

PROPOSAL FOR ENGINEER TRAINING AREA

260th Engineering Company

Prepared For:

Yellowstone County Department of Public Works

Prepared By:

G3, Montana Army National Guard

Point Of Contact:

1LT Trevor Drinville

406-324-3959 or trevor.a.drinville.mil@army.mil

Executive Summary:

The 260th Engineer Company, Montana Army National Guard, requests use of a designated training area that is approximately 30-50 acres in Billings, MT from the Yellowstone County Department of Public Works for horizontal and vertical construction training. A local site would eliminate the current travel burden to Miles City, allow an estimated 75 percent of each drill weekend to focus on hands-on operations, and enable multi-crew training on complete projects such as road construction, earthmoving, site preparation, and foundation work. Approval would improve operator qualification and proficiency while increasing unit readiness for both state and federal missions.

1. Proposed Activities

- This site would be used as a dedicated equipment and construction training area for multiple platoons to train together in one location. It would support both horizontal construction activities, such as roadwork and earthmoving, and vertical construction activities, such as foundation and building-related work.

2. Why is this area needed?

- Currently, personnel must travel to Miles City for equipment training. The round-trip requires approximately six hours and significantly reduces available training time during limited weekend drill periods.
- A local training area in Billings would eliminate that travel time and allow substantially more hands-on training. The unit estimates that approximately 75 percent of a drill weekend could then be dedicated directly to equipment operations.
- The proposed site would:
 - Improve operator training and qualifications for new personnel.
 - Maintain proficiency of currently licensed operators through required recurring evaluations.
 - Enable multiple crews to train together on complete construction projects rather than isolated individual tasks.
 - Increase readiness for both state and federal missions.

3. What Training will be conducted?

- Training at the site would focus on:
 - Construction and heavy equipment operations, including loading, hauling, grading, watering, and compacting.
 - Road construction and earthmoving.
 - Site preparation, foundation excavation, utility trenching, backfilling, basic structural construction support.
 - Construction of roads, berms, and protective positions.

4. Similar Successes

MTARNG has successfully implemented two similarly situated agreements:

- **Butte Training Area:** Under a multi-year inter-agency license agreement between the Montana Department of Military Affairs (DMA), the Montana National Guard (MTNG), and the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT), MTNG engineers utilize an active gravel pit near Butte for vital earthmoving and heavy-equipment operations. The facility delivers hands-on operating experience in excavation, trenching, grading, and other practical engineering operations. These proficiencies have already contributed to soldier readiness for overseas troop deployments, including infrastructure missions in Germany. Access to active terrain enables service members to master both horizontal and vertical engineering disciplines and equips soldiers with specialized technical skills, heavy machinery qualifications, and safety expertise. The Butte Training Area demonstrates how public land and infrastructure assets can have dual purposes and serves as an effective operational template for future county-level partnerships.
- **Miles City Training Area:** Another multi-year inter-agency license agreement that provides engineering training opportunities to MTNG. This 2024 agreement between DMA, MTNG, and the City of Miles City enables soldiers to receive engineering training at a gravel pit near Miles City. Like the Butte Training Area, soldiers are gaining valuable training experience on large-scale earth-moving equipment, all while the City of Miles City maintains continual use and benefits to the gravel pit.