



*Bull elk on Big Creek the first day of hunting season.*

**HUNTING.**

Whether you are planning a hunt in the Frank Church Wilderness on your own or with an outfitter, Middle Fork Aviation can get you there. We will fly you and your gear to an airstrip of your choice. A typical

load for one of our Cessna 206 aircraft is three hunters, each with a backpack, day pack, and rifle. If you have a large camp—wall tent, stove, coolers, etc.—we can fly extra loads. Plan on more loads to carry out your trophy and meat.

**FISHING.** The crystal waters of the Middle Fork and its tributaries are an outstanding catch-and-release fishery. Fishing is best from early July through September. Native cutthroats, bull trout, and rainbows are typically 12” to 15”, but larger fish are common. You can find water that eludes all but the most dedicated boaters and hikers by flying into wilderness runways.

**HIKING.** A variety of wilderness airstrips offers lots of opportunities for hikers to arrange for drop-offs and pickups. Trail conditions and creek crossings are difficult to accurately scout by air, so check trail conditions with the USFS and plan your trip wisely. Distances, terrain, and conditions can be more challenging than you might think.

**MOUNTAIN FLYING REALITIES:**

Air is smooth in the mornings, so flying earlier is better. We start large groups at 7:00 or 8:00 a.m., sometimes earlier on warm or busy days. Warm air adversely affects aircraft performance, so we *will not* fly gear or people during the heat of the day during warm months.

We cannot land on gravel bars, lakes, or ridge tops (like in Alaska).



**Challis Airport**

**Elevation:** 5,072 ft.  
**CTAF/UNICOM:** 122.8  
**ASOS:** 119.275  
208-879-5121

**Runway:** 16 / 34, Asphalt  
4600 x 60 ft

**Fuel:** Self-serve 100LL, Jet A

**Services:** Major engine and airframe

**Remarks:** Sloping runway.  
Landing 16, Takeoff 34 recommended  
when conditions permit.

MIDDLE FORK AVIATION

P.O. BOX 656

CHALLIS, ID 83226

208•879•5728

888•283•7258

WWW.MIDDLEFORKAIR.COM

**MIDDLE FORK  
AVIATION, INC.**

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**FLY IDAHO'S  
BACKCOUNTRY  
WITH US**

One of the premier aviation services in the region, **Middle Fork Aviation** provides charter flights, aircraft maintenance, fuel services, mountain flying training, and friendly advice to pilots passing through.

Pete and Shiley Nelson and the staff at Middle Fork Aviation are down-to-earth folks who enjoy safely flying people and cargo into the backcountry. We look out for each other and fellow pilots like family. Middle Fork Aviation also trains private pilots seeking to improve their mountain flying skills. Fly Idaho's backcountry with Middle Fork Aviation.



**BOATING.** Middle Fork Aviation will fly you to your launch, shuttle your gear, or fly passengers in or out midway through your trip on the Middle Fork of the Salmon. When the water is low and the river is spiny, we can drop extra weight (gear or passengers) to the runway of your choice — Indian Creek is the most popular choice.

**Planning Rules of Thumb for People and Gear:**

A typical load for a Cessna 206 aircraft is 1,000 lbs. That's room for four large coolers or dry boxes, a couple inflatable kayaks, charcoal, beer, and one person up front.

If we're flying your entire party, including boats and gear, divide the number of people in your party by two. That number will be very close to the number of loads required. Everyone's gear fits in the plane a little differently and items like hard kayaks can require more trips. Turn-around time for each flight is about an hour.

Following our rule of thumb, getting a group of 20 on the river would require 10 loads (about four hours using three airplanes).

**Packing Tips:**

Think smaller and lighter to reduce your loads. We can only take boat frames that break down, and the more they do, the better. Hard boats (kayaks) and oars up to 10' long will fit, but take up space. Inflatable boats and oars that break down are better and more cost-effective. Rolling everything tightly will save space.

# Flying the River of No Return



**BACKCOUNTRY CHARTERS**

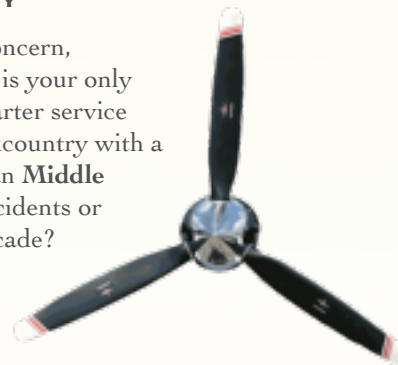
You don't need to mount an expedition to access the largest wilderness complex in the Lower Forty-Eight. You just need **Middle Fork Aviation**. From the air, you can easily reach one of 18 wilderness airstrips. Arranging a drop-off in a deep canyon, on a high plateau, or one of the river's resort outposts is likely cheaper and easier than you think.

We work with numerous guides who can help you outfit your trip, or you can outfit it yourself and rely on us to get you in and out of the Wilderness. Pack light or bring all the luxuries of car camping.

**SAFETY**

If safety is your only concern, **Middle Fork Aviation** is your only choice. There is no Charter service flying into Idaho's backcountry with a better safety record than **Middle Fork Aviation**. Any incidents or accidents in the last decade? Nope. Ask any competing Charter service this same question.

Our safety record beats all other regional charter services hands down and we aim to keep it that way.



**CHARTER SERVICE PRICING**

Our operations are based out of Challis, Idaho flying scenic flights and charters into Idaho's back country, but we regularly pick up, drop off and shuttle people and gear between Boise, McCall, Hailey and Salmon as well. We fly charters in and out of numerous backcountry airstrips in the region.

Charter services are typically quoted one-way, by the airplane load. Scenic flights are typically priced by the half-hour and by the seat. We set our prices at the beginning of the year so they may be subject to fuel surcharges to cover fluctuations in the price of aviation fuel. We buy bulk and provide fuel service for the airport so our prices are relatively stable, but we can't control what happens in the Middle East. Call to get a firm quote.

**MOUNTAIN FLYING CLINIC**

Mountain flying in general, and Idaho's wilderness airstrips in particular, require an awareness of terrain, weather conditions, aircraft performance, and the hazards associated with each airstrip. Each year, **Middle Fork Aviation's Mountain Flying Clinic** helps pilots gain or sharpen mountain flying skills.

Our training focuses on mountain flying techniques and aviation safety while we orient pilots to the backcountry airstrips in our area. Our training is informal but very thorough, with a focus on experiential learning. The atmosphere is casual—with lunches in the hanger and group dinners at Pete and Shiley's house. We round out every pilot's learning experience with classroom experience and hanger talk over a cold one when the day is done.

Space for flying students is limited to 12, so register early with a deposit to hold your seat.

