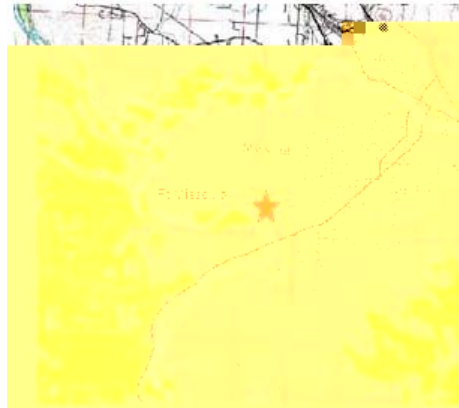


## Missoula/Fort Missoula (FtM\_MT\_NRM)

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**Web Page:** <http://dbs.umt.edu/flightlab/>

**Locator Map:** (lat 46.84, long -114.05)



**History:** Ft Missoula was a military base from its establishment in 1877 until after WWII when it was broken up and portions transferred to several public agencies including the University of Montana that maintains a Field Station at Ft Missoula. Much of the original Fort property remains undeveloped, and several opportunities exist within the diversified public ownership to site research infrastructure in a secure setting surrounded by the rapidly expanding Missoula urban area.

**Key Characteristics:** Ft Missoula is located in the southwestern section of Missoula along the Bitterroot River just upstream from its confluence with the Clark Fork River. It occupies a valley floor and floodplain, and the original vegetation was Palouse Prairie bunchgrass on the valley floor and willow-cottonwood stands along the floodplain. In its valley location at about 975 m elevation, the annual precipitation is about 45 cm, and mean annual temperature is about 7.3°C. The climate and setting is very typical of the Northern Rockies with high mountains surrounding broad valley floors. Missoula is a rapidly growing small city (44% increase in population between 1990 and 2004) and the urban sprawl is largely to the south and west of the City making Ft Missoula central to this expansion. Small patches (10s of ac/ha) of relatively natural prairie and woodland habitat still exist within Ft Missoula, but these are becoming increasingly insular as development proceeds around the Fort. Surrounded as it is by mountains, the Missoula area has a high potential for temperature inversions to trap atmospheric pollutants which in turns means that effects of anthropogenic pollutants are apt to be especially pronounced in this area. The site offers an excellent urban setting to the proposed urban-to-wild transect from Missoula to Coram Experimental Forest/Glacier National Park.