

Dear Director Fazio,

I would like to submit comments on the Federal Aviation Administration's Notice of Proposed Rulemaking for the National Parks Air Tour Management Act (14 CFR Part 136 [Docket No. FAA-2001-8690; Notice No. 01-01]), and appreciate this opportunity.

I place a great value on preserving natural quiet and aesthetics in America's national parks. While hiking in national parks, little has disturbed me more than low flying aircraft disrupting the serenity and my enjoyment of these wild areas. In order to better preserve the peacefulness of these remnants of wilderness, it is necessary to manage commercial air tours over our national parks.

After having viewed the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, I would like to support the 5,000-foot Above Ground Level altitude as the triggering altitude for the air tour management plan, as recommended by the Federal Aviation Administration. This level was also recommended by the members of the National Parks Overflights Working Group with nearly unanimous consent. The 5,000-foot Above Ground Level will capture most operators that give commercial air tours of parks. This is quite reasonable because the 5,000-foot level in no way interferes with general aviation traffic since only flight operators who meet the rest of the act's definitions are defined as commercial air tour operators.

I would also like to note that in any Air Tour Management Planning process, the Federal Aviation Administration should recognize the National Park Service's expertise on natural quiet issues and defer to their authority in order to determine the impacts of noise on park visitors, resources, and values.

I urge the Federal Aviation Administration to begin immediate enforcement of the "no new entrants" clause of the act, in order to prevent new air tour operators from flying over parks before the air tour management planning process starts. Furthermore, I strongly urge you to block any existing air tour operators from flying over parks if they have ignored the National Park Air Tour Management Act's requirement that air tour operators flying over national parks notify the Federal Aviation Administration of their over-park operations within 90 days of the passage of the National Parks Air Tour Management Act.

Finally, for the public and for air tour operators, I would like to request that the Federal Aviation Administration clearly define the process through which air tour management plans will be developed.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments on this very important issue. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,  
Christopher Lish  
PO Box 433  
Terlingua, TX 79852  
lishchris@yahoo.com