans Shark Massacre After 15-Year-Old Girl Dies in Reunion...
Take Part

(<http://www.kval.com/news/local/Bald-eagles-bad-news-for-seabird-220277501.html>)

(<http://www.takepart.com/article/2013/07/31/shark-attack-reunion-island-massacre>)



Five Unconventional Careers The Army National Guards Prepares You...
On Your GUARD



Inside Littoral, the Navy's Most Controversial Ship
Bloomberg

(http://www.bloomberg.com/video/u-s-navy-ship-proves-agility-to-win-over-congress-EfPHLoDqSl6ourMp_8k34A.html)



Daycare Teacher Fired After Extinguishing Fire at Daycare Center
itsybitsystems

(<http://itsybitsystems.com/daycare-teacher-fired-after-extinguishing-fire-at-daycare-center/>)

Recommended by

0 Comments

Sign in / Register

1 person reading



(<http://www.kval.com/younews/220764931>)



(<http://www.kval.com/younews/220567421>)



(<http://www.kval.com/younews/220460031>)

[More YouNews \(/younews\)](#) | [Share your photos \(/younews?form=post\)](#)

EVENT CALENDAR
(HTTP://EVENTS.KVAL.COM?UTM_SOURCE=WWW.KVAL.COM&U)

Today Tomorrow Weekend

[Buccaneer Rampage](#)
(http://events.kval.com/Buccaneer_Rampage/?utm_source=www.kval.com&utm_medium=eventsouthbeach)
[South Beach \(tab1_first_clink?\)](#)
[utm_source=www.kval.com&utm_medium=eventshomepage](http://events.kval.com/default.aspx?utm_source=www.kval.com&utm_medium=eventshomepage)

[Cancer Prevention Study-3](#)
(http://events.kval.com/Cancer_Prevention_Study-3)
[utm_source=www.kval.com&utm_medium=eventsouthbeach](http://events.kval.com/default.aspx?utm_source=www.kval.com&utm_medium=eventsouthbeach)
[utm_source=www.kval.com&utm_medium=eventsouthbeach](http://events.kval.com/default.aspx?utm_source=www.kval.com&utm_medium=eventsouthbeach)
[utm_source=www.kval.com&utm_medium=eventsouthbeach](http://events.kval.com/default.aspx?utm_source=www.kval.com&utm_medium=eventsouthbeach)

| | | | |
|--|----------|--|--------------------|
| | | | |
| | + Follow | | Post comment as... |

[Newest](#) | [Oldest](#) | [Top Comments](#)

KVAL 13 is happy to provide a forum for commenting and discussion. Please respect and abide by the house rules:

Keep it clean, keep it civil, keep it truthful, stay on topic, be responsible. Share your knowledge and please suggest removal of comments that violate these standards.

[See full commenting rules \(http://account.kval.com/commenting-rules/\)](http://account.kval.com/commenting-rules/)

[Send Feedback \(mailto:webteam@komo4news.com\)](mailto:webteam@komo4news.com)

Powered by Livefyre (<http://livefyre.com>)

Sinclair Interactive Media

KVAL, 4575 Blanton Road, Eugene, OR 97405

[Contact Us \(/about/contact\)](#) | [Advertise with Us \(http://mediakit.fisherinteractive.com/contact\)](http://mediakit.fisherinteractive.com/contact) | [Media Kit \(http://mediakit.fisherinteractive.com/\)](http://mediakit.fisherinteractive.com/) | [Careers \(http://www.sbgi.net/employment/index.shtml\)](http://www.sbgi.net/employment/index.shtml) | [Privacy Policy \(/about/privacy\)](#) | [Terms & Conditions \(/about/terms\)](#) | [Copyright Notices \(/about/copyright-notices\)](#) | [Public Filing Report \(http://komonews.s3.amazonaws.com/KVAL-KCBY-KPIC-Public-File-Tab-Report-2011-2012-Final.pdf\)](http://komonews.s3.amazonaws.com/KVAL-KCBY-KPIC-Public-File-Tab-Report-2011-2012-Final.pdf) | [Closed Captioning \(http://www.kval.com/about/88690827.html\)](http://www.kval.com/about/88690827.html)

Copyright © 2013 Sinclair Interactive Media, LLC; a member of Sinclair Broadcast Group, Inc.

For assistance accessing the [Online Public File \(https://stations.fcc.gov/station-profile/kval-tv\)](https://stations.fcc.gov/station-profile/kval-tv) please contact: Greg Raschio 541-685-5708

Powered by [Broadcast Interactive Media \(http://www.broadcast-interactive.com\)](http://www.broadcast-interactive.com).