



Economic Impact Study

Polson Airport

2026

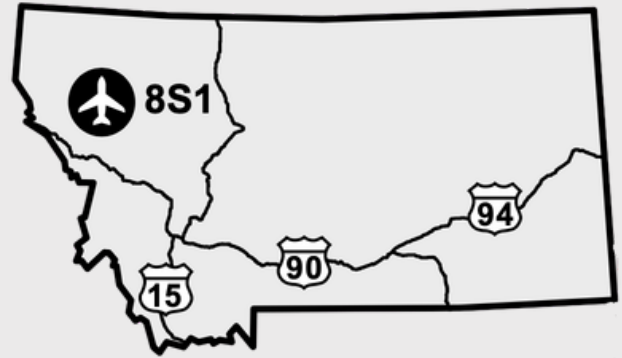


MONTANA
Department of Transportation



Polson Airport Impact

Polson Airport is a public-use general aviation airport located one mile west of Polson in Lake County, situated at the southern shore of Flathead Lake in western Montana. The airfield features a primary runway of 4,200 feet and nearby seaplane landing. The airport hosts recreational flying, flight training, and emergency medical flights. On-airport tenants include aviation manufacturing and repair companies, a fixed-base operator, and a flight training academy. The airport hosts an annual fly-in each September, drawing visiting aircraft from across the region and reflecting strong community support for the facility.



Total Economic Impact on Montana



Jobs
19



Economic Impact
\$2.4 Million



Payroll
\$691 Thousand

Qualitative Impacts

In addition to generating substantial economic impacts, this airport supports a variety of harder to quantify “Qualitative Impacts” that support critical statewide safety and enterprise. The 2026 Montana Statewide Economic Impact of Airports Study documents the following non-inclusive list of qualitative impacts associated with the airport:



Aerial Firefighting
Supports Wildland
Firefighting Operations



Flight Training & Education
Provides Pilot Training and Aviation
Education



**Emergency Medical
Aviation**
Supports Air Ambulance
Operations



Recreational Flying
Supports recreational flying and
access.



Agriculture Support
Supports Agriculture through
Aerial Application

Source: Montana Statewide Economic Impact of Airports.

Montana Airports Support Our State



Jobs
39,400



Economic Impact
\$6.4 Billion



Payroll
\$2.4 Billion

Montana's airport system functions as a critical component of the state's transportation and economic infrastructure, enabling connectivity across a large and geographically dispersed landscape. Through scheduled commercial service and general aviation activity, airports provide access between Montana communities and regional, national, and international markets, supporting passenger travel, freight movement, and time-sensitive operations that cannot be efficiently served by surface transportation alone.

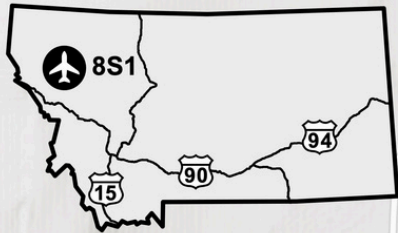
Beyond mobility, Montana's airports support a broad range of economic activity that contributes to employment, income generation, and business operations throughout the state. Aviation-related enterprises, on-airport and nearby businesses, visitor spending associated with air travel, and ongoing investment in airport facilities collectively generate economic activity at the local, regional, and statewide levels. These effects extend across multiple sectors, including tourism, healthcare, construction, professional services, and natural resource industries.

To document both the economic contributions and broader community functions of the state's aviation system, the Montana Department of Transportation undertook a comprehensive, statewide evaluation of Montana's airports. The **2026 Montana Statewide Economic Impact of Aviation** study examines the full scope of airport-related activity, including aviation and non-aviation businesses, visitor spending, capital investment, and secondary economic effects, while also identifying the specific roles individual airports play in supporting residents, businesses, and critical services across Montana.



Polson Airport (8S1)

Polson, MT



47° 41.7' N
114° 11.1' W
2941'



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