

Montana and the Sky

Montana Department of Transportation

Aeronautics Division

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March 2025

Montana Airports Receive Grant & Loan Funding

The Montana Aeronautics Board has allocated more than \$3.2 million in funding for fiscal year (FY) 2026. This funding is designated for a range of airport infrastructure enhancement initiatives.

A portion of the annual grants and loans is intended to match 95/5 Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) funding for substantial airport construction projects. Requests totaling approximately \$5.7 million were submitted by 49 public-use airports throughout the state. Ultimately, the Board awarded funding for 123 out of 140 submitted project proposals from 44 public airports in Montana, encompassing both federally supported and non-federally supported projects.

The following airports have been selected for funding in FY 2026:

Airport	Grant	Loan
Baker	\$22,725	\$0
Big Sandy	\$9,000	\$0
Broadus	\$10,500	\$0
Chester	\$80,000	\$0
Chinook	\$43,000	\$0
Choteau	\$3,760	\$0
Colstrip	\$14,525	\$0
Conrad	\$34,700	\$0
Cutbank	\$9,000	\$0
Deer Lodge	\$77,977	\$0
Ekalaka	\$36,875	\$0
Ennis	\$24,000	\$0
Forsyth	\$15,000	\$0
Fort Benton	\$14,500	\$0
Geraldine	\$8,000	\$0
Hamilton	\$331,442	\$0
Harlem	\$15,000	\$0
Havre	\$10,000	\$0
Helena	\$0	\$230,000
Hot Springs	\$165,630	\$0
Kalispell	\$556,395	\$0
Lewistown	\$200,000	\$20,000
Lincoln	\$12,500	\$0

Airport	Grant	Loan
Malta	\$16,469	\$0
Miles City	\$39,200	\$100,000
Plains	\$55,000	\$0
Plentywood	\$46,175	\$0
Polson	\$350,000	\$0
Poplar	\$13,280	\$0
Red Lodge	\$318,500	\$0
Ronan	\$18,750	\$0
Roundup	\$20,530	\$0
Scobey	\$9,000	\$0
Shelby	\$9,000	\$0
Sidney	\$20,000	\$0
Stanford	\$34,000	\$0
Stevensville	\$79,450	\$0
Superior	\$9,000	\$0
Terry	\$17,175	\$0
Three Forks	\$193,867	\$0
Twin Bridges	\$122,596	\$0
West Yellowstone	\$68,480	\$0
White Sulphur Springs	\$35,600	\$0
Winnett	\$29,400	\$0
Total Awarded	\$3,200,000	\$350,000

2025 Aviation Awareness Art Contest

The MDT Aeronautics Division's Aviation Awareness Art Contest is designed to broaden knowledge and promote interest in careers within the aviation and aerospace industries.

The contest is open to all students in K - 12 in public, private, and home schools.

Submissions will be accepted from March 1 to April 11.

Artwork must have a Montana aviation theme.

To find more details and download the full flyer, go to

mdt.mt.gov/aviation/events.aspx

For further information, please contact:

Barbara Barnum at 406-444-2506 or bbarnum@mt.gov

Bozeman Tower Letter to Airmen

Bozeman (BZN) has experienced numerous Traffic Alert and Collision Avoidance System (TCAS) events involving aircraft arriving, departing, and transitioning the airspace. Close proximity events resulting in a TCAS Resolution Alert (RA) pose a significant risk to aviation safety. **Because TCAS RAs take precedence over ATC instructions, pilots are expected to promptly follow the RA, even if the resulting maneuver is unplanned and may create additional conflicts.**

Due to the mountainous terrain (Bridger Range to the east/northeast and Gallatin Range to the south), aircraft around Bozeman are funneled through a southwest-to-northeast oriented, low-lying valley. Aircraft operating under Instrument Flight Rules (IFR) are required to adhere strictly to both standard instrument departure and instrument arrival procedures. Unfortunately, close calls continue to occur when VFR traffic operates within the **arrival and departure corridors**, bringing them dangerously close to IFR jet aircraft flying at high closure rates.

In an effort to reduce frequency congestion and simplify instructions for VFR aircraft departing BZN—or transitioning nearby—departure routes and associated VFR waypoints have been developed. These waypoints are in the GPS database and can be programmed into Flight Management Systems (FMS) and GPS units. **Pilots are encouraged to reference the relevant aeronautical charts** for additional guidance and to better visualize these routes.

Application of these departure procedures, or any action taken by Air Traffic Control (ATC) to avoid traffic conflicts, does not relieve pilots of their responsibilities to **see and avoid** other aircraft while operating under Visual Flight Rules (CFR 91.113). Heightened awareness and vigilance among all pilots—whether operating IFR or VFR—are essential in mitigating risk and ensuring safe operations in the BZN airspace.

To assist ATC with enhancing the safety of operations near BZN, pilots should:

- **Familiarize themselves with the airspace** surrounding BZN, including nearby terrain.
- **Familiarize themselves with the airport layout and information** prior to flight, including the new VFR waypoints.
- **Actively listen to ATC instructions and clearances** to ensure full understanding.
- **Read back instructions and clearances** accurately to confirm receipt.
- **Ask ATC if there is any doubt** about the VFR route assigned, or if you need clarification on any instruction.

Alejandro Ortiz
Air Traffic Manager, Bozeman Tower

The notice and clear view of the chart diagrams can be seen here at:
notams.aim.faa.gov/lta/main/viewlta?lookupid=3551176388570519523
Or scan the QR Code



Color Vision Test Not Required If Previously Passed

Only first-time medical certificate applicants, or previous medical certificate holders seeking to remove a color vision limitation, will need to find an aviation medical examiner equipped to administer one of the approved computer-based tests under a new FAA policy that took effect January 1, 2025.

- **Current pilots** - Any pilot who was previously issued a medical certificate (of any class) without a limitation related to color vision will be issued a new certificate without having to take a color vision test. However, a pilot who reports taking one or more medications [known to affect color vision](#) will need to pass one of the new computer-based color vision tests in order to be issued a medical certificate without a limitation.
- **New certificate applicants** - The new computer-based tests will be administered only once to first-time applicants seeking a medical certificate. Subsequent medical certificates will be issued without requiring a color vision retest. If the applicant does not pass the color vision test, a third class medical certificate limited to daytime visual flight rules operations only will be issued if the applicant is otherwise qualified.
- **SODA and LOE holders** - A pilot with a statement of demonstrated ability (SODA) or letter of evidence (LOE) who was issued a first or second class medical certificate without a limitation is not required to take the new computer-based color vision test. A pilot with a third class medical issued a SODA or LOE, or a medical certificate with a limitation such as "not valid for flights requiring color signal control during daylight hours" or "not valid for night flying by color signal control," will not be required to take a computer-based color vision test unless the pilot is applying for a first or second class medical certificate.

For more information, scan the QR Code or go to
www.faa.gov/ame_guide/app_process/exam_tech/item52/amd



2025 FIRC Held in Helena

MDT Aeronautics Division hosted the annual flight instructor refresher clinic (FIRC) in Helena February 7 to 8. Around 30 certified flight instructors (CFIs) renewed their certificates. Several CFI applicants also attended to learn and sharpen their skills ahead of their upcoming check rides.

The next flight clinic (FIRC) will be held in February 2026.

You do not have to be a CFI to attend and learn.
Participation from all pilots is encouraged!

For more information, contact:
Matt Lindberg at
406-444-2506
mlindberg@mt.gov



New Flight School Establishes in Montana

Vali Air Service is a new flight school located in Livingston. Andrew Stone is the founder and owner and is instructing in a Piper Cherokee 180. Vali Air Service is offering private, instrument, and flight instructor training as well as airplane rental.

Andrew is a Marine veteran and now flies Blackhawk helicopters in the National Guard. He offers a discount on his services to veterans.

Dreaming of Spring \$100 Breakfast Fly-Outs?

The Hangar Café located on the Hamilton Airport might be just what you are looking for! Gary Boothe of Hamilton, builder of his beautiful Pietenpol Air Camper, shows just how easy it is to access a great breakfast after flying into Hamilton.



Distinguished Montanans Recognized for Excellence

The Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA), the world's largest aviation association, has recognized Don Hendrickson of Helena with the flight training experience awards as a distinguished instructor in the western region. Ridgeline Aviation of Bozeman and Billings was awarded distinguished flight school in the western region. Both Hendrickson and Ridgeline are multi-year winners.

Both recognitions highlight high standards and accomplishments in flight training. The Flight Training Experience Awards were created to highlight the best flight training the industry has to offer.

The 2025 awards were drawn from flight students and pilots who voluntarily reviewed their flight training experience this past fall through an AOPA online customer feedback process.

Do You Know of an Aviation Event in Montana?

The Montana Aeronautics Division relies on the aviation community to share upcoming events.

Events will added to the Montana and the Sky calendar of events (below).

Please submit content at least 30 days before the first day of the month you want your event included in.

Email event information to mdtad@mt.gov.

Calendar of Events

May 17 - Lincoln Fly-In. Pancake breakfast from 8 to 11 a.m. every third Saturday each month starting May 17 ending September 20. For more information, contact Doug Vulcan at vulcandg408@gmail.com.

June 7 - Spotted Bear Work Party. Work starts at 9 a.m. Lunch provided by the Flathead Montana Pilots Association hangar. For more information, contact Scott Newpower at 406-670-3169.

June 14 - Big Timber Fly-In Breakfast and Car Show. 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. Breakfast and lunch will be served starting at 7 a.m. Hosted by Yellowstone Air Service. Donations accepted for breakfast. For more information, contact Kirk Bryer 406-930-1780.

June 14 - Meadow Creek Airstrip Work Party. Work starts at 9 a.m. If you're handy with a chainsaw, bring one along as we have a lot of downed trees to cut and stack for firewood. Lunch will be provided. For more information, contact Scott Newpower at 406-670-3169.

June 19 - 21 - Round Engine Round-Up. Idaho Falls, Idaho. Wanted: Round engines for the Round Engine Round-Up. Registration by June 1 is mandatory. Meals are limited. Contact Thomas Hoff at galactic@gmail.com if you plan on attending.

June 21 - MPA Fly-In and Pancake Breakfast. Lewistown. 7 to 11 a.m. Hosted by the MPA Central Montana Hangar. Once again, we will be serving our world famous, Jeff and Stacy Martinez, cinnamon chip pancakes! For more information, contact Pete Smith at 406-366-1435 or pete180@gmail.com.

June 21 - Lincoln Fly-In. Pancake breakfast from 8 to 11 a.m. every third Saturday each month starting May 17 ending September 20. For more information, contact Doug Vulcan at vulcandg408@gmail.com.

July 12 - Vintage Sea Plane Fly In. Proctor. At the Lodge and Resort Lake Mary Ronan. Event starts at 10:30 a.m. Lunch is available for purchase. For more information, or to participate, please contact Addison Pemberton at 509-995-6240 or apemberton@scanivalve.com.

July 12 - 13 - Saint Ignatius Fly-In. Saturday July 12, free BBQ with all the fixin's, \$50 per seat helicopter rides 4 to 8 p.m., Sunday, July 13, 8 to 12 p.m., free huckleberry pancake breakfast, 100 gallon avgas giveaway, many door prizes, \$50 per seat helicopter rides. For more information, contact Michael Kuefler 406-544-2274.

July 19 - Lincoln Fly-In. Open house, pancake breakfast and potluck lunch. Pancake breakfast from 8 to 11 a.m. followed by a potluck lunch from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. For more information, contact Doug Vulcan at vulcandg408@gmail.com.

July 19 - Schafer Meadows Work Party. Work starts at 9 a.m. Dinner provided Saturday night, so come help out and camp for the weekend. For more information, contact Scott Newpower at 406-670-3169.

August 16 - Lincoln Fly-In. Pancake breakfast from 8 to 11 a.m. every third Saturday each month starting May 17 ending September 20. For more information, contact Doug Vulcan at vulcandg408@gmail.com.

August 23 - Anaconda Bowman Field 9th Annual Fly-In and Car Show. 10 to 2 p.m. Free to the public. Flour sack drop, games for the kids, and possible airplane rides (weather permitting). For more information, contact Laura at 406-560-8622.

August 31 - Wings and Wheels. Red Lodge. 8 to 11 a.m. Join us for the 3rd annual Wings and Wheels fly-in in conjunction with the Burn the Point car show in Billings and the town of Red Lodge's labor day celebrations. For more information about the fly-in, contact Bo Ewald at b.ewald@att.net.

MDT Aeronautics Division

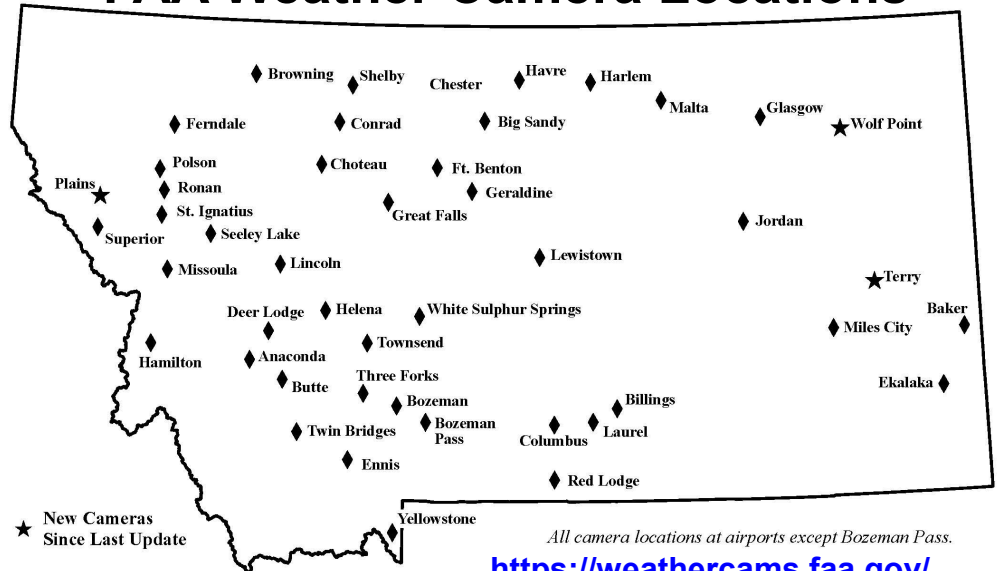
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FAA Weather Camera Locations



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