



Montana Department of Transportation

Aeronautics Division

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Jet service returns to West for first time since 1978

By Jeremy Weber, originally appeared in the June 5, 2015 issue of West Yellowstone News, reprinted with permission

Commercial jet service made a triumphant return to Yellowstone Airport this week as the first commercial jet since 1978 touched down in West Yellowstone shortly after noon Monday.

The model CRJ200 Delta Airlines connection flight, operated by SkyWest, from Salt Lake City made its landing on the airport's western runway Monday as town officials, business leaders, and others looked on. The flight was welcomed with an archway of water from a pair of the airport's fire engines.

"This is a great day for West Yellowstone and for the state of Montana. For the first time since 1978, we can hear the whine of the engines of a commercial jet here in West Yellowstone," Director of the Montana Department of Transportation, Mike Tooley said. "This new option for travelers will provide a 30 percent increase in the potential number of seats on the flights into this airport."

Tooley went on to state that the return of jet service to West Yellowstone is just one of several new upgrades that the airport can look forward to.

"I would like to thank everyone here for their support. We want everyone to know that we are not going to ignore that support. Over the next few years, we intend to continue improving the facilities here," he said. "Over the next three years we are going to spend about \$7.2 million in state and federal funding to maintain the surfaces of the airport so that the jets can continue to come in."

Each of the new jet flights from Salt Lake City to West Yellowstone will be onboard the 50-seat Canadair Regional Jet (CRJ200). There will be two daily flights Thursday through Monday and one daily flight on Tuesday and Wednesday.

"The jets bring a new product to the West Yellowstone community. A faster, more comfortable ride, and then seamless Delta connection access to the Delta network from Salt Lake City and worldwide," said Mike Ostler of SkyWest Airlines. "We are excited about a faster and more comfortable ride for everyone. We are excited to support you as a community."

The new jet service should also be a boost for the local economy. With the new jet service in place, the West Yellowstone Airport could see as many as 600 jet passengers arriving per week during this summer with an estimated total during the summer of nearly 10,000. The previously used turboprop aircraft could accommodate a maximum of 30 passengers per flight on 12 regularly scheduled flights, or 360 passengers per week and roughly 6,000 passengers per summer on average.

"Every time someone walks off that jet that mean money in the pockets of businesses and Main Street it also means we are marketing a part of our state that will bring guest from all over the world," Director of Montana's Department of Commerce, Meg O'Leary, said.

"Moving from the turbo-prop we will have faster more reliable service to the area and it will bring in more business to the community and more visitors to the park," said Airport Director Jeff Kadlec.



Photo courtesy of Mike Moore/WYNews



Photo courtesy of Jeremy Weber/WYNews

Administrator's Column

UAS Center of Excellence: Montana State University (MSU) has been selected as part of a team to operate a national Center of Excellence for Unmanned Aircraft Systems. Led by Mississippi State University, the team will focus on research, education and training in areas that are critical to safely and successfully integrating UAS into the nation's airspace. The team consists of 18 of the nation's leading UAS and aviation universities and a hundred leading industry, government partners. Doug Cairns, professor in MSU's Department of Mechanical and Industrial Engineering (<http://www.coe.montana.edu/mie/>) and head of MSU's UAS researchers said, "It has been a fierce competition, but we won. Now the work begins, U.S. Rep. Ryan Zinke (R-Mont.) initiated this effort over four years ago that evolved into a Mississippi State University and Montana State University team in 2012." With support from Montana Governor Steve Bullock's Office and the Montana Department of Transportation Director Mike Tooley, Congress was approached to develop a separate Center of Excellence for UAS in 2013. The team and topics have gone through many iterations to get to its present state. Between the Federal Aviation Administration needs, and the expertise of the team, it bears little resemblance to the initial activities. This ultimately blossomed into the final, successful ASSURE team to address the FAA needs for UAS technology. ASSURE, the name of the new team, refers to the "Alliance for System Safety of UAS through Research Excellence." Congress has charged the FAA with developing rules regulating commercial UAS. The new center will provide the agency and industry with research to maximize the potential of commercial unmanned systems with minimal changes to the current system regulating manned aircraft. MSU is a core member of the new center, and it will continue to conduct UAS research, but it is not a test site. MSU will receive funds for five to ten years for this center. The funds will require non-federal matching funds, including funds from the team's industrial partners.

Congratulations to the ASSURE Team and MSU in its selection.

Flight Training for Veterans: The National Association of State Aviation Officials (NASAO) joined other general aviation associations and asked Congress to stop legislation that would limit funding for flight training for veterans. In the May 19 letter to leaders of the Veterans Affairs Committee, (<http://download.aopa.org/advocacy/150518FINAL LETTER HR 476.pdf>) the groups asked Congress to stop the GI Bill Education Quality Enhancement Act of 2015. The legislation would cap annual benefits for veterans in collegiate flight training programs at \$20,980, not enough for them to earn a commercial pilot certificate and necessary ratings as part of a college degree program. The legislation was proposed after it was revealed that a small number of flight schools were charging veterans using their GI Bill benefits excessive fees for training. In the letter, it was suggested that better oversight and enforcement of existing Veterans Administration (VA) rules would have prevented the abuses. Instead of passing House Resolution 476, alternatives are recommended to: provide that the VA's enforce its own rules; treat all college degree programs at public institutions equally; encourage the use of flight simulator training when appropriate; enforce an approved FAA Training Course Outline; and advocate for a GAO study on the costs and requirements for veterans to obtain employable status as pilots.

Flight Training Scholarships: The Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA) Foundation is currently offering scholarships for those who are learning to fly, and those who want to learn to fly. In total 25 scholarships will be awarded in amounts ranging from \$2,500 to \$12,000. The Flight Training Scholarships are available to flight students who are U.S. citizens or permanent residents, at least 16 years old and who hold a current Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Student Pilot Certificate at the time of application. Students must also be AOPA members in good standing at both the time of application and when the scholarship is awarded, and must have not yet taken their FAA practical test/checkride. The online application can be found at <http://flighttraining.aopa.org/ftscholarship.html>. The application page includes FAQs and instructions for submitting two recommendations. The Application deadline is 10 p.m. (EDT), **August 9, 2015**. In addition, the AOPA Foundation's AV8RS program for teens ages 13-18, will offer \$15,000 in assistance for aviation education. AV8RS scholarships are available to any teen who is enrolled in the AV8RS program and who is pursuing an aviation-related goal, including a primary pilot's certificate (student must not have completed the FAA practical test/checkride at time of application); study in an aviation/aerospace field through an accredited aviation program at a college, university, technical school or aviation academy, or attendance at an aviation or aerospace camp. A completed application and supporting documentation must be received on or before **August 31, 2015**. To apply for an AV8RS scholarship, go to www.aopa.org/Pilot-Resources/Aviation-Resources-for-Youth/AOPA-AV8RS.



Montana and the Sky

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Calendar of Events

June 6 - EAA Chapter 344 Morrison Park Burger Burn. All aviation-related folk, or would-be aviation folk are invited to come and have a burger or hot dog and socialize. All food and soft drinks will be provided. The event times are 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m., at Morrison Park on the south side of the Helena Airport next to the Helena College Airport Campus.

June 13 – Benchmark Work Session. For further information call (406) 444-2506.

June 13 - 11th Annual Lewistown Airport Fly-In, 7:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.. MPA Sourdough pancake feed, Young Eagles (flights for kids) and displays of Antique, Warbird, Experimental and Sport Airplanes. Held in conjunction with Central Montana Flywheelers Exhibition. For further information contact Jerry Moline at (406) 350-3264.

June 20 – Meadow Creek Work Session. For further information call (406) 444-2506.

June 23-24 – Aviation Career Camp, Helena. For further information contact Harold Dramstad at (406) 444-9568 or email hdramstad@mt.gov. **NOTE: THE APPLICATION DUE DATE OF JUNE 5 HAS BEEN EXTENDED TO JUNE 16 – REGISTER NOW FOR THIS FUN FILLED EVENT!**

June 27 - Big Horn County Airport (00U) at Hardin is open. They are planning a fly-in breakfast in conjunction with Little Big Horn Days 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. Contact Ed Auker at (406) 665-1731 for more details.

June 27 - Fly-In hosted by North Central Hangar MPA at KHVR Havre, MT. Featuring the second best breakfast you will get at an airport, from 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Static displays, Candy drop for the kids, and Sky Bowling. The local FBO is offering a discount fuel price for the day of \$4.00/gal. AVgas for the day. More information call Willie at (406) 945-3646.

July 4 - Townsend Festival of Flight. We don't fool you, we feed you! An annual, deluxe fly-in breakfast and Young Eagles Rally for all GA, Experimental, Classic, Vintage, Light Sport aircraft sponsored by EAA Chapter 344. Townsend Airport (8U8). Times: breakfast served 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m., Young Eagles flights 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Proceeds support EAA programs, including scholarships for AVMT students. Contacts: Neil Salmi 406 980-0544, Young Eagles: Lance Seaman 406 442-8459.

July 4 – Heritage Days Air Fair (Fly-In) Hamilton Airport (6S5), 8:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Breakfast, aircraft static displays, car show, warbirds, skydivers, EAA Young Eagle rides, and pilot competition. For further information contact Joel Jessop at (406) 363-6471.

July 11 – Hands across the Border work session, Del Bonita Airstrip, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Alberta Flying Farmers will provide lunch. For further information call (406) 444-2506.

July 17-18 – Can Am Aerobatic competition held at the Cut Bank Airport. All types of aircraft from Yaks to Pitts all competing for points at this International Aerobatic Club sanctioned event. Free to all. Bring your lawn chair to watch the action. For further information contact Dave Ries (406) 229-0376 or Roy Nollkamper (406) 450-1078.

July 17-19 - Open House Great Falls International Airport. Bravo 369 group will fly in with several Lend Lease Airplanes. For further information contact the airport administration office at (406) 727-3404. See page 7 of the newsletter for more information.

July 18 – Air Fair (Fly-In) Ennis Big Sky Airport, 8:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Breakfast, aircraft static displays, and car show. Iron Pilot competition, ping pong ball drop, skydivers, aircraft rides, fly-overs and a free lunch by Choice Aviation. For further information contact Troy Hunter at (406) 682-7502 or email eks@choiceaviation.com.

July 18 - Jim Bridger fly in and celebration days. Breakfast 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. the fly in is held in conjunction with Jim Bridger days that will be going on in the town of Bridger. For further information contact Merrill Pfeifer at (406) 662-3319.

July 18-19 – Schafer Meadows Work Session. For further information call (406) 444-2506.

July 19 – St. Ignatius Airport Fly-In, 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., Huckleberry Pancake Breakfast, EAA Young Eagle Flights. For further information contact Mike Kuefler (406) 544-2274.

July 19 – 22 – International Flying Farmers Convention. Great Northern Hotel, Helena. For further information go to www.internationalflyingfarmers.org/.

Calendar of Events, continued

July 25 - Lincoln Airport Fly-In. Arrive and depart whenever you like. Food will be served from Noon to 3:00 p.m.. BBQ burgers & dogs with the works, potato salad, chili, cake and ice cream, etc. Bring something to share if you wish. Donations accepted. Camping & bicycles available at airport. Visit the Grizzly Bear exhibit http://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/stelprdb5408031.pdf at the Lincoln Ranger Station adjacent to the airport and the Blackfoot Pathways: Sculpture in the Wild <http://www.sculptureinthewild.com/> right across HWY 200 from the Ranger Station. Downtown Lincoln <http://lincolnmontana.com/> is less than a mile west of the airport. RSVP would be appreciated but not necessary. For further information contact Jerry Cain (406) 461-5631 or sgr@linctel.net.

August 1 - Cabin Creek Landing (97MT) will be holding a Fly-In breakfast from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.. This is a paved runway parallel with Highway 2 West, 22 miles west of Kalispell (mile marker 99). To drive in use the Cabin Creek Landing B&B entrance, everyone welcome. Call Carolyn at (406) 854-9399 for more information.

August 6 - EAA Chapter 344 (HLN) will again be holding a Young Eagles rally at the Three Forks Airport (in conjunction with MAAA Fly-In) from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.. The EAA Young Eagles program offers free, first-time flights for kids ages 8 to 17 and is intended as an introduction to flight that might encourage youngsters to consider a career in aviation or get involved in recreational aviation and/or homebuilding.

August 6 – 8 - Montana Antique Aircraft Association's (MAAA) Annual Fly-In at Three Forks {9S5}. There will be flour bombing & spot landing contests. Free camping on the Airport. For further information contact: Pat Green at greenrrg@aol.com; Ken Flikkema at (406) 580-6207; Bob Green at (406) 539-7830 or Tim Linn at (406) 451-5897.

August 9 – Lions Club Drive In, Fly In breakfast and model airplane show at Hysham Airport 7:00 a.m. to noon. For further information contact Bob Miller (406) 342-5252.

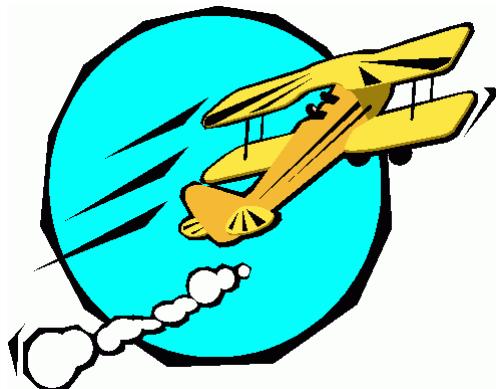
August 15-16 – Montana Fun Weekend Fly-In, car and airplane show. Cash awards for top five cars and top three aircraft. Breakfast served Saturday and Sunday mornings. Food vendors all day Saturday. Lawn Chair drive in movie Friday night after burn out competition. Don't miss it! For further information contact Dave Ries (406) 229-0376 or Roy Nollkamper (406) 450-1078.

September 6 – Fly-In pancake breakfast, Young Eagles flights from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Car show downtown Bigfork. For further information contact Ry Keller (406) 837-1379 or (406) 837-6679.

September 11-13 – Search Pilot Clinic, Missoula. For further information contact Harold Dramstad at (406) 444-9568 or email hdramstad@mt.gov.

September 12 - Columbus Airport 3rd Annual Fly-In. Pancake breakfast starts at 8:00 a.m. They hope to see you there! For further information contact Mark O'Bryant (406) 696-6923 or kippkeefer@me.com.

September 20 - The traditional "GA BBQ" at Missoula International Airport from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.. This annual event features burgers grilled with peerless talent by Missoula Airport's Cris Jensen and Brian Ellestad. Classic cars add a rich flavor to the event, thanks to participation of the Garden City Rods and Customs car club. Displays are expected from the Museum of Mountain Flying and from others with aircraft of special interest. A competitive aviation event (for example, a spot landing contest) is also in the works. All Montana pilots and their guests are invited. The location is the "Runway 25 Hangars" just east of Northstar Jet. For information contact Gary Matson gjmatson@montana.com.



Deadline for Aviation Career Exploration (ACE) Academy Extended

The application deadline for the upcoming Aviation Career Exploration (ACE) Academy has been extended to June 16.

If you or someone you know is a high school student interested in aviation and aerospace-related careers this is something you won't want to miss!

Participants will venture on field trips to fun and interesting aviation activities, visit the shop floor of a state-of-the-art aerospace manufacturing plant, fly with Helena pilots in the Young Eagles program, and much more.

The \$130 tuition includes meals, lodging, and all activities. Enrollment is limited to 12 students, so please apply early. A limited number of scholarships are available, to be awarded on the basis of a personal essay describing your passion for aviation and career goals.

The ACE Academy will be based out of the Aeronautics Division office at 2630 Airport Road at the Helena airport. Hotel rooms will be provided (double occupancy) for Tuesday night.

For further information contact Stefani DeMars at (406) 444-2506 or sdemars@mt.gov.

Mike Rogan Retires!

Mike Rogan retired from the MDT Aeronautics Division on May 15 after 31 years of service!

Mike went to A&P School at the Helena Vo-Tech from September of 1982 through February 1984. He started with the Aeronautics Division on April 2, 1984 as their Airport/Aircraft Technician. He got his private pilot's license in September of 1988. He was promoted to Aviation Representative in 1989. He received his Commercial pilot's license and Instrument rating in 2003. In 2007 Mike added Inspection Authorization to his A&P mechanics license.

In 2004 he received the Governor's Award for Excellence from Governor Judy Martz "In appreciation for excellence in performance as a state of Montana Employee".

During his career with MDT Aeronautics, Mike always enjoyed helping airports with any problems they encountered. He also enjoyed doing the maintenance on all of the airway beacons. He considered the challenge of trying to get to the remote sites during the winter lots of fun—Mike enjoyed climbing those towers in all kinds of weather! At his retirement party, Bill Burkland of RPA presented Mike with the "Golden Shoe String Award" because he kept the airway beacons running on shoe string budget all of those years.

Mike also developed, coordinated and oversaw the annual Montana aircraft mechanics refresher course for many years. Above all Mike loved flying all over the state to do his work!

We wish Mike the best in his retirement, he and his wife Donna plan to do a lot of camping and traveling around the state to watch their grandson Jace in rodeo competitions.



Several former Aeronautics staff members who are now retired stopped by to congratulate Mike! Pictured (l-r) Gerry Burrows, Mike Rogan, Vern Moody and Fred Hasskamp.

Yellowstone Airport Welcomes Summer Intern!



The Yellowstone Airport staff is pleased to welcome David Mack as the newest employee on their team. He is filling the summer internship position at the Yellowstone Airport. David began studying aviation at Rocky Mountain College in 2012 and is excited to start his first job in the aviation industry. David is pursuing a Bachelor of Science Degree in Aeronautical Science and Business Administration with a Minor in Unmanned Arial Systems. He is planning on finishing his Certified Flight Instructor training in the fall.

David is excited to spend the summer in such a beautiful part of the state that has so many outdoor activities to offer. David is very enthusiastic about joining the MDT team and eager to further his knowledge, experience, and career in airport management while serving the aviation and local community.

DF Refresher Training Held in Cut Bank



On Monday, May 18, members of the Glacier Hangar of the Montana Pilots Association received refresher training on the use of direction finding equipment used for homing to emergency locator transmitters. Cut Bank airport manager Dave Ries and District 3 Search Coordinator Leif Torgerson are shown here using car top antennas with the DF receiver to home in on a practice ELT. Montana relies upon our network of 14 search district coordinators and volunteer pilots to carry out our aerial search and rescue mission. MDT Aeronautics regularly provides training sessions to our volunteers, and conducts an annual search pilot clinic. This year's search pilot clinic will take place in Missoula on September 11-13. Please contact Harold Dramstad, Bureau Chief, Safety and Education, for details at (406) 444-9568, or hdramstad@mt.gov.



Volunteers Maintain Spotted Bear Airstrip

On Saturday, May 23, several volunteers from the Flathead Hangar of the Montana Pilots Association worked on the Spotted Bear airstrip on the South Fork of the Flathead River. MPA member Chuck Manning is shown here raking in ruts created by vehicle traffic earlier in the spring when the runway was still wet and soft. Perry Brown came along behind Chuck with the roller and smoothed out the full length of the runway, and then fired up the grill for some lunch. Zach Anderson and crew painted the outhouse and tool shed and generally spruced the place up. On hand for the work session was Forest Service District Ranger Deb Mucklow and MPA President Scott Newpower. Next time you enjoy a nice backcountry flight into Spotted Bear, you can thank the good folks from the Flathead hangar for their good works. Don't miss Benchmark work session coming up on the 13th of June, sponsored by the Vigilante Hangar of the MPA.



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Historic Event to Take Place in Great Falls!

Montana is a state with a rich flying heritage. One of the most interesting chapters in our history is the Lend-Lease Program during World War II. The Lend-Lease was authorized by the Roosevelt administration to help the Russians combat the German invasion. Nearly all of Russia's fighter capacity was destroyed in the first several weeks of the conflict leaving ground troops, bases and cities unprotected from ferocious German bombing campaigns.

The Lend-Lease ultimately provided over 8,000 aircraft to the Russian military. The current Great Falls Airport was chosen as the ideal logistical location to congregate the US war planes before they were flown by the Army Air Corps 8th Ferry Group to Fairbanks, Alaska. Great Falls was chosen because of its frequent VFR conditions and it was out of range of an aircraft carrier based attack from the West Coast. From Fairbanks, aircraft were piloted along the Alaska-Siberia route in to Russia and ultimately the Russian front.

On July 17th through the 19th, Montanans will have perhaps the last opportunity to experience the historic migration. Three WWII AT-6 Texans and several other historic aircraft will arrive in Great Falls before setting out on the historic Alaska-Siberia Route. The public is invited to view these historic aircraft and hangars and attend events throughout the weekend. Fly-ins are encouraged. Please contact John Faulkner at Great Falls Airport, 406 727-3404, if you have a historic plane that you would like to display in this event.

Schedule of Events:

Friday, July 17th from 5:30pm to 9:00pm

Welcome Celebration at Historic Wood Hangar, Great Falls Airport

Enjoy an evening celebration on the historic ramp with live music and aircraft. Food and beverages will be available for purchase. Suggested donation of \$5 will go toward the Bravo 369 documentary project.

Saturday, July 18th and Sunday, July 19th from 11:00 am to 4 pm

Public Open House at the Historic Wood Hangar, Great Falls Airport

Come view the WWII aircraft. Meet the pilots of these amazing heritage airplanes and learn more about the fascinating history of the program that sent 8,000 US warplanes to the Russian front. Lectures will be given each day at 1:00 pm at the Passenger Terminal by a representative of the National Women Airforce Service Program ("WASP") Museum about the WASP's role in delivering these aircraft. Activities will be provided for children. Suggested donation of \$5 will go toward the Bravo 369 documentary project.



A Great Location to Cross the Border!



Construction of the Del Bonita Airport (Whetstone International) H28 started in 1982. It was dedicated in June of 1984. The airstrip lies directly on top, and parallel to the United States and Canadian border. The turf runway is 4440' long, 65' wide and at an altitude of 4336'. It is well-marked with white cones. There are tie down/parking areas on both sides of the border for declaring customs. Amenities are sparse at Del Bonita, but the airport is a good location for crossing the border when flying North to Canada and Alaska. Remember to call customs 2 hours ahead of landing, and park on the side you will be travelling to.

Hands Across the Border sponsors an annual work session that is light on work and heavy on fun. Join us this year on July 11, 2015, for a chance to swap stories with our neighbors to the North, and to meet some of the friendliest border guards around. Planes start arriving around 10:00 am. Bring some gloves and walking shoes. All tools are provided. Maintenance includes weed eating, replacing runway cones, gopher hole filling and bait station filling.

After the work is done sit down and enjoy a BBQ/potluck lunch put on by the Canadian Flying Farmers with presentations by the Flying Farmers and US/Canadian Customs.