

# **Douglas County, New Zealand district become sister communities**

The Douglas County Board of Commissioners formally approved a sister community partnership with the Waitaki District, New Zealand, this month.

The partnership was spurred by long-time relationships that already exist between gliding enthusiasts in Douglas County and the Waitaki District, as both communities are widely recognized as world destinations for soaring. Soaring NV, a glider operator at the Minden-Tahoe Airport has established a strong relationship with Glide Omarama, a glider operator at the Omarama Airfield in the Waitaki District. During initial discussions to create the partnership at a cross-country glider camp in Minden last summer, many other natural commonalities were discovered between Douglas County and the Waitaki District, including rural lifestyles, outdoor recreation, agriculture, soaring, fishing, climate, tourism and friendly people.

Sister community programs are recognized as a catalyst for economic vitality, fostering communication across borders, creating a mutual exchange of ideas, education, culture and sport, and promoting tourism and trade. Formalizing the relationship between Douglas County and the Waitaki District through a sister community partnership sends a message to both communities that we value the mutual exchange of ideas, people and materials, and we wish to promote the common links between our communities.

The partnership does not require any financial commitment from Douglas County.