

Review of
Blue Canyon-Nyack Airport KBLU Scenery

Created by ORBX Simulation Systems

Intro

The Blue Canyon-Nyack airport package from ORBX Systems is a high quality scenery pack developed by Greg Jones and Russell Linn together with their team. The pack includes 3 airports together with a bonus hospital helipad located in the vicinity of 2O1 Gansner Field and the airfields together covers an area of about 1,500 sq miles. The custom mesh is a 10m mesh covering about 8,000 sq miles around and in between the airfields. The scenery requires the ORBX FTX region NA Northern California to perform the best.

KBLU is a public strip that features an asphalt runway together with an asphalt apron. The field is located at an altitude of 5,284 feet above sea level and is only open for flights during the summer season since there are no facilities for clearing the runway during winter.

CA21 Limberlost Ranch is a small private grass strip with a very short and challenging sloped runway that certainly will push your pilot skills to the limit, especially at windy and rainy weather conditions.

2O1 Gansner Field is a medium size public airfield featuring an asphalt runway, taxiways, apron and parking areas together with several hangars. The CL94 Plumas District Hospital helipad is close to the airport and also featured in the pack.



General Information & Airport Specs

• Airport Name	<i>Blue Canyon-Nyack</i>	<i>Gansner Field</i>	<i>Limberlost Ranch</i>
• Airport Type	<i>Public</i>	<i>Public</i>	<i>Private</i>
• Owner	<i>County of Placer</i>	<i>County of Plumas</i>	<i>E.J. Pettigrew-Chase</i>
• Operations	-	<i>9,200 (2015)</i>	-
• Website	-	-	-
• ICAO	<i>KBLU</i>	<i>None</i>	<i>None</i>
• IATA/FAA	<i>BLU</i>	<i>GNF / 201</i>	<i>CA21</i>
• Freq:			
○ <i>Tower</i>	<i>None</i>	<i>None</i>	<i>None</i>
○ <i>Approach</i>	<i>None</i>	<i>None</i>	<i>None</i>
○ <i>Ground</i>	<i>None</i>	<i>None</i>	<i>None</i>
○ <i>Multicom</i>	<i>122,90 MHz</i>	<i>122,70 MHz</i>	
• Location	<i>Emigrant Gap, CA</i>	<i>Plumas County, CA</i>	<i>23Nmi West of KBLU</i>
• Elevation	<i>5,284 ft</i>	<i>3,419 ft</i>	<i>1,650 ft</i>
• Coordinates	<i>39°16'30"N 120°42'35"W</i>	<i>39°56'38"N 120°56'43"W</i>	<i>39°13'15"N 121°12'57"W</i>
• Runways	<i>15/33 Asphalt</i> <i>3,300 ft x 50 ft</i>	<i>06/24 Asphalt</i> <i>4,105 ft x 60 ft</i>	<i>10/28 Turf</i> <i>1,700 ft x 100 ft</i>

Key Features (data from ORBX Systems)

Key Features

- ✂ Three airports in one package!
- ✂ Unique static aircraft models
- ✂ Seasonal textures
- ✂ 8000 sq miles custom 10m mesh
- ✂ Custom modelled surrounding POIs
- ✂ Fully hand placed autogen
- ✂ Detailed custom ground polygons
- ✂ Plumas District Hosp helipad CL94
- ✂ By Greg Jones and Russell Linn
- ✂ High resolution buildings
- ✂ Challenging hilltop landing CA21

Purchase, Download and Installation

I got this scenery directly from the ORBX Systems website and I did the download and installation through the ORBX FTX Central v3. Downloading and performing the installation of the scenery this way was exceptionally easy since I almost did not have to do anything myself. After the scenery was unlocked in the FTX Central I could just click the button “Install” and the scenery was then automatically downloaded and installed to the correct location on my PC without me having to provide any input on folders or registration keys etc.

The installed version of the KBLU scenery pack which is also the version tested and reviewed in this review is the version v1.05 for FSX. The download of the app. 955 MB file together with the installation of the scenery only took about 2-3 minutes in total which I find to be very quickly and only possible due to a superbly good server connection.

Prior to the installation of the KBLU I had also activated, downloaded and installed the FTX region NA Northern California. This file is 1.32GB and the version installed for this review was the version v1.30.

Included in this pack is a user friendly and very easy to read User Guide. This guide is a 15 page PDF file that you can download through the FTX central v3 as well, and that features descriptions on the three airfields, various helpful airport information and charts together with quick references and recommended settings etc.

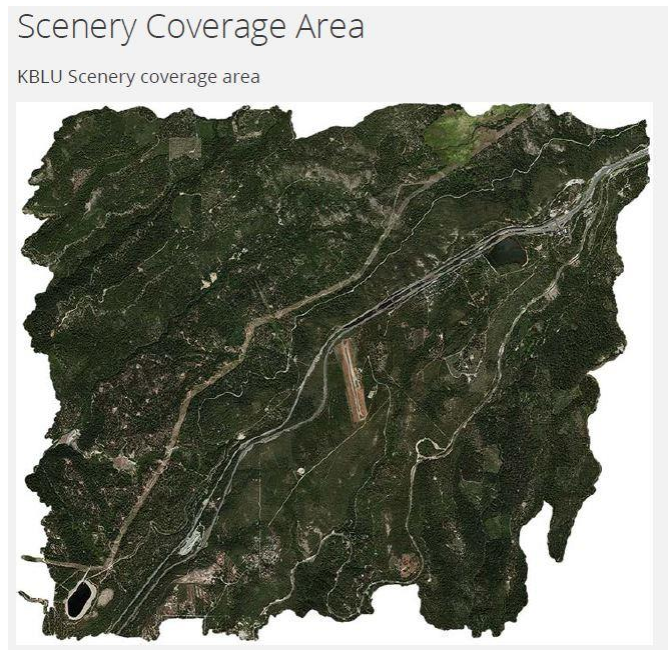
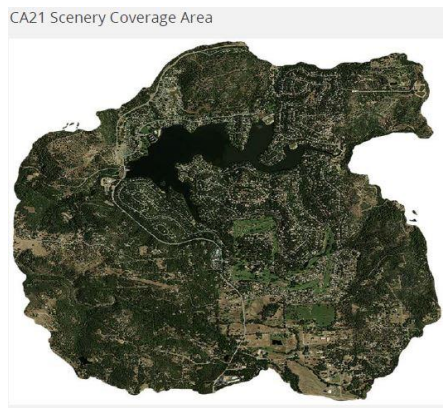
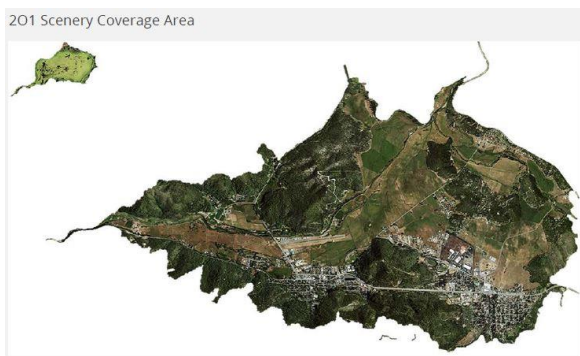
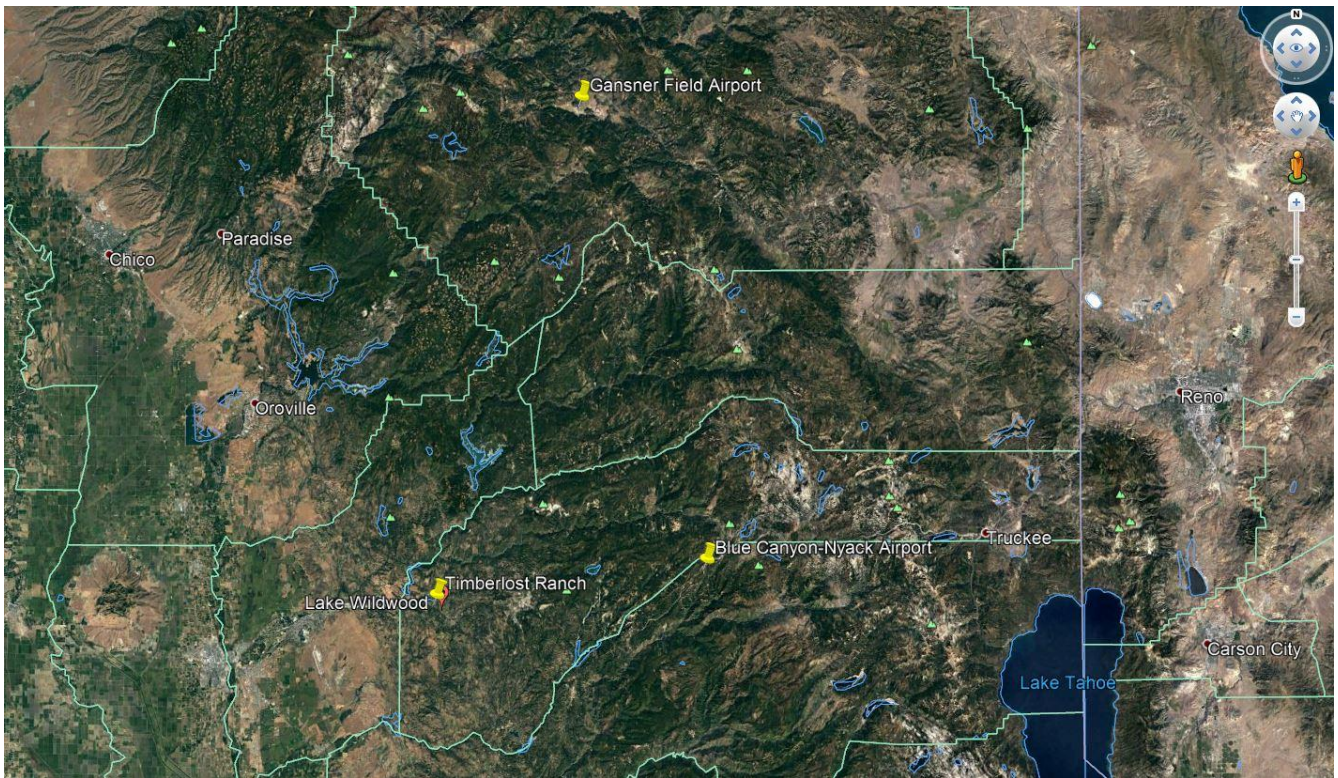
Before using the scenery I will recommend opening the included scenery configuration program which will enable you to customize the sceneries from a large list of options. The options included in the list are e.g. texture resolutions, grass settings, airport shrub settings as well as various other features that can be applied, changed or de-activated.

If you have a lot of add-on sceneries installed you might get issues with the elevation meaning that the sceneries are not correctly displayed. This does not mean that the scenery is not installed correctly, but I discovered that for me it was due to the scenery priority in the FSX scenery menu. Changing the priority by giving the KBLU pack a higher priority made the scenery appear perfectly.

Also ORBX Systems has included a note regarding the usage of CA21 Limberlost Ranch – since this strip is very sloped and does not follow the FSX or P3D terrain, ORBX recommend to select the starting location to be “Runway 10” and not the default “Active Runway” to avoid getting an elevation issue.

The complete scenery covers a huge area located north-west of the famous Lake Tahoe near the Sierra Nevada Mountains with Gansner Field to the north-west and the Blue Canyon-Nyack Airport as well as Limberlost Ranch to the west.

The area is a very scenic area to tour with lots of beautiful terrain featuring hills, mountains, lakes, dams, forests etc and is in my opinion certainly best viewed flying GA aircrafts.



Tools, Supporting Programs & Customization

The Scenery Configurator can be accessed through the FTX Central v3 by first selecting the KBLU scenery and thereafter clicking the Control Panel button located in the lower right side. (Next to User Guide and the option to uninstall the scenery pack).

Now a new window appears and here you get several options to increase the sceneries look-and-feel, but of course maxing out the Scenery Configurator will require a medium-high-end computer to get a smooth performance.

There are options that will enable specific seasoning features and there are options for how detailed the airport environment should be together with texture resolutions etc. I found the idea of the Hard Winter setting to be a bit fun when thinking about the fact that KBLU is not active during winter time, but of course this is not just for the KBLU but also for Gansner Field etc.

You can also enable or disable the famous PeopleFlow at this Configurator – for those of you that might not have tried out an ORBX airport yet then the PeopleFlow is an awesome additional feature in almost all ORBX sceneries. The PeopleFlow are animated people that are placed around the scenery that do various things like washing windows, walking around the scenery, talking, performing maintenance on aircraft, sweeping the floors in the hangars etc. The PeopleFlow adds greatly to the atmosphere in an airport because it makes the airport a living environment.

The screenshot displays the 'KBLU Blue Canyon-Nyack Airport Product Control Panel'. The left sidebar shows the ORBX logo, user account information for Richardt Raymond Andersen, and category navigation (FTX Global Range, Europe, North America, Oceania, Aircraft). The central settings panel includes:

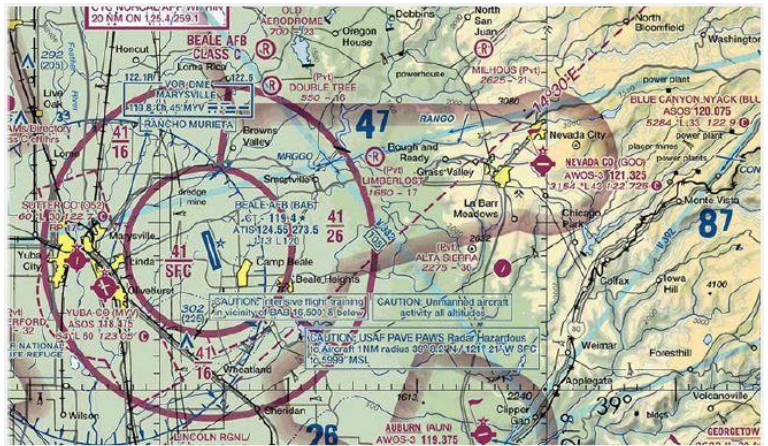
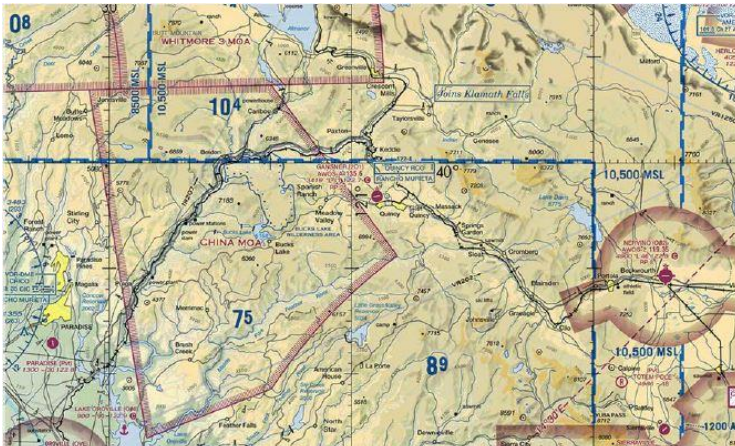
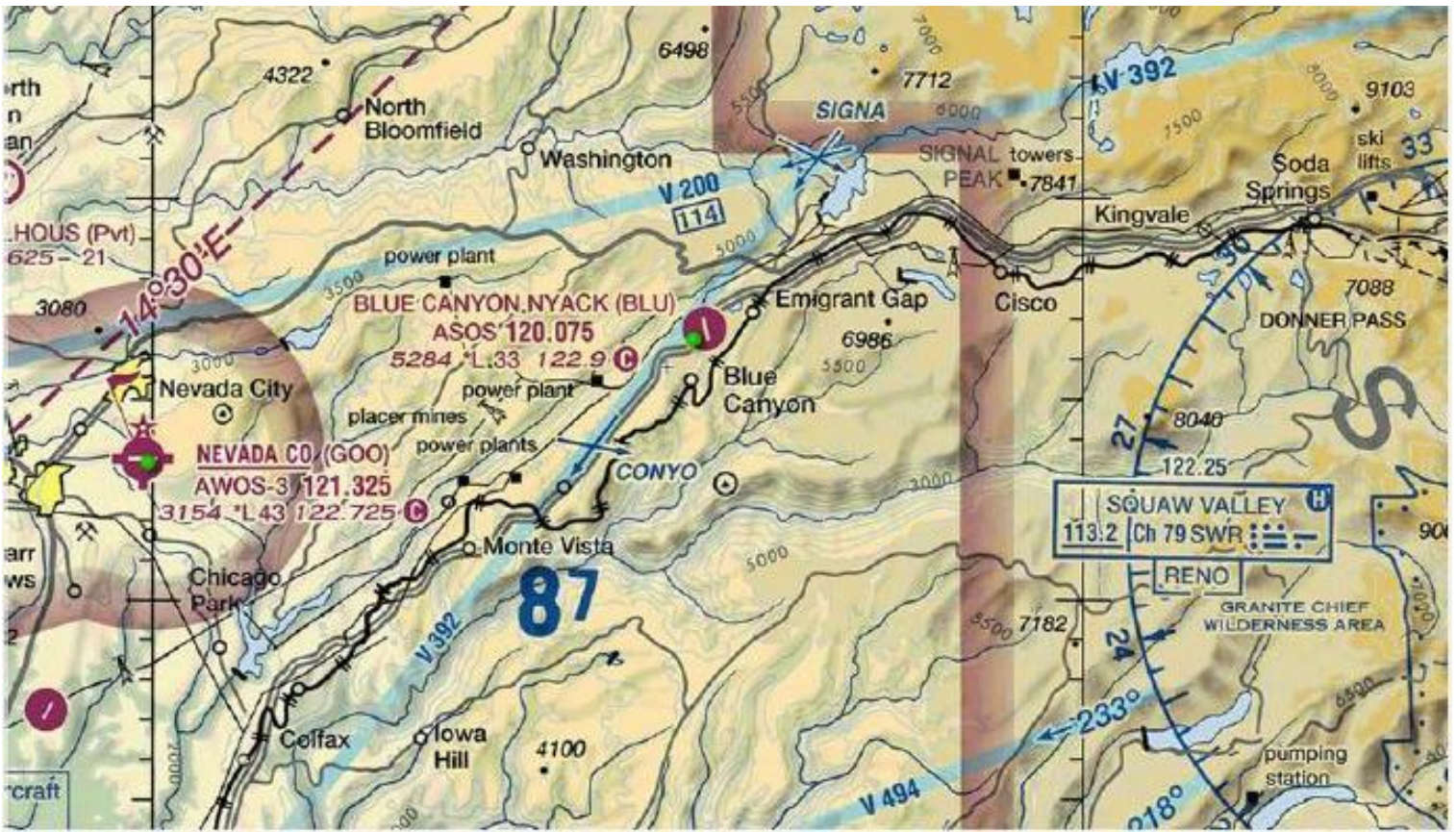
- Resolution Settings:** Options for 'High Resolution - Hard Winter (2048 Textures)' and 'Low Resolution - Hard Winter (1024 Textures)', both with descriptive notes.
- Airport Grass Settings:** Radio buttons for 'Summer, Spring, Fall and Winter', 'Hard Winter', and 'Disabled', each with a brief description.
- Airport Shrub Settings:** Similar radio button options for seasonal and disabled states.
- Miscellaneous Airport Feature Settings:** A list of checked checkboxes for 'Static Aircraft', 'People Flow', 'Vehicles', 'Clutter', 'Rocks', and 'Road Objects', each with a short explanation.

The right preview window shows a 3D rendering of the airport tarmac with several aircraft. At the bottom right of the interface are three buttons: 'Control Panel', 'User Guide', and 'Uninstall'.

To get the best rendition of the airports in this scenery pack, it is recommended that you also install the FTX Region NA Northern California. The sceneries can be used without the FTX region but by installing the FTX region, all airports are perfectly integrated and blended into the complete terrain.

Furthermore all road traffic is perfectly aligned with the photo real ground terrain and together with that, all buildings and trees are customized by ORBX to replicate realistic North American homes and trees.

Additional tools included are the aviation charts found in the User Guide – these are very specific charts covering all 3 included airports and do provide some degree of detail – however, I would recommend searching the AirNav or similar website to get the detailed information, but these charts are ok for starters.



Buildings, Signs and Vegetation

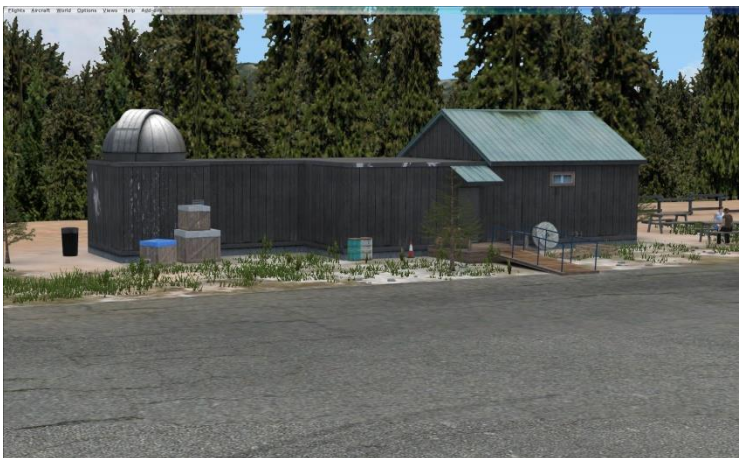
Taking a closer look at each of the three included sceneries quickly game me a superb feeling of yet another excellent and high quality add-on scenery from ORBX Systems. The buildings that are created are most certainly created with an eye for the details and with a lot of focus on making the buildings appear as realistic as possible. The level of details are excellent and this not just the main buildings but also smaller buildings, shelters and towers etc. that are to be found within the sceneries.

The textures that are used are high quality, multi-layer textures that absolutely creates a very realistic and authentic atmosphere when viewing the scenery. This is especially seen on the corrosion, the dirt and the wear'n tear that are to be found on several buildings and which is awesome and provides the buildings with a very realistic appearance. Also the colors on the buildings, the shiny versus the dimmed parts of the buildings are just so very well in accordance to real life – almost perfect and very authentic.

I was also happy to find that the accuracy of the models (buildings etc) as well as the placement of the various buildings was very well in accordance to the images that I could find on the internet and on Google-Earth. I did find a few minor detail-errors on some of the buildings but these small details are peanuts and have no affect on the overall rating of the sceneries.

As an example we have the wooden observatory at Blue Canyon-Nyack Airport where the window frame in the right side of the building complex, in real life (according to the picture I could find on the internet) is red, but in the scenery, this window frame is instead gray/brown – I find it to be superb that I have to go into such small details to find potential improvements of the sceneries and this level of detailing I found to be at all the included airfield.

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Real Life



Viewing the other observatory buildings at Blue Canyon-Nyack Airport I again found a stunning resemblance from the pictures from the internet versus the scenery – also in regards to major vegetation such as trees which in the scenery are also placed very accurately and in accordance with real life. Maybe the wood species is not 100% correct but there is a tree where there in real life also is a tree and that is awesome.

Moving my focus from the buildings and onto e.g. the signs I was again very happy to see that ORBX kept the focus and included very specific and detailed signs all over the sceneries as according to real life. This is e.g. the small sign on the high pole in front of the white observatory building at KBLU as well as the welcoming sign at KBLU. Only difference I found on that sign was the white frame that can be seen in real life and not on the sim version. The images on the sign, the colors and the front of the letters are just so very realistic – Excellent work!

The abundance of high quality and realistic details and eye candy that are integrated into these sceneries all adds greatly to my impression and to the atmosphere surrounding these airports.

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Real Life



The vegetation is very similar to real life with a lot of dirt, small bushes and grass scattered around the sceneries together with specific trees as mentioned earlier. The quality and realism is good and these details provide a greater depth and atmosphere to the sceneries.





Apron, Taxi- and Runways

Moving the focus to the taxiways, the runways and the apron for all sceneries was as I expected again very good quality with a high level of details, accuracy and realism.

I very much like that I in this scenery pack found rough edges around the taxiways and runways because that increases my experience of a realistic laid asphalt as per in real life that also would be a bit rough. In regards to the parts of the taxiways or apron that are made from concrete, I more like that the edges are sharpened which in my opinion is close to real life. Both the rough edges for the asphalt and the sharpened edges for the concrete were very nicely created in these sceneries.

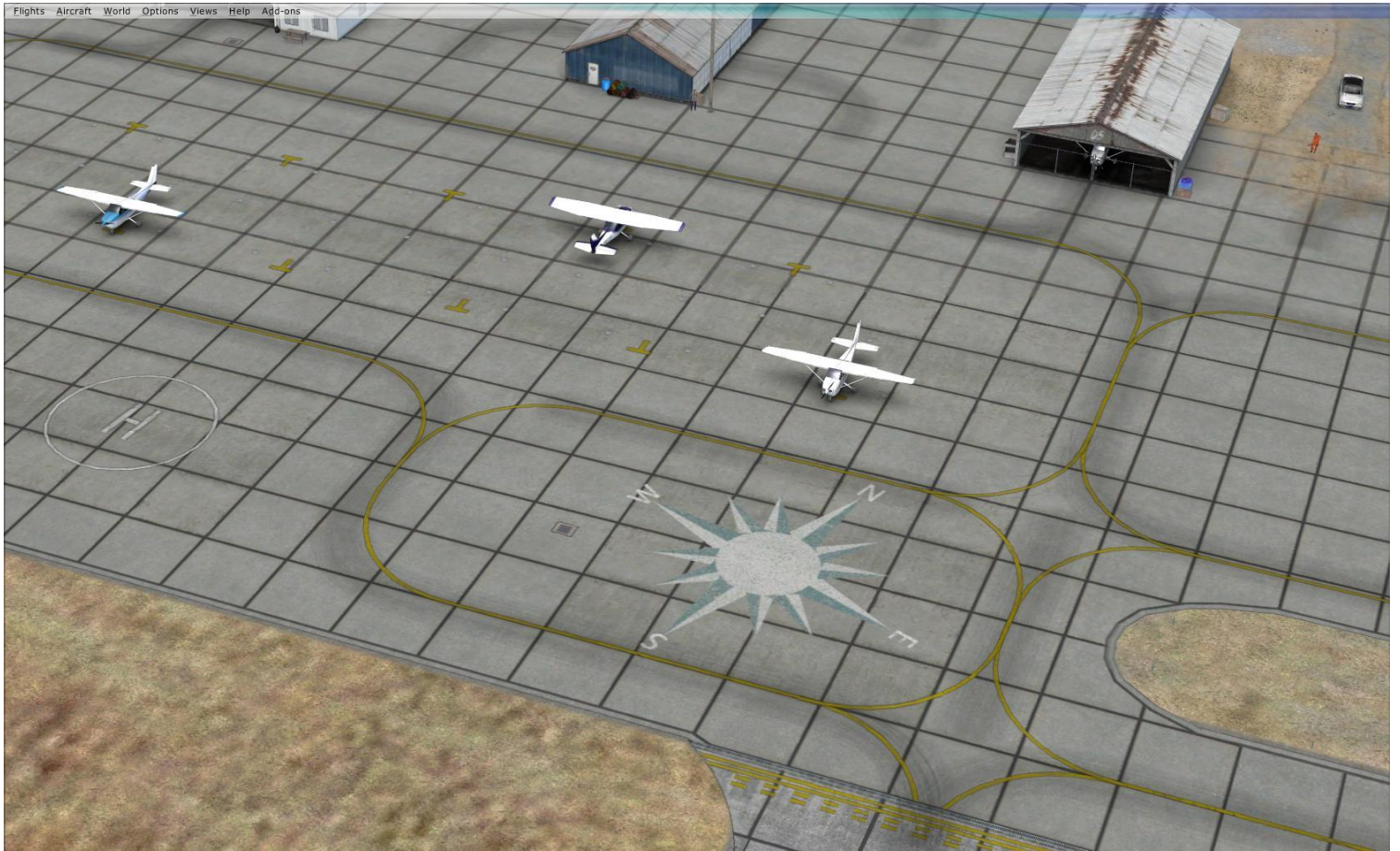
In regards to the CA21 Limberlost Ranch well, this scenery features a grass/turf runway so here there are no sharp or rough edges however, there is a small asphalt taxiway at the beginning next to the hangar, and this piece of taxiway is very good quality as well. I did notice that at the end of the short asphalt taxiway (on the turf end) there were some pieces of wood that is extending the asphalt taxiway or maybe they are actually the foundation of the taxiway where the asphalt has been worn off. These wooden boards I could not find on any real images from the airfield and neither on the images from Google-Earth as well, so if this is just a detail to add more realism or eye candy to the scenery or if this is a minor error, I can't say. No matter what, it does look great and authentic.

The detailing in regards to markings on the runways, taxiways and aprons are excellent – they are very true to real life – this especially for the text written on the runway at KBLU Blue Canyon-Nyack Airport with frequency, name and elevation. Also at 2O1 Gansner Field Airport there are in real life a huge compass drawn on the apron, and this is also rendered perfectly in the scenery. That is truly some awesome details!

Additionally I also find the asphalt and concrete to include a variety of realistic cracks, small changes in color, skid marks and oil-stains etc scattered around the areas – all that makes the asphalt and concrete appear used and realistic with a high level of wear'n tear. Both the taxiways, the runways and the aprons are certainly created beautifully and there is no doubt that ORBX has also kept a superb focus on these elements of the sceneries.

In regards to the challenging runway at CA21, then this is one of the packs best features – this runway slopes enormously and is really a great challenge also because it is short and the surface is grass/turf which can get rather slippery in rainy conditions. To top it off, there are trees surrounding the entire strip and at the top of the hill you have the hangar placed very close to the runway/taxiway, so you better be able to stop the aircraft before getting too close to the hangar.





Static & Dynamic Elements and Flows

The sceneries are all very high quality but my next focus is just as important as the buildings, the taxi and runways as well as the aprons, and that is the airport environment. Here I quickly noticed that ORBX have continued their supreme focus within this area too.

Everywhere that I looked I saw an abundance of beautiful, realistic and very detailed airport environment elements such as oil drums, pallets, various tanks (fuel/gas etc), fences etc. as well as a variety of static aircrafts and vehicles that is nicely placed around all sceneries – this certainly improves and adds to create a very realistic atmosphere but additionally there are also included the famous PeopleFlow technology which certainly lifts the sceneries to a higher level.

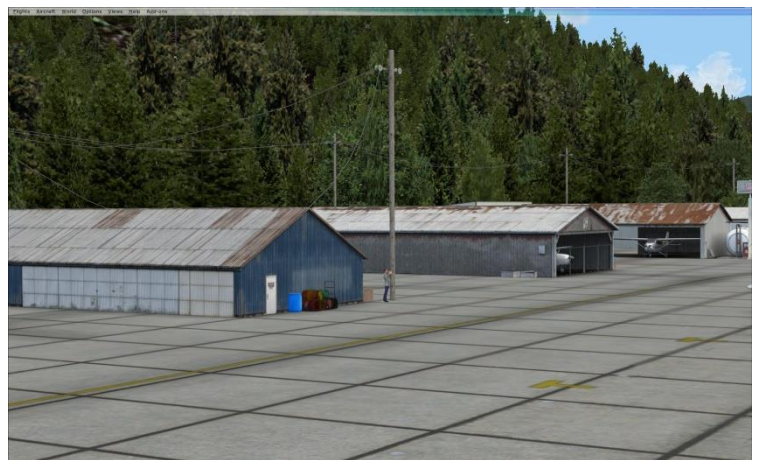
The Blue Canyon-Nyack Airport pack is living and dynamic airport sceneries where there are animated people walking around the sceneries and doing various things as simply walking or talking or cleaning windows, performing maintenance on aircrafts etc. The PeopleFlow is awesome and certainly brings life to the scenery and hereby creates an even more realistic atmosphere.

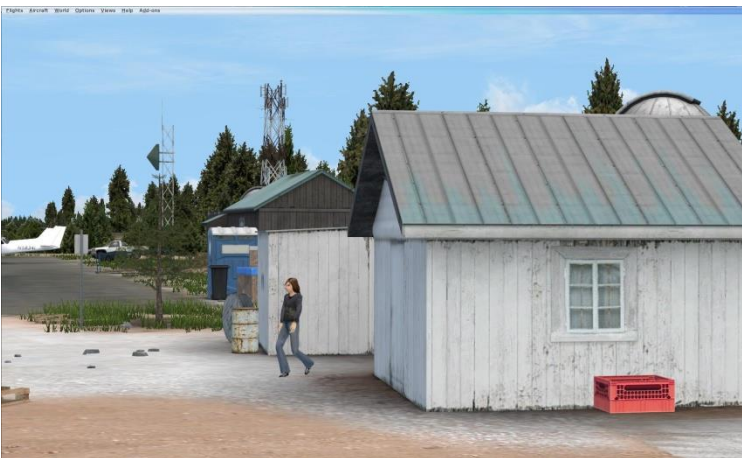
The sceneries were not over-crowded with the animated people which could be very interesting for an international airport or an extremely busy airport environment, but for these smaller sceneries the amount of people included are limited and provides the sceneries with a very good sense of realism.

All the airport environment elements are created with high quality detailing, good quality multi-layer textures and created with a superb and realistic finish. E.g. the shipping container at Limberlost Ranch is so well made with textures showing a high degree of wear and tear and with details on the backend doors that are so life-like. Also at Blue Canyon-Nyack there are e.g. an oil drum that are showing a lot of corrosion and the textures are almost showing how the outside paint is bending outward from the metal drum. Small details with a great effect and this level of environmental elements are found everywhere in the sceneries.

In regards to airport illumination, then this is something that is rather limited however, that is okay since that reflects the reality in the sceneries and just improves the realism. E.g. there are no runway lights at Limberlost Ranch as per real life – only a rotating beacon placed on top of the hangar building but hey that is just a private grass strip.

At Gansner Field Airport and Blue Canyon-Nyack Airport there were runway lights as well as some hangar lights and they were very nicely rendered. The lights are fair quality with a good warm and soft shine and they are very realistic and not too bright.





Conclusion

To wrap up my experience of the Blue Canyon-Nyack Airport pack from ORBX Systems, then this scenery pack is a perfect addition to ORBX Systems long portfolio of high quality and very realistic and living sceneries.

There is an abundance of eye candy everywhere to be found. The buildings are accurately modeled and accurately placed around the sceneries. The textures used for both buildings, taxiways, runways, aprons and the environmental elements etc. is high quality multi-layer textures that certainly brings out the best and most realistic appearance of each element.

The performance of all included sceneries was good meaning that I did not encounter a huge impact on my FPS's even though using the sceneries on max settings.

If you like flying smaller GA aircraft, helicopters or even small business jets, then this scenery pack is certainly recommendable – of course please do not try to land at Limberlost Ranch in e.g. a LearJet45 – that would just be plain stupid ☺

The sceneries are very challenging especially Limberlost Ranch with the extremely sloped and short runway, but also the Blue Canyon-Nyack Airport runway is rather challenging due to the elevation of the runway and due to the final approach which is performed on a low ground altitude over a busy highway/motorway at the runway 15.

The Blue Canyon-Nyack Airport scenery pack scored a superb rating of 4.73 out of 5.00 and is an awesome scenery pack created by some of the best scenery builders at ORBX Systems.

I would like to thank ORBX Systems and of course Greg Jones and Russell Linn together with their team for creating these beautiful and very realistic renditions of these small GA airports/airfields. Keep up the excellent work!

Rays Aviation



Technical Requirements and Review Computer Specifications

Technical Requirements

- OS – not mentioned but works on both Win7 and Win10
- FSX, FSX:SE, Prepar3D v1, v2 and v3
- FTX Region NA Northern California
- No other minimum specs or requirements are mentioned

Review Computer Specifications

- Windows 10 (64-bit)
- FSX + Acceleration Pack installed
- Intel Core™ i7-4790K 4x4.00GHz (Turbo 4x4.40GHz)
- Asus Maximus VII Ranger (ROG-series)
- Antec Kuhler H20 650 Water Cooler
- Kingston HyperX Beast-series 32Gb DDR3-2133 RAM
- 500Gb Samsung 850 EVO SSD
- 3Tb Seagate Barracura (7200rpm, 6Gb/s)
- Asus GeForce GTX 980 Strix OC 4Gb
- 150/150Mbit Fiber Internet Connection
- REX Overdrive for FSX