

County Commissioners and Airport Managers,

My name is Lauren DeWit. I'm a Mercy Flight and former Stat Air pilot leading the Montana Medivac Camera Program. I've recently contacted your airport about the possibility of installing FAA weather cameras on behalf of Montana Aeronautics and the Montana Medivac Pilots to greatly increase healthcare access to your community. By the end of summer 2025, MT Aeronautics will have installed FAA Weather Cameras in 55 of the 60 rural, publicly paved airports in the state. These airports cover nearly all rural Montanans outside the six major towns and healthcare centers. We want to include your airport in this project because we've seen it save lives, increase our availability and accessibility to your community, increase our flight team safety, and decrease our response time especially in the winter and summer months with all their complicating weather and runway conditions.

After installing cameras at these airports, we've used this awesome tool to increase your neighboring communities' healthcare access as follows: At a typical small Montana airport with a few thousand people in the area, it's estimated that there are a half dozen more flights in combination with less diversions, while the small to medium sized airports with about 5-10,000 people in the area, it's closer to a dozen more flights and less diversions in total. On the higher end, we've seen two particular small airports hit almost three dozen more flights and less diversions at each this last year. Every diversion adds about 1-3 hours on to a life flight transport, so time critical health issues become even more serious with these preventable delays. Each one of these completed flights means hours to maybe even a half a day of ground transport is shaved off the patient's transport time. One can see that over a year, these cameras will save a life or two and shave about a day off all the patients' care wait time. What is that worth to you, your family and friends, and your community?

With that being said, we all at Montana Aeronautics and the Medivac community think it's worth installing these cameras at every airport that will allow it. Montana Aeronautics is covering half of the camera and equipment costs with installation provided at no cost by the state grants in the next year or two. There is a 3 camera system with installation that costs about \$4,000-5,000 total of which half is covered by Montana. If you want a 4 camera system, it is about \$1,500 more (or \$750 since half is covered by the state).

Many of the counties have paid the couple thousand dollars themselves, but many EMS, hospitals, pilot groups, health care foundations, and other organizations have chipped in as well. Nearly everyone sees the benefit, and we are hoping you do as well. We want to help you fund and install these cameras with the minimal effort on your part. We've worked with all the airport engineering companies in the state, and usually there's none or minimal requirements from them since the cameras are typically mounted on a hanger or building with electric and internet already installed. If you have any questions about the cameras or installation, Derrick at Aeronautics can answer them. 406-444-9592 or dolheiser@mt.gov

FAA Camera Link: <https://weathercams.faa.gov/map/>

You now have my contact as well if you want more information from a pilot's perspective and how it's being utilized by the medivac world and a lot of the Montana General Aviation pilots as well. Montana Aeronautics' fiscal year starts July 1st, so we are hoping you'll get a hold of Derrick to be put on the list and receive half funding and possibly more for a summer 2025 installation.

Thank you for your time and interest in improving your healthcare access and aviation safety,

Lauren DeWit, Montana Medivac Pilot

406-208-3004