

Montana and the Sky

Montana Department of Transportation

Aeronautics Division

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May 2025

2025 ACE Academy Helena, June 26 to 28

The Aviation Career Exploration (ACE) Academy offers high school students a glimpse into the diverse career paths available in the aviation sector. On the first day, the experience will kick off with flights aboard general aviation aircraft! Participants will tour Pioneer Aerostructure's manufacturing facility, the Army National Guard Aviation Support Facility, Helena College's aviation maintenance technician program, maintenance facilities, and Montana Medical Transport (an air ambulance operation).

On the second day, students will be in Missoula for visits to Northstar/Neptune Aviation, the Museum of Mountain Flying, the Smokejumper Base, and the Missoula air traffic control (ATC) tower.

The third and final day will conclude with a general aviation fly-in at the Canyon Ferry airstrip.

If you know any high school students who are interested in exploring the exciting world of aviation and the various opportunities it presents, please pass this information along to them!



Participation in the academy is \$50, which covers all meals, flights, activities, and shared accommodations.

For more information, contact:
Barbara Barnum at 406-444-2506 or bbarnum@mt.gov.

Scan the QR Code to register online.

You Are Invited to Fly Into Canyon Ferry - June 28

Please fly your aircraft into Canyon Ferry on June 28 at 8 a.m. to support the annual ACE Academy.

The final day of the camp we host a general aviation fly-in. This is a great opportunity to show off your aircraft and talk to aspiring and interested high school students. Students love to hear how you got started in aviation and your careers in the field. We want you to spend some time with us and talk about your airplanes. We hope for a diverse turnout!

The parking area along the strip will be nicely mowed prior to our fly-in, and the 3,200 ft. treated and rolled dirt runway is in good condition.

For more information about ACE Academy, please see above.

Please RSVP if you plan on flying in at mdtad@mt.gov or 406-444-2506.



Photo courtesy of Spencer Kreikemeire in Brandon Wilson's R-44 helicopter

Aviation Maintenance Technician Day

Aviation Maintenance Technician Day is a National day of recognition, observed on May 24, that recognizes the efforts of aviation maintenance professionals as well as the achievements of Charles Edward Taylor. Taylor was a self-taught mechanic, who built the engine used to power the airplane of the Wright Brothers.

On May 24, 2007, the U.S. House of Representatives introduced a resolution to create a National Aviation Maintenance Technician Day. Currently 45 states observe National Aviation Maintenance Technician Day on Taylors' birthday, May 24th.

Thank you, aviation maintenance professionals and upcoming aviation technicians for all your hard work to support safe air travel!



Derrick Olheiser (Left) MDT Aeronautics' aircraft maintenance technician and Aiden Fouhy (Right), scholarship winner and aviation technician student at Helena College.

New Flight School Takes Flight in Three Forks

Janelle Reali, a Certified Flight Instructor (CFI), recently founded a new flight school called Skyhound Aviation based in Three Forks. Janelle is passionate about aviation and is dedicated to helping students achieve their flying dreams.

Janelle instructs in the world's most popular training aircraft, the iconic Cessna 172. She is committed to ensuring each student receives the personalized attention they need to excel in their training. Janelle is also an instrument flight instructor and offers private, instrument, commercial, and CFI training as well as flight reviews and instrument competency checks.

Janelle is excited to announce another CFI just joined Skyhound Aviation and is accepting new students.



For more information about Skyhound Aviation, visit <https://www.skyhoundaviation.com/> or scan the QR Code

FAA Proposes Elimination of RCO System

The FAA plans to decommission the remote communications outlet (RCO) system due to a significant decline in usage, with daily requests dropping from 22,000 in the mid-1980s to fewer than 300 today. While mobile technology has largely replaced the need for RCOs, the AOPA warns that many pilots and aircraft still rely on this network for safety, especially in areas with limited radio coverage. The FAA's plan to close the remaining 936 RCOs in the U.S. could save about \$16 million annually. AOPA suggests a phased reduction instead, as not all segments of the aviation community are ready for this change. Written comments on the plan are due by May 27 and MDT Aeronautics will be submitting their feedback.



Scan the QR Code To view the Notice of Intent and to submit a comment.

Yellowstone Airport Opens for Season

The Yellowstone Airport and Fixed Based Operator (FBO) are now open for the season. The newly constructed airline passenger terminal will accommodate inaugural airline passenger flights beginning May 6. The new terminal building replaced the original terminal constructed in the early 1960's, which was beyond the end of its useful life.

Dell Airport Update

It has been a year since the State sold the Dell Airport to a private land owner. Since then, the runway has been repaved by its new owner! Per the terms of the sale, the airport must remain open to the public and no fees may be charged to aircraft weighing less than 12,500 pounds.

New BasicMed Allowances

You can now act as pilot in command of an aircraft, while operating under BasicMed, weighing up to 6,000 pounds maximum gross takeoff weight. Additionally, the maximum allowable passengers increased from 5 to 6 in an aircraft certified for up to 7 occupants.

Use the Weather Cameras!

The summer flying season is here, which means thunderstorms are here too. Montana is one of few states leading the charge to install FAA approved weather cameras around the state. These cameras aid in preflight planning and enroute decision making. It can be very helpful to get a real-time view of the actual conditions along your route of flight.



Scan the QR Code to access the FAA weather cameras.

Density Altitude Reminder

In 2022, the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA) launched a campaign to raise awareness of density altitude (DA), introducing a new reminder poster at various airports, including those in Montana. Look for these posters at self-serve fuel pumps, pilot lounges, and other locations.

The Montana Pilots Association (MPA), along with the MDT Aeronautics Division and volunteers, collaborated to calculate and install these posters at key points for pilots. The MPA calculated DA for public airports, while the MDT Aeronautics Division assisted in production and placement.

High, hot, and humid conditions significantly decrease aircraft performance and can lead to accidents, especially in Montana, where DA is often a factor in incidents. Even when departing from a 7,000-foot runway, performance may be inadequate in high DA conditions.

High DA affects true airspeed, takeoff, and landing rolls, while reducing climb rates. Remember that performance data in Pilots Operating Handbooks (POH) is based at sea level. Always review your aircraft's performance charts before flying, considering current conditions. Keeping a Koch Chart in the cockpit can provide a quick reference and help you assess the impact of DA on your flight.

Be on the lookout for these DA posters at Montana's airports and give them a look before you fly. You might be surprised!



Scan the QR Code for more information on density altitude or to download a PDF of the Density Altitude poster.

Calendar of Events

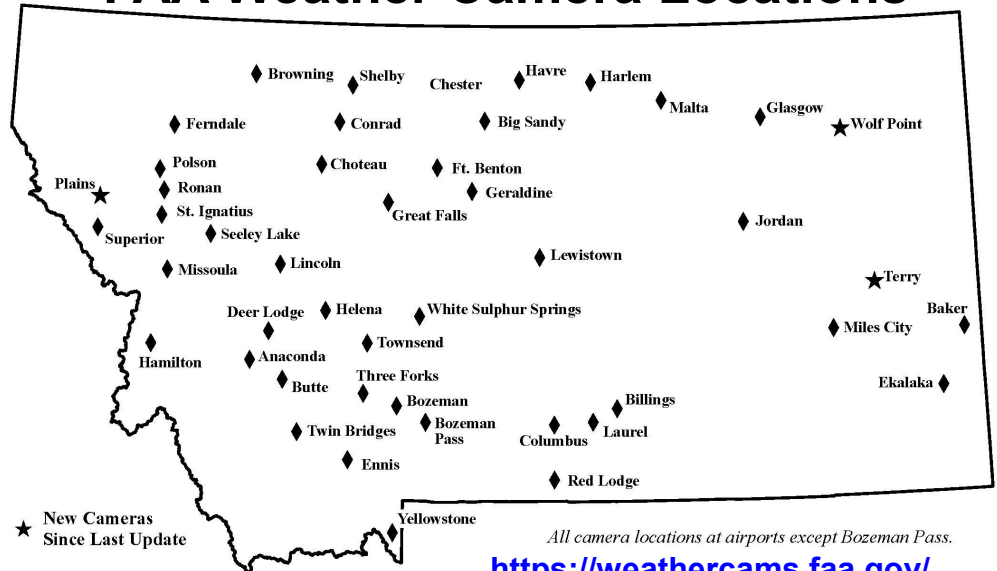
- May 17 - Lincoln Fly-In.** Pancake breakfast from 8 to 11 a.m. every third Saturday each month starting May 17 ending September 20. For more information, contact Doug Vulcan at 406-362-4473 or vulcandg406@gmail.com.
- June 3 - Aeronautics Board Meeting - Loan and Grants Extensions.** West Yellowstone Airport (WYS). For more information contact, Stephen Torske at storske@mt.gov.
- June 7 - Spotted Bear Work Party.** Work starts at 9 a.m. Lunch provided by the MPA Flathead hangar. For more information, contact Scott Newpower at 406-670-3169.
- June 7 - Butte Wings and Wheels Fly-In or Drive-in** with DC-3 Miss Montana and a P-51 scheduled. 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Honoring veterans and 80th Anniversary of end of WWII. Fundraiser pancake breakfast for Civil Air Patrol, live 40's music, lunch food trucks. Fuel discount. Contact Walt McIntosh 406-670-1846 or pwrwgnwalt@gmail.com.
- June 12 - Del Bonita Work Session.** Work from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Alternate day is June 17. For more information contact, Stephen Torske at storske@mt.gov.
- 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 14 - Choteau Fly-In.** 6:30 to 10 a.m. Free breakfast starting at 6:30 a.m., donations welcome. Young Eagles airplane rides available. For more information, contact Scott Gasvoda at 406-590-2836 or Ben Hodgkiss at 406-737-4244.
- June 21 - Geraldine Fly-In.** 7 to 10 a.m. In conjunction with Geraldine Fun Day. Lots of activities downtown. There will be a fireman's breakfast at the fire station downtown (Check courtesy car availability.) For more Fly-In information, contact Butch Hankins at 406-737-4244. For information on Geraldine Fun Day go to <https://www.geraldineac.com>.
- 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 20 - 22 - Annual Missouri Breaks Fly-In.** *Sod has been reseeded, land only on asphalt at Winifred.* The Fly-In starts Friday, June 20, with arrivals in Winifred. Fly out to Missouri Breaks strips, then dinner in Winifred's hangar. Saturday, June 21, fly out to Lewistown's MPA Central Hangar Fly-In Breakfast, then fly to the Breaks followed by dinner in Winifred. Breakfast in Winifred Sunday, June 22. For more information, contact Ralph Rogers at 406-350-5487.
- 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 Jeff and Stacy Martinez's world famous, 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 406-362-4473 or vulcandg406@gmail.com.
- June 22 - Big Sandy Fly-In.** Pancake breakfast 8 to 11 a.m. Contact Joe Essert at jessert01@gmail.com.
- June 26 - 28 - ACE Academy.** For more information, contact Barbara Barnum at bbarnum@mt.gov.
- June 28 - Canyon Ferry Fly-In.** 8 to 11:30 a.m. Please fly your aircraft into Canyon Ferry to support the annual ACE Academy! This is a great opportunity to show off your aircraft and talk to high school students interested in aviation. Students love to hear how you got started in aviation and about your careers in the field. We want you to spend some time with us and talk about the world of aviation. Please RSVP to mdtad@mt.gov or 406-444-2506 if you plan on attending.
- July 4 - Plains Fly-in and Paradise Rural Fire Department Pancake Breakfast.** Plains Airport. 8 to 11 a.m. Ride an antique fire truck shuttle to the breakfast held at the fire station next door. Contact Randy Garrison at 406-370-6179.
- July 12 - Vintage Sea Plane Fly-In.** 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, 4 to 8 p.m., free BBQ with all the fixin's. Sunday, July 13, 8 a.m. to 12 p.m., free huckleberry pancake breakfast, 100 gallon avgas giveaway, many door prizes. \$50 per seat helicopter rides both days. 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 406-362-4473 or vulcandg406@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.
- July 24 - 27 - Big Sky Balloon Rally.** Amend Park, Billings. 6 a.m. balloon launches. Field opens to the public on July 26 at 6 p.m., live music starts at 6:15 p.m. Balloon glow at dusk (weather permitting)! For information, go to <https://www.bigskyballoonrally.com>.
- August 2 - Montana Antique Aircraft Association (MAAA) Fly-In.** Three Forks. Hot breakfast available for purchase from 7 a.m. to 10 a.m., lunch from 11 to 1 p.m. Ping pong ball drop, young eagles discovery flights, flying events with awards, static display with peoples choice award. Dinner available for pilots camping both Friday and Saturday nights. For more information, visit www.montanaantiqueaircraftassociation.com or contact Nick Hunt at 503-209-1041.
- 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 406-362-4473 or vulcandg406@gmail.com.
- August 23 - Anaconda Bowman Field 9th Annual Fly-In and Car Show.** 10 a.m. 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 - Red Lodge Wings and Wheels.** 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.
- September 6 - Helena Aviation Day.** Helena. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Aircraft static displays, Boeing facility tours, armory and aviation facility open house, events and games for kids. Please RSVP to Scott Sponholz at scott.m.sponholz.mil@army.mil.
- September 6 - MPA North Central Hanger Fly-In.** Havre. 7 to 11 a.m. Breakfast will be served 7 to 10 a.m. All activities will be completed by 11 a.m. For more information, contact Chad Olsen at 406-945-1577.
- September 13 - MPA South Central Fly-In.** Laurel. For more information, contact John Roberts at 406-855-2372.
- September 20 - Lincoln Fly-In.** Pancake breakfast from 8 to 11 a.m. For more information, contact Doug Vulcan at vulcandg406@gmail.com.

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**Thank you for
reading
*Montana and
the Sky.*
Fly Safe!**

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FAA Weather Camera Locations



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