

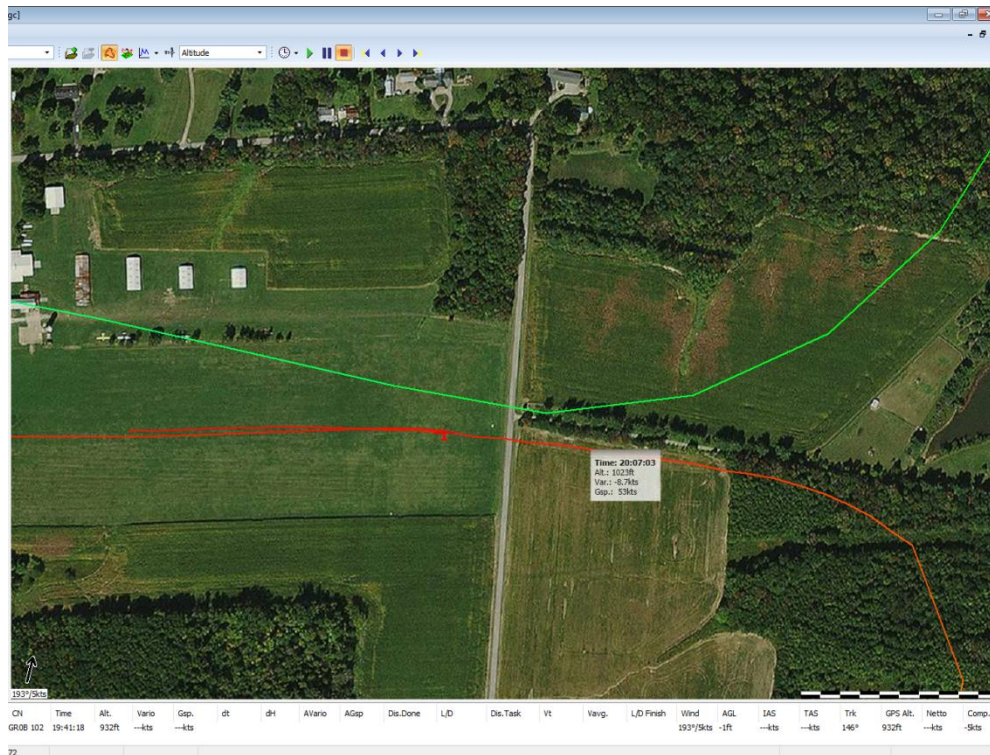
Safety Corner...TREES...the ones you may not be seeing!

Kevin Price, CCSC Safety Officer

CCSC pilots demonstrate a healthy respect for the trees on the approach end of runway 09. Those trees are obviously very obvious, and the natural instinct is to give them wide vertical berth during landing. What about the those trees though at the approach end of runway 27? Trees, what trees?

I am not referring to the trees that set back about 700 feet from Elbon Road. You'd have to really mess up a pattern for those to be a problem during landing. The concern is the narrow line of trees oriented parallel with the runway 27 landing lanes. While most pilots land on the south side of runway 27 and so do not come close to these trees, occasionally a slight pattern overshoot, the need to deconflict from aircraft that just landed, or perhaps the need to land on a drier part of the runway can bring a pilot close to these rather tall trees. When this happens, it is easy to be so focused on the landing that the pilot can lose consideration of these trees, especially considering the very long wingspan of a glider.

During my field check last year the instructor spoke up (good!) about his concern with the trees as I approached runway 27 to land. For this pattern, I had to offset a bit north due to traffic that had just landed. That, combined with being on a not-steep approach, brought my right wing a bit close to the tree line. Here' a picture from that flight...with accurate altitude and ground track information... from SeeYou:



I have seen others come quite close to this tree line both vertically and laterally, and I am not sure they were fully aware. Again, it seems it is particularly easy to forget about those long wings and this tree line when focusing on the end game of the landing.

Anyhow, please pay special attention to these trees when your landing approach is not well to the south or north side of runway 27. Likewise, if you see someone come uncomfortably close to the trees, do them a favor and let them know what you saw. Crew Chiefs, Ground Crews, and especially Instructors, please keep an eye out for this trend item.