

Low Flying Aircraft – Rio Verde Foothills

Issued: March 21, 2018

Background:

The Arizona Flight Training Workgroup (AFTW.org) is a safety-focused group of aviation training professionals who recommend best practices for utilizing airspace in Arizona with the ultimate goal of reducing accidents, incidents and pilot deviations. This group has taken note that many pilots are still conducting ground reference maneuvers in the area over and west of Rio Verde Community, despite the recent charting change.

Abbreviations and Definitions:

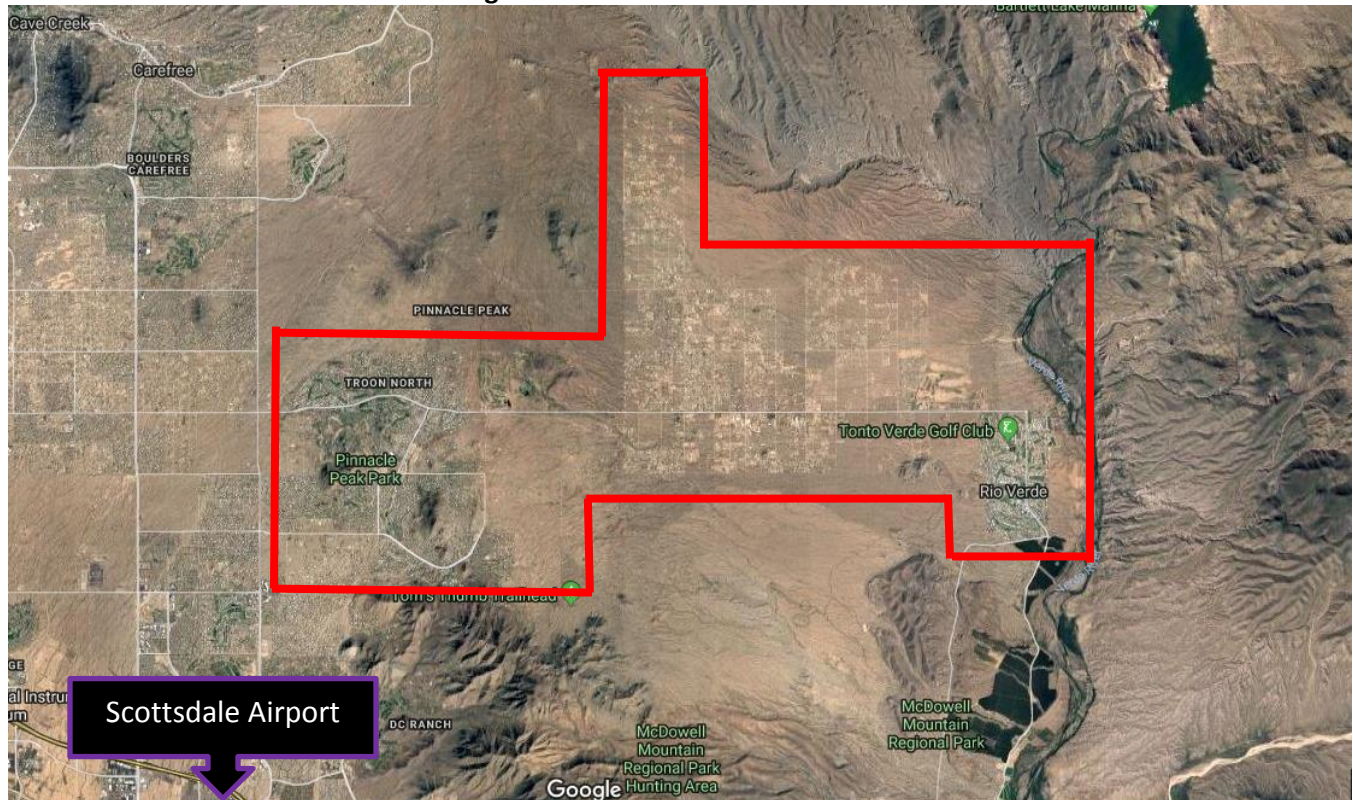
Ground Reference Maneuvers – Maneuvers required by Airmen Certification Standards including turns around a point, rectangular course and S-turns across a road conducted between 600-1000 feet AGL.

AGL – Above Ground Level

MSL – Mean Sea Level

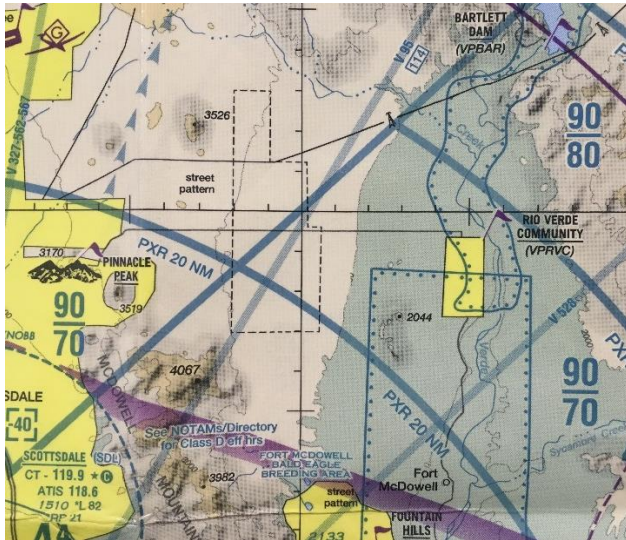
Simulated Emergency Approach and Landing – Maneuver required by Airmen Certification Standards in which the pilot maneuvers the aircraft with a simulated engine failure (Airplane Single Engine Land/Sea).

Attachment 1: Please note the following area:

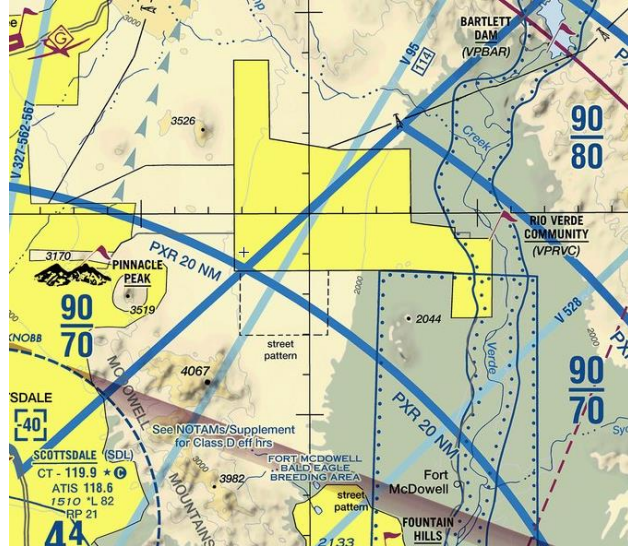


Attachment 2: Please note the chart changes

Terminal Chart **PRIOR** to October 12th, 2017



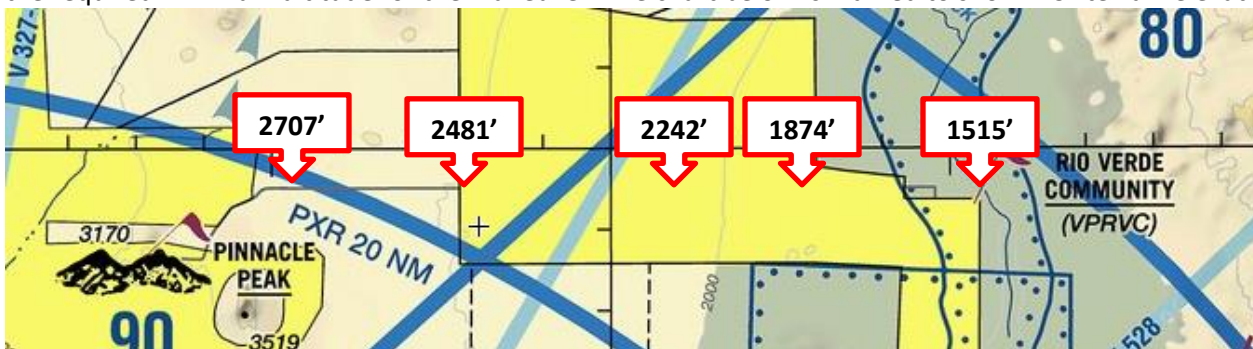
Terminal Chart **AFTER** October 12th, 2017:



This charting change now indicates this area as a “populated place” according to the Aeronautical Chart Users Guide. The Airplane Flying Handbook states that choices for ground reference maneuvers “can be limited by geography, population density, infrastructure, or structures.” It later states that the, “Maneuver area should not cause disturbances and be well away from groups of people, livestock, or communities.”

Attachment 3: Please note the terrain

Flight Crews practicing ground reference are referencing terrain elevation at the beginning of the maneuver, but then proceeding west over what looks like flat terrain, not realizing the terrain slopes up significantly. Thus, when they conclude their maneuver, they end up being well below their starting altitude, sometimes well below the required minimum altitude for the maneuver. The chart below is marked to show MSL terrain elevations.



Please fly friendly in all training airspace