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DEPT OF TRANSPORTATION

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May 27, 2001

Anthony Fazio, Director
Office of Rulemaking
Docket Management System
U.S. Department of Transportation
400 Seventh Street, S.W., Rm. PL401
Washington, D.C. 20590.

FAA-01-8690-17

Dear Director Fazio,

Docket No. FAA-2001-8690; Notice No. 01?01

As a member of NPCA, I am commenting on 14 CFR Part 136 as the process allows. The subject of these comments is preserving the natural quiet and aesthetics in national parks by managing commercial flyovers.

1. I support the 5000 ft. Above Ground Level altitude recommended by FAA as the "triggering altitude" for the air tour management planning process. This has been accepted by the parks in question. It should be agreeable to most commercial operators who offer national park flyovers. This will not interfere with general aviation traffic.

2. I believe with NPCA that any air tour management planning should recognize the NPS expertise in defining "quiet" and defer to its authority to determine the impact of noise on park visitors and resources.

3. I would like you to request FAA to immediately begin the enforcement of the part of the Act's clause "No new entrants" in order to prevent new air tour operators from starting park flyovers before the new management planning process starts.

4. Please request FAA to block existing air tour operators from flying over parks if they have ignored the FAA Advisory requesting operators over national parks to notify FAA of their over-park operations within 90 days of the passage of the National Parks Air Tour Management Act in April 2000.

5. And, lastly, please require FAA to define clearly to the public and air tour operators the process through which air touring management plans will be developed.

It is hoped that by the coming summer season this process may run smoothly for park visitors and air traffic alike and that park flyovers, for visitors on the ground, will no longer be an unpleasant intrusion in their enjoyment of national parks. Thank you for helping.

Sincerely,
Melissa K. Buhler
Melissa K. Buhler (Ms.)