

# Montana and the Sky

Montana Department of Transportation

Aeronautics Division

Vol. 73, No. 07

July 2022

## New Practice Airstrips Coming in Montana

In early June, nine volunteers from the Montana Pilots Association (MPA) gathered at the Canyon Ferry airstrip to paint markings on the runway designating a short practice airstrip within the confines of the existing runway.

Volunteers identified and plotted the locations for the new runway markings and painted 2'X4' white blocks on the runway. These markings designate a 900'X25' area to practice short and soft field takeoffs and landings.

This effort provides pilots an unobstructed place to measure their skills and their aircraft's capabilities without having the stress of a runway overrun or having to clear tall trees immediately off the departure or approach end to the runway. It also provides a helpful environment to demonstrate the effects of high density altitude on a short runway.

Since density altitude continues to be a contributing cause to aviation accidents in the mountain west, this initiative is becoming popular in areas where pilots are more likely to encounter this hazardous phenomenon. Canyon Ferry is the first airstrip in Montana to receive these practice markings for the public to use, but it won't be the last! Plans are in the works to paint additional airstrips in west central Montana this summer. If you want to help, contact MPA president Mike Vivion at [mpaprez@gmail.com](mailto:mpaprez@gmail.com).

Volunteers also installed one of the new density altitude awareness posters at the Canyon Ferry picnic area.

So, head to Canyon Ferry to utilize this new teaching and learning tool before hitting those super short, obstructed, confined, and super fun airstrips we all love so much this summer. Practice makes perfect; practicing for the first time at a challenging airstrip isn't always the best idea despite your aircrafts' or instructors' capabilities.



*Photos courtesy of Mike Vivion*

# Aeronautics Loan & Grant Application Reminder

As a reminder to airport loan and grant applicants, the Loan and Grant online portal (<http://www.mdt.mt.gov/aviation/loans-grants.shtml>) will accept FY 2024 applications starting July 1, 2022, through November 15, 2022. If you cannot enter the website, you may have a previous award that needs a closeout form or an annual status report filed.

Additionally, make sure projects are broken down as required. As an example, asphalt projects should be broken down by runway, apron, and taxiway, not as one project lumped together.

## Airport Sponsors and Engineers-

As a friendly reminder, airport sponsors who were previously awarded a loan or grant from Montana Aeronautics are required to complete a status update or project closeout form to be eligible to apply for additional funding.

If you have any questions or need assistance with the loan and grant program, please contact Karen Speeg at 406-444-9581 or [kaspeeg@mt.gov](mailto:kaspeeg@mt.gov).

## Congratulations, Karen!

For the last two and a half years, Karen Speeg has served as the Aviation Support officer at the Aeronautics Division. In June, Karen accepted a new position at the Division as the Airports and Airways Bureau Chief. She replaced Marc McKee, who is returning to the sky as a first officer at a major airline. Karen brings a wide variety of expertise to the position in areas such as airport safety inspections, airport funding, grant and loan programs, airport management, and is also a certified flight instructor. When you see Karen next, please join us in congratulating her on her new role!



*Photo courtesy of Montana Aeronautics staff*

## Inflation Hits Avionics Prices

Have you purchased avionics recently? Did you experience sticker shock? You're not alone. A recent survey by the Aircraft Electronics Association found that more than 82% of the avionics businesses that responded to the survey have raised their prices this year. The survey, which noted that the annual inflation rate in the U.S. was 8.3% through April 2022, found that:

- 32.4% have increased customer pricing more than 10%.
- 32.4% have increased customer pricing 6-10%.
- 17.6% have increased customer pricing 1-5%.
- 16.2% have not changed customer pricing.
- 1.4% have decreased customer pricing.

Article reprinted with permission from General Aviation News

<https://generalaviationnews.com/2022/05/26/inflation-hits-avionics-prices/>



Tim Conway, Administrator

*Montana and the Sky*  
Montana  
Department of Transportation

Greg Gianforte, Governor  
Malcolm Long, Director

Official monthly publication of the  
Aeronautics Division  
Telephone - (406) 444-2506  
Fax - (406) 444-2519  
P.O. Box 200507  
Helena, MT 59620-0507  
[www.mdt.mt.gov/aviation/](http://www.mdt.mt.gov/aviation/)

## Aeronautics Board:

Bill Lepper, Chair  
Robert Bergeson, Member  
Wade Cebulski, Member  
Pam Chamberlin, Member  
Dan Hargrove, Member  
Tim Robertson, Member  
Tom Schoenleben, Member  
Timothy Sheehy, Member  
Gregory Smith, Member

# Aviation Career Exploration Academy

Provided by the Montana Department of Transportation, Aeronautics Division, the Aviation Career Exploration (ACE) Academy is a camp offered each summer for high school students to learn about careers in aviation and explore flight. This camp helps students from across the state learn what is available within the industry. This year, ACE Camp will be held July 22-23, 2022, in Helena. Tuition of \$120 includes lodging, all activities, discovery flight, meals, snacks, supplies, drinks, and ground transportation.

On the first day, students are exposed to as many areas and careers in aviation as possible. Students will receive introductory flights in Division aircraft to start out the day, followed by touring many local aviation facilities and hearing from industry experts. Possibilities include a tour of the Montana Army National Guard Aviation Support Facility, a fixed based operator, an air ambulance company, the Helena Air Traffic Control tower, the Helena Airport, a local fire department crash rescue facility, the Boeing manufacturing plant, Helena college Airframe and Powerplant mechanic program, and a drone company. Additionally, students have the opportunity to hear from industry experts such as professional pilots, engineers, aircraft mechanics, flight nurses and paramedics, various local aviation business owners, and other aviation professionals.

On the second day, students will be taken to the Great Falls International Airport to attend an airshow/military open house, "Flight Over the Falls". The airshow will feature the United States Air Force Thunderbirds team. A variety of presentations from military services and other organizations will be present, including a P-51, P-38, the Jelly Belly team, Precision Exotics, and a growing list of other performers! More information on the open house and airshow can be found at <https://greatfallsairshow.com/schedule/>.

Scholarships may be available to students for tuition. In order for a student to receive a scholarship from a donor, students must submit an essay explaining their interest in aviation and financial need for the award. Essays should be typed and no more than 500 words. They can be emailed to [mdtaerosafetyed@mt.gov](mailto:mdtaerosafetyed@mt.gov).

## Sponsors Needed!

In previous years, the majority of students were sponsored by generous individuals and businesses in Montana. Thank you! Direct donations are accepted, and sponsors are welcome to attend and participate in ACE camp. Volunteers are always welcome!

You can impact a student's future with your life-changing donation of \$120 or more to the program and send a student to ACE! Some of Montana's youth live in areas without access to aviation exposure. For many, this will be their first time flying or even being around someone in aviation.

ACE is open to high school students (those who will be freshmen through those who just graduated). Capacity is limited, and is available on a first-come, first-served basis. Online registration is available at [https://www.eventsquid.com/event.cfm?event\\_id=16682&fromdash](https://www.eventsquid.com/event.cfm?event_id=16682&fromdash).

Contact Aeronautics at (406) 444-2506 or email [mdtaerosafetyed@mt.gov](mailto:mdtaerosafetyed@mt.gov) to set up a sponsorship or with any questions.



Photo courtesy of Aeronautics Staff

## Search Pilot Clinic is BACK

For most of four decades, Montana Aeronautics has held a search pilot clinic to train volunteer pilots to search for missing aircraft. It's been a few years since Montana Aeronautics has offered this training, but it will be held again in Helena, August 5-6, 2022. Montana is one of very few states to operate its own search services using both state and volunteer aircraft, pilots,

and observers. Participating pilots will receive dual instruction in a Cessna 182 or 206 airplane focused on mountain flying techniques in addition to learning search techniques, and receiving ground instruction. Volunteer observers will be trained to look for signs of a crash site and gain experience sitting in the back seat on training flights. Also included in the program is direction-finding theory and training for emergency locator transmitters. The mountain ranges surrounding Helena will provide good training for route and grid searching.

Aeronautics will select up to 24 qualified candidates to attend the course. The cost is \$175 plus lodging. Applications can be submitted at

[https://www.eventsquid.com/event.cfm?preview&event\\_id=17078](https://www.eventsquid.com/event.cfm?preview&event_id=17078).

For more information about this clinic, contact Matt Lindberg at (406) 444-9568 or [mlindberg@mt.gov](mailto:mlindberg@mt.gov).



Photo courtesy of Aeronautics staff

# \$13.6 Million Announced for 19 Montana Airports

U.S. Senator Jon Tester has announced \$13,602,102 in Department of Transportation (DOT) funding for 19 Montana airports to expand and repair facilities. "Montana is booming, and it's critical that the Treasure State has up-to-date infrastructure to support our growing economy," said Tester. "This funding will allow our airports to expand operations and support the increasing demand for reliable, affordable flights in and out of Montana. Improved facilities will pave the way for more flights to the region, allowing Montana to stay connected and support good paying jobs here for years to come."

The funding awarded by the DOT will be used for a wide variety of facility expansions and repairs. Recipients and intended uses include:

**Great Falls International:** \$4,800,519 – Construct deicing pad with associated facilities, construct taxiway

**Missoula Montana:** \$2,149,521 – Construct terminal building

**Lewistown Municipal:** \$1,780,000 – Rehabilitate taxiway

**Helena Regional:** \$1,150,000 – Acquire aircraft rescue & firefighting safety vehicle and equipment

**Cut Bank International:** \$600,000 – Construct/modify/improve/rehabilitate hangar, improve/modify access road, seal apron pavement surface/pavement joints, seal runway pavement surface/pavement joints, seal taxiway pavement surface/pavement joints

**Wokal Field/Glasgow-Valley County:** \$503,575 – Seal apron pavement surface/pavement joints, seal runway pavement surface/pavement joints, seal taxiway pavement surface/pavement joints

**Scobey:** \$450,000 – Install miscellaneous navigational aids, install weather reporting equipment, reconstruct or replace airport lighting vault

**Stanford/Biggerstaff Field:** \$443,655 – Construct taxiway

**Mission Field:** \$354,102 – Construct taxiway

**Conrad:** \$192,510 – Construct taxiway, install miscellaneous navigational aids, reconstruct airfield guidance signs, reconstruct apron, reconstruct runway, reconstruct runway lighting, reconstruct taxiway

**Big Sky Field:** \$183,678 – Construct terminal building, construct/rehabilitate/modify/expand snow removal equipment building

**Lincoln:** \$171,161 – Acquire snow removal equipment

**Harlem:** \$166,500 – Install apron edge lights and/or flood lighting, install runway vertical/visual guidance system, install taxiway lighting, rehabilitate access road

**Choteau:** \$150,000 – Reconstruct airfield guidance signs, seal apron pavement surface/pavement joints, seal runway pavement surface/pavement joints, seal taxiway pavement surface/pavement joints

**Plains:** \$150,000 – Install weather reporting equipment

**Shelby:** \$150,000 – Install weather reporting equipment

**Thompson Falls:** \$106,000 – Reconstruct access road

**Billings Logan International:** \$50,881 – Conduct or update miscellaneous study

**L M Clayton:** \$50,000 – Seal apron pavement surface/pavement joints, seal runway pavement surface/pavement joints, seal taxiway pavement surface/pavement joints

Tester recently secured an additional \$28,610,817 in Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Fiscal Year 2022 funding for 69 Montana airports as part of his bipartisan infrastructure package for repairs and upgrades. The funding is a part of approximately \$144 million secured by Tester that will be awarded over five years to Montana airports through the FAA's Airport Improvement Program, which can be used to construct or repair runways and taxiways as well as make terminal and gate improvements.

*Article reprinted with permission from State Aviation Journal, written by Kim Stevens*

<https://stateaviationjournal.com/index.php/state-news/montana/13-6-million-announced-for-19-montana-airports>

# 2022 Yellowstone Airport Summer Intern

The Yellowstone Airport is excited to welcome David Baerson to the team for the 2022 season. David is working alongside the Airport Manager and Operation Specialists during the summer months to provide additional support and learn all that the Yellowstone Airport has to offer.

David is a student at Purdue University in West Lafayette, IN. He is going to be a junior, majoring in aviation management and minoring in business management. After graduation, David hopes to pursue a career in airport or airline operations. At Purdue, he is involved in Aviation Ambassadors which gives tours of the university to perspective students that may attend the School of Aviation and Transportation Technology.

David is excited to learn more about airport operations and management this summer. In his free time, he is excited to see and explore a part of the country he has never seen before.

The Yellowstone Airport offers this paid internship, available by competitive application, to assist the airport by providing additional help during the busy summer operating season. In return, the opportunity supports the furtherance of education and development of airport management to the intern recipients. It is critical to have well-rounded professionals in the airport industry to effectively manage, grow, and protect our airports. This experience is one way the airport can assist with securing the future of the industry. The airport was awarded a grant from the Montana Airport Management Association to assist in funding the summer intern position.



*Photo courtesy of Montana Aeronautics staff*

## Yellowstone Airport Receives Upgrade

Yellowstone Airport recently installed a new Precision Approach Path Indicator (PAPI). This new LED approach light uses less energy and replaced the old and problematic PAPI which required a tremendous amount of maintenance over the last several years. The PAPI provides vertical guidance to approaching aircraft for Runway 1. The lights are adjusted to ensure a smooth descent at 3 degrees to the runway while transitioning from the traffic pattern for landing. This project was funded entirely by the Federal Aviation Administration with 100% federal Airport Improvement Program Funding.

*Photo courtesy of Montana Aeronautics staff*



# Missoula Photographer Has Her Eyes Skyward

Montana Native Keely Flatow of Missoula is a fine art photographer with a passion for capturing the majestic beauty of aircraft, especially vintage ones. She is a 12-year Air Force veteran and a graduate from the University of Montana. Later, she earned a M.S. in professional aeronautics. Keely was gracious enough to share some of her work for us to enjoy, pictured below. More information on Keely and her work can be found at [KeelyFlatow.mypixieset.com](http://KeelyFlatow.mypixieset.com).



Photo credits: Keely M. Flatow

# Students Visit Yellowstone Airport



As the school year was winding down for the students at West Yellowstone Elementary School in late May, a visit to the Yellowstone Airport gave the 2nd and 4th graders an exciting end-of-the-year activity. The field trip provided students the opportunity to see what daily life is like at the airport. After arriving at the SkyWest airlines ticket counter, students received a pretend boarding pass and went through the security checkpoint. Security officers showed them the computer screen when luggage went through the x-ray machines followed by a trip through the metal detector. Then, they went out onto the ramp where they learned basic marshaling signals from the SkyWest operations employees. Later, students toured the airport fire station, toured the Air Methods medical transport helicopter, flew flight simulators and drones, and finally climbed through the airport firetrucks. They even got to try out one of the hoses on the firetrucks as well as build and fly their own mini wooden airplanes. For many of the students, this was their first trip to an airport and many reported interest in wanting to work in an aviation field. Montana Aeronautics proudly supports students in Montana and encourages their participation and interest in aviation. Field trips like these can be the first spark to a life-long career in the field!



Photos courtesy of Aeronautics staff



# Calendar of Events



**July 4, 2022 — Ice Cream Social Yellowstone Airport** Fly-in, Drive-in, Walk-In at Choice Aviation for free Wilcoxson's ice cream from 12pm-4pm.

**July 5-10, 2022 — Commemorative Air Force Flying Legends of Victory Tour Kalispell, MT** B-17 Flying Fortress *Sentimental Journey* and B-25 Mitchell *Maid in the Shade* will make a stop in Kalispell. Come see these historic military aircraft up close, or even purchase a flight in one. For more information, visit

<https://www.azcaf.org/location/kalispell-mt-tour-stop/>

**July 11-17, 2022 — Commemorative Air Force Flying Legends of Victory Tour Missoula, MT** B-17 Flying Fortress *Sentimental Journey* and B-25 Mitchell *Maid in the Shade* will make a stop in Missoula. Come see these historic military aircraft up close, or even purchase a flight in one. For more information, visit

<https://www.azcaf.org/location/missoula-mt-tour-stop/>

**July 16-17, 2022 St. Ignatius Fly-In** Come to St. Ignatius, 52S, for a weekend of fun. Saturday, July 16<sup>th</sup> there will be a free barbeque, as well as helicopter rides available for purchase from 4:00 - 8:00 p.m. Sunday, July 17<sup>th</sup> there will be a free huckleberry pancake breakfast, and more opportunities for affordable helicopter rides. For more information, contact Michael Kuefler at (406) 544-2274.

**July 16, 2022 — Schafer Meadows Work Session** Fly in to Schafer for the annual work party! Work starts at 9:00 a.m.

**July 22-23, 2022 — Aviation Career Exploration (ACE) Academy** See Page 3 for more information.

**July 23, 2022 — Lincoln Airport Annual Community Open House and BBQ Potluck** Head over to S69 from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. for their annual community open house/barbeque potluck and fly-in. For more information, contact Jerome Cain at (406) 461-5631.

**July 23-24, 2022 — Flight Over the Falls Montana Military Open House** The Malmstrom Air Force Base 341st Missile Wing and the Montana Air National Guard 120th Airlift Wing are co-hosting a Montana Military Open House at the Great Falls airport. There will be aerial demonstrations both days, including the U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds, as well as a variety of other organizations and aircraft. This event is free and open to the public. For more information and safety reminders, please visit

[www.greatfallsairshow.com](http://www.greatfallsairshow.com)

**August 6, 2022 — Three Forks Fly-in** The Montana Antique Aircraft Association will host the 44th annual Three Forks Fly In on August 6th at 7:30am. Friday the 5th will be the kick off pot luck dinner for members and friends. Saturday morning fly or drive into Three Forks Airport for a hot breakfast starting at 7:30. The Shriners will provide lunch. At 1:30 there will be a ping pong ball drop for kids 7-12. Four bombing and spot landing contests will follow. Awards will be given to the top 3 winners. A prize will be given for the people's choice airplane as well. No Saturday night dinner this year. For more information, contact Bob Green at (406) 539-7830.

**August 14, 2022 — Hysham Fly-In and Drive In** Come to Hysham for breakfast hosted by the Hysham Chamber of Commerce. For more information, contact Bob Miller at (406) 342-5252

**August 5-6, 2022 — Search Pilot Clinic, Helena** See Page 3 for more information.

## Do You Know of an Aviation Event in Montana?

Montana Aeronautics relies on input from sponsors, planners, hosts, and volunteers from aviation events in Montana to let us know about planned aviation activities. Please let us know what events you have planned, and we will put them on our calendar of events to share with the flying community.

This year's activities are abundant; we hope to see you at some of them soon!

You can email your events to [mdtaerosafetyed@mt.gov](mailto:mdtaerosafetyed@mt.gov).

## Montana Aeronautics is Hiring!

If you have always wanted to work at the Montana Aeronautics Division and make a difference in aviation in Montana, check out our available job postings.

For more information and to apply, please visit: <https://statecareers.mt.gov/>

**Aeronautics Division**  
**2630 Airport Road**  
**PO Box 200507**  
**Helena, Montana 59620-0507**

**Thank you for reading this month's edition of**  
***Montana and the Sky, fly safe!***

To manage your Montana and the Sky newsletter subscription preferences, please email [mdtaerosafetyed@mt.gov](mailto:mdtaerosafetyed@mt.gov) or call (406) 444-2506.

This document printed at state expense. Information on the cost of publication may be obtained by contacting the Department of Administration.

Alternative accessible formats of this document will be provided on request. Persons who need an alternative format should contact the Office of Civil Rights, Department of Transportation, 2701 Prospect Avenue, PO Box 201001, Helena, MT 59620. Telephone 406-444-5416 or Montana Relay Service at 711.

Contact Matt Maze, MDT External ADA Coordinator, at (406) 444-5416 or [mmaze@mt.gov](mailto:mmaze@mt.gov), two weeks prior to the event if you are a person with a disability and require a reasonable accommodation or auxiliary aid or service to participate an event. The Department of Transportation makes reasonable accommodations for any known disability that may interfere with a person's ability to participate in training. Persons needing an accommodation must notify MDT no later than two weeks before the date of training to allow enough time to make arrangements. To make your request, you can call (406) 444-5416, or through the Montana Relay 711.