

- Concentrate on the flight leg you're doing. This keeps you from getting overwhelmed with the enormity of the whole trip. **(Dave)**
- This trip is a fantastic confidence booster that is doable—without time pressure—for a low-time pilot. **(JP)**
- The issues with doing it yourself are logistical, not safety. But having an instructor with you adds utility and lets you work toward your instrument rating. **(Sarah)**
- This might be a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that the pilot may never get again, but crossing the Rockies is a real challenge. This pilot should get some experience with mountain flying the day before departing if possible. **(Tom)**
- Plan to cross any mountains in the morning. Road and railroad builders have already found the low places to cross. You'll probably want the same routes. **(Dave)**
- Stay hydrated. Rest when you can. Use good nutrition. If you take care of yourself physically, you're in a much better place to make good decisions. **(Dave)**
- If the pilot didn't have experience in this airplane type, going with an instructor would be essential. **(Tom)**

"It would be really tough for me to keep the foggles on during this trip. You're gonna see things that you'll probably never see again flying at an altitude this low across the country. I would love the opportunity to build the [instrument] time. But, man, I would hate what I'm missing." — JP

- Long trips in a slow airplane on a deadline are incompatible with the time and priorities of instrument training. But that situation is perfect for VFR cross-country experience. **(Wally)**
- Once you're east of the Rockies, you can get practical experience in the IFR system and do it at airports outside of your home area, which rarely happens in IFR training. **(Sarah)**
- You could have the instructor meet you in a city in the Midwest if you really want someone for the last part of the trip. **(Tom)**
- If you were following major roads, basic survival gear would be sufficient. However, you should have a raft and vest to cross the Great Lakes. **(Sarah)**
- Review the effects of winds in and over the mountains with someone experienced before this flight. **(Dave and Tom)**

EXPERT CHOICES

- 1** Dave, Wally, Tom, JP, Kevin
- 3** Sarah

1

6 Days

Go it alone, which gives you 6 days to get back to Burlington (KBTV) (Tues-Sun).

2

4 Days

Take your non-instrument-rated friend. You'll have 4 days to reach Burlington (KBTV) (Tues-Fri).

3

4 Days

Meet Bob the CFII in Portland and fly back with him. You'll have 4 days to get back to Burlington (KBTV) (Thurs-Sun).

4

1 day... for you

Who knows for the plane... **Ferry Pilot**

Fly back home commercially and hire a ferry pilot to bring the airplane to Burlington (KBTV).

- Have a friend or family member track your progress and check in with you each day. You can share photos too. **(JP)**
- A Spot or InReach tracker can offer peace of mind and safety if you must land just outside of cell coverage. **(Kevin)**
- Performance isn't a big issue for the route you can take avoiding the high parts of the Rockies. The weight of another person isn't a big deal. **(Sarah)**
- Storms several days out aren't worth stressing about because the picture may change. **(Dave)**
- There's a really good chance you'll deal with thunderstorms at the end of trip. You'll want a plan for that, which might be leaving the airplane short of your destination. **(JP)**
- It's good to have a plan, but don't get hung up on a goal. Fly along and see where it makes the most sense to land. **(Dave, Wally, and Sarah)**
- Plan your last stop for the day at a towered airport with services and a nearby hotel. **(Dave)**
- Ask anyone you know and on social media for the best places to stop, with things to do if you get stuck or crew cars you can borrow. **(Dave, Wally, and Sarah)**
- Some of the best, most unique experiences have been where I had weather diversions and I stopped unexpectedly. **(Tom)**
- This won't turn out how you expect—it will both be better and more challenging—but totally worth it. **(Everyone)**

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