



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Barry Houser
Marketing and Communications Director
Montana Contractors Association
barry@mtagc.org
406.442.4162

Montana Contractors Association Presents Excellence in Construction Awards
Local projects Crow Nation Irrigation, Columbus-East & I-90 Incident Management recognized

BILLINGS, Mont. (February 14, 2025) - The Montana Contractors Association (MCA) recognized 17 projects and 12 Montana contractors for excellence in construction during their annual winter convention in Helena.

"We are proud to honor Montana contractors for their exceptional expertise," said David Smith, MCA Executive Director. "This acknowledgment not only showcases their remarkable skills but also emphasizes a steadfast commitment to quality and excellence in supporting our communities."

In the face of fierce competition across all categories, the remarkable quality of each project positions Montana's construction industry as a true leader among the finest in the nation. The Excellence in Construction Awards celebrate outstanding contractors and projects while reinforcing the strength and dedication of Montana's workforce.

Area projects recognized for construction excellence include the Columbus-East project in Stillwater County, the I-90 Incident Management project between Three Forks and Billings, and the Crow Nation Irrigation project.

2024 MCA Concrete Excellence Awards

"Best Agricultural Project"

Presented to: Martin Construction

Project: Crow Nation Irrigation project, Big Horn County

The project replaced an irrigation structure that was nearly 100 years old. The concrete and CLSM was completed on time and within the specification of the project. All concrete made the compressive strength before 28-day cure time. Testing on the concrete and CLSM was completed, and all materials met or exceeded the requirements of MDT Section 511. Access to the construction site was constrained by a roadway that was required to remain open along the Little Big Horn River. The work site was deep, and the bottom of the work area was 25 feet from the surrounding ground level. Historic Irrigation Structures could not be disturbed or damaged during construction. All concrete and CLSM was pumped using a pump truck and had to be completed under cold weather construction December through February.

2024 MCA Highway Excellence Awards

"Best Paving & Smoothness/Volumetric & Density"

Presented To: Riverside Contracting, Inc.

Project: Columbus-East; Stillwater County

The scope of the project included 8.7 miles of a mill and overlay on Interstate 90, just east of Columbus. This project was set up to cross-over traffic head-to-head allowing construction of the closed side of the interstate. The progression of the work started with the bridge deck repair and guardrail installation. Once the bridge repair work was completed, construction traffic was able to completely access all parts of the closed lanes of the interstate. With access to all areas, the milling operation was able to begin. Following the milling operation was an underseal. The underseal was designed to alleviate cracking from propagating through to the top roadway surface. The roadway would then be overlaid with grade S ¾-

inch plant mix. New signs, delineators and guardrails were installed after the plant mix was complete. The roadway surface was then completed with a final chip seal and pavement markings. Upon completion, the traveling public was switched head-to-head on the other side and the process was repeated. The plans called for a 0.10' mill depth and a 0.20' plant mix section. This equated to 59,760 tons of grade S ¾ Inch plant mix and 25,000 tons of milling material. 10,600 tons of chips were required for both the underseal and chip seal operations. Due to the grade of the shoulders, 20,962 feet of MGS guardrail was required as well.

**2024 MCA Highway Excellence Awards
“Special Recognition”**

Presented To: Montana Lines, Inc.

Project: I-90 Incident Management; Three Forks to Billings

This \$7.8M project was designed to increase the safety of the traveling public along the I-90 corridor. The project included 17 massive Variable Message Signs, 34 road closure gates, roadway illumination, flashing signs, guardrail, as well as other significant signing and electrical upgrades. All these elements were strategically placed among 23 sites along I-90 between Three Forks and Billings with the intention of alerting the traveling public to weather and safety events, as well as providing infrastructure to quickly and safely close and divert traffic during such events. Careful and constant planning and coordination between Montana Lines, Mountain West Holding Company, and the owner, were key to the success of the fast-paced and widespread project.

MCA is in its third decade of presenting construction awards. The first recipients were recognized for concrete excellence in 2003. Additional categories have been added throughout the years. The MCA/MDT partnering award was presented for the first time in 2021. Contractors submit their projects for consideration, projects are reviewed and judged by a panel of their peers.

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THE CONSTRUCTION ASSOCIATION

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Local contractors Sletten Construction and Montana Lines, Inc. & multiple projects recognized

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Among the recipients were Sletten Construction for their contributions to the Rocky Boy Water Treatment Plant and Blackfoot River Bridge projects and Montana Lines, Inc. for the I-90 Incident Management project. The local Scheels Aim High Big Sky Aquatic & Recreation Center project in Great Falls was also recognized for construction excellence.

2024 MCA Concrete Excellence Awards

"Best Industrial Commercial Project"

Presented to: Sletten Construction

Project: Rocky Boy's Water Treatment Plant Phase 1, Chester

This project involved the construction of a 74,000 square foot structure housing and an 11-million-gallon-per-day conventional water treatment facility for the Chippewa Cree Tribe. The treatment process features flocculation, plate settlement, and filtration systems, along with chemical feed and necessary pumping equipment. The build utilized over 7,200 cubic yards of cast-in-place concrete, precast tilt-up exterior panels, and structural steel framing. The project is part of a larger regional water system which will provide potable water to seven counties in north-central Montana.

2024 MCA Concrete Excellence Awards

"Best Bridges Project"

Presented to: Sletten Construction

Project: Blackfoot River Bridge, Lincoln

The project featured structure removal, new structure construction, bridge curb, bridge rail, approach slabs, Portland cement concrete paving, slope paving, deck grooving, rip rap, bioengineered bank, grading, gravel, new private approaches, fencing, drainage, pedestrian passes, and guardrail. After demolition of the structure, temporary ramps for work bridge access were constructed. A 120-foot work bridge was then installed, concurrent with rip rap and bioengineering bank installation to facilitate drilled shaft and bridge abutment work. Following work bridge and bridge abutment completion, the steel truss was delivered and erected. This truss superstructure consisted of six different truss sections with eleven floor beams and fifty stringers. The bridge deck was then formed in 40 separate bays and poured with 122

cubic yards of concrete. Concurrent to structure installation was bridge-end backfill and grading. This allowed Sletten to swiftly pour the approach slabs and Portland cement concrete paving sections at the bridge approaches. The concrete driving surfaces were then transversely grooved to increase surface friction. Once approach work was complete, embankment protectors and guardrail were installed with slope paving and curb installed for water erosion mitigation improvement.

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2024 MCA Building Excellence Awards

"Best Commercial Project"

Presented To: Swank Enterprises

Project: Scheels Aim High Big Sky Aquatic & Recreation Center; Great Falls

The Scheels Aim High Big Sky Aquatics and Recreation Facility is a 45,000 square foot facility that is the central location for city-sponsored indoor recreation programs, skills and personal development courses, multiple fitness options, and aquatic training for the local military community (Malmstrom Air Force Base and the Montana Air National Guard) of Great Falls. The facility contains full indoor aquatics, including a 25 meter 8-lane lap pool, a recreational pool complete with a lazy river, warming pool and waterslides. The facility also sports a full-size gymnasium to accommodate basketball, volleyball and pickle ball; cardio and weight training areas; a child-care area with an outdoor playground and outdoor splash pad; and multipurpose classrooms/meeting rooms which can accommodate exercise classes as well as parties. A walking track above the gym provides the community, especially seniors, a safe place to walk and exercise. A sauna is easily accessible between the locker rooms. The lobby houses a sitting area as well as a fireplace that provides an inviting atmosphere to the building design.

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Multiple area contractors and projects recognized

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Local contractors recognized include Treasure State Incorporated, CK May Excavating, Langlas & Associates, Infinity Pools, Martel Construction, Inc. and R&R Taylor. Multiple local projects, including The National, the SF 169 S-288 Curves project, the Summit Hotel Spa Rebuild, and the I-90 Incident Management project, were all recognized for construction excellence. Additionally, Belgrade High School Panther Trades and R&R Taylor received a Building Our Workforce Award and CK May Excavating was honored with a partnering award for the US 191 project.

2024 MCA Building Excellence Awards

"Best Historic Restoration"

Presented To: Langlas & Associates

Project: The National; Bozeman

The Commercial National Bank, complete with its tall arched windows, grand public space and ornate cornice, first opened to the public in 1920 with much fanfare. For half a century, the 5-story, 40,000 square foot building at 104 East Main Street in downtown Bozeman looked the same as it was built; a sturdy limestone base, topped with pale bricks and 40' flagpole on the roof. In the spirit of modernization, the structure received a "facelift" in 1970 in which the entire façade was encased in concrete portals, epoxy aggregate, tinted light wells and a blocky white parapet. In 2022, new ownership with an exciting vision to bring back the once landmark building to its original splendor, construction commenced on 'The National'. Thirty months later, with a completely restored exterior, full seismic upgrade, a current code compliant interior and an 8,000 square foot addition, The National is open to the public.

2024 MCA Highway Excellence Awards

"Best Reconstruction of a Rural Project"

Presented To: CK MAY Excavating, Inc.

Project: SF 169 S-288 Curves; Gallatin County

This project consisted of highway safety improvements at two rural locations in Gallatin County. Both locations have been the scene of many fatalities over the years due to the high speeds, nonexistent shoulders, tight curves, and narrow bridges. The bridges were replaced with a 26' x 11' and a 22' x 10'

box culvert. Each box culvert section weighed approximately 55,000 lbs. and CK May placed over 1,100 tons of precast concrete. This project also required a unique diversion ditch construction as well as a mixing and placement of native material and imported rip rap embedment for the varying hydraulic fluctuations of Camp Creek and aquatic fish habitat. During construction, a 1930's era road was discovered in the new highway road prism which required the addition of over 35,000 cubic yards of excavation and embankment. With these unexpected challenges, CK May was able to keep the project on schedule.

2024 MCA Building Excellence Awards

"Best Specialty Contractor Project"

Presented To: Infinity Pools

Project: Summit Hotel Spa Rebuild; Big Sky

The spa renovation at the Summit Hotel in Big Sky involved key upgrades and overcame several challenges. Notable improvements included the addition of automatic covers to enhance maintenance efficiency and energy conservation in the harsh climate, as well as two seating islands to create "conversation zones," improving the guest experience. A significant challenge was ensuring the foundation's stability. To prevent settling issues that plagued the original spa, helical piers were used to provide a long-lasting, stable base. With a tight timeline to complete the renovation before peak ski season, the project required exceptional teamwork and coordination. Infinity Pools wants to thank Martel Construction for their trust throughout this process. Through clear communication, careful planning, and skilled craftsmanship, deadlines were met without compromising on quality. The result is a durable, functional, and beautiful spa that will serve the Summit Hotel for many years.

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2024 MCA Concrete Excellence Awards

"Best Paving Project"

Presented to: Treasure State, Inc.

Project: Terminal Expansion, Glacier Park International Airport; Kalispell

Treasure State Inc. placed approximately 7,500 cubic yards of Knife River P-501 concrete over a 15,660 square yard, 15" thick apron at the Gallatin Park International Airport (GPIA) in Kalispell. TSI used their Gomaco GP3 concrete paver set at 25' wide and equipped with total station machine controls to successfully construct the apron to FAA tolerances. The concrete scope started roughly a month behind schedule and workdays were added to the paving plan to better match concrete production/supply. The contracting team worked tirelessly to complete the project within the 2024 construction season.

2024 MCA Building Excellence Awards

"Best Industrial Project"

Presented To: Martel Construction, Inc.

Project: Noller Automotive Supercenter; Kalispell

The Noller Automotive Supercenter is a 27,000 square foot, state-of-the-art facility designed to service a wide range of vehicles, including large trucks and specialized heavy-duty equipment. Built with a robust pre-engineered metal building (PEMB) framework, this automotive center integrates advanced systems to support high capacity, efficient service operations. The facility includes sophisticated oil distribution and compressed air systems, ensuring streamlined maintenance processes across service bays. Large hydraulic vehicle lifts provide the capability to service vehicles of all sizes, enhancing versatility and efficiency. Noller Automotive Supercenter stands as a comprehensive solution for high-demand vehicle servicing, combining durability, functionality, and advanced technology to meet diverse service needs.

2024 MCA Education Foundation Award

“Building Our Workforce”

Presented To: R&R Taylor Construction, Inc.

Project: Belgrade High School Panther Trades; Belgrade

R&R Taylor Construction in partnership with Belgrade High School’s CTE program, Panther Trades, brings in high school students to work on site with R&R Taylor employees and learn the hands-on skills necessary for a career in carpentry. While working for R&R Taylor, the students are also enrolled in the State of Montana’s pre-apprenticeship program for General Carpentry. The students are required to complete some of the bookwork necessary for the Carpenter’s Apprenticeship. The students can transfer their work and time to the State’s Apprenticeship once they graduate high school, should they wish to continue with a career in construction, potentially fulfilling 50% of the state’s requirement for a Journeyman Carpenter.

2024 MCA Partnering Award

Level 2 Project

Presented To: CK MAY Excavating, Inc.

Project: US 191, MDT District: Butte

This project is located on US-191 south of Bozeman on the route to Big Sky and Yellowstone National Park. The average daily travel was well over 15,600 vehicles and is the busiest two-lane highway in Montana. The failing bridge on US 191 needed to be replaced and installed prior to April 15th. Prior to the start of the project, it was realized the designed detour was still on the existing bridge. This created an immediate and potentially catastrophic problem with the removal of the existing bridge and installation of the new reinforced concrete box culvert. CK May was able to successfully navigate the problem and received the culvert section a little later than scheduled, but they were able to adapt and install more efficiently to meet the deadline. Additionally, Northwestern Energy was involved since there were obstacles with proximity to overhead power poles and short overhead electrical services crossing the new detour. The end project was the fruit of the partnering efforts.

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Local contractor Swank Enterprises & multiple area projects recognized

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Among the recipients was Swank Enterprises for their contribution to the Scheels Aim High Aquatic and Rec Center and the University of Montana Lodge Dining Facilities projects. Area projects recognized for construction excellence include the Glacier Park International Airport Terminal Expansion, The Salmon Lake Highway Reconstruction, and the Nolar Automotive Supercenter. The Salmon Lake Highway Reconstruction project was also recognized for partnership excellence.

2024 MCA Building Excellence Award
"Best Commercial Project"

Presented To: Swank Enterprises

Project: Scheels Aim High Big Sky Aquatic & Recreation Center; Great Falls

The Scheels Aim High Big Sky Aquatics and Recreation Facility is a 45,000 square foot facility that is the central location for city-sponsored indoor recreation programs, skills and personal development courses, multiple fitness options, and aquatic training for the local military community (Malmstrom Air Force Base and the Montana Air National Guard) of Great Falls. The facility contains full indoor aquatics, including a 25 meter 8-lane lap pool, a recreational pool complete with a lazy river, warming pool and waterslides. The facility also sports a full-size gymnasium to accommodate basketball, volleyball and pickle ball; cardio and weight training areas; a child-care area with an outdoor playground and outdoor splash pad; and multipurpose classrooms/meeting rooms which can accommodate exercise classes as well as parties. A walking track above the gym provides the community, especially seniors, a safe place to walk and exercise. A sauna is easily accessible between the locker rooms. The lobby houses a sitting area as well as a fireplace that provides an inviting atmosphere to the building design.

2024 MCA Building Excellence Award
"Best Institutional Project"

Presented To: Swank Enterprises

Project: University of Montana - Lodge Dining Facility; Missoula

The University of Montana's new Lodge Dining Facility is in the center of campus, looking east over the oval to Montana Hall. At 44,000 square feet, the two-story building features high ceilings and open

spaces, outdoor seating with a fireplace on the ground level patio and two balconies for outdoor seating overlooking the campus. A full kitchen and seven unique food venues offer students a wide variety of culinary experiences, serving over five thousand meals per day. The finishes bring characteristics of iconic Montana communities into the venue themes in an expansive environment for students to eat, gather and study. The building began serving students in August of 2024, and is on track to be certified LEED Gold.

2024 MCA Concrete Excellence Award
“Best Paving Project”

Presented to: Treasure State, Inc.

Project: Terminal Expansion, Glacier Park International Airport; Kalispell

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2024 MCA Environmental Excellence Awards
“Best Environmental Project”

Presented To: Kiewit Infrastructure Co.

Project: Salmon Lake Hwy 83 Roadway Reconstruction; Seeley Lake

The Salmon Lake project reconstructed 4.2 miles of Montana Highway 83 with the goals of widening the roadway and creating a safer corridor for local and tourist traffic. The project was situated between Salmon Lake and the surrounding mountains. Environmental conservation was a top priority for the project team, especially given the close proximity to Salmon Lake. Throughout the project’s duration, the Salmon Lake project positively impacted the local community through philanthropic donations and by hiring local employees and contractors. The project was highly successful, providing the Montana Department of Transportation and the local community with a safer road, with no unintended environmental impacts or safety incidents during construction.

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Project: Noller Automotive Supercenter; Kalispell

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2024 MCA Partnering Award

Level 1 Project

Presented To: Kiewit Infrastructure Co.

Project: Salmon Lake, MDT District: Missoula

There were ongoing issues with sizable rocks falling from the mountain, occasionally landing on the roadway and, at times, hitting vehicles. To mitigate this hazard, a wire mesh attenuator was installed on one slope, and rock catchment ditches with concrete barriers were placed along the mountainside to keep fallen rocks on the road. The original roadway lacked shoulders, creating unsafe conditions for drivers and bicyclists who frequently travel the route. The project added 4-foot shoulders to both sides of the roadway throughout the corridor, as well as frequent turnouts on each side of the road. Guardrails and permanent concrete barriers were installed on both sides to further enhance safety. Managing traffic was a significant challenge, as this is a major corridor to Glacier National Park. Trac-actuated signals, paired with level two monitoring, PTZ cameras, and driveway-automated devices, were used to minimize wait times for the public traveling through the project area. The corridor was paved with plant mix asphalt and finished with chip and fog seal.

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2024 MCA Highway Excellence Awards
"Best Reconstruction of an Urban/City Project"
Presented To: Riverside Contracting, Inc.
Project: Missoula-Lolo; Missoula County

The Missoula-Lolo surfacing project was successfully completed with zero work related accidents and a high standard of quality, all in the dead of the night. Daily commuters traveling the corridor had minimal inconvenience during the eight-week project. But, if you showed up at night, you were treated to a well-orchestrated equipment and light show, reminiscent of the 1970's movie, Close Encounters of the Third Kind. Riverside, Knife River, Mountain West and others combined forces to operate as much trucking, milling, and paving equipment as has likely ever been assembled on one project in Montana. And all thanks go to the 110+ hard working men and women who altered their sleep schedules, so that the rest of the world wouldn't be inconvenienced by road construction. In the end, Riverside delivered a 7.6-mile resurfacing project with guardrail and median upgrades, both urban/rural, all in the dead of the night.

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Project: University of Montana - Lodge Dining Facility; Missoula

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Presented To: Riverside Contracting, Inc.

Project: Columbus-East; Stillwater County

The scope of the project included 8.7 miles of a mill and overlay on Interstate 90, just east of Columbus. This project was set up to cross-over traffic head-to-head allowing construction of the closed side of the interstate. The progression of the work started with the bridge deck repair and guardrail installation. Once the bridge repair work was completed, construction traffic was able to completely access all parts of the closed lanes of the interstate. With access to all areas, the milling operation was able to begin. Following the milling operation was an underseal. The underseal was designed to alleviate cracking from propagating through to the top roadway surface. The roadway would then be overlaid with grade S ¾-inch plant mix. New signs, delineators and guardrails were installed after the plant mix was complete. The roadway surface was then completed with a final chip seal and pavement markings. Upon completion, the traveling public was switched head-to-head on the other side and the process was repeated. The plans called for a 0.10’ mill depth and a 0.20’ plant mix section. This equated to 59,760 tons of grade S ¾ Inch plant mix and 25,000 tons of milling material. 10,600 tons of chips were required for both the underseal and chip seal operations. Due to the grade of the shoulders, 20,962 feet of MGS guardrail was required as well.

**2024 MCA Building Excellence Awards
"Best Commercial Project"**

Presented To: Swank Enterprises

Project: Scheels Aim High Big Sky Aquatic & Recreation Center; Great Falls

The Scheels Aim High Big Sky Aquatics and Recreation Facility is a 45,000 square foot facility that is the central location for city-sponsored indoor recreation programs, skills and personal development courses, multiple fitness options, and aquatic training for the local military community (Malmstrom Air Force Base and the Montana Air National Guard) of Great Falls. The facility contains full indoor aquatics, including a 25 meter 8-lane lap pool, a recreational pool complete with a lazy river, warming pool and waterslides. The facility also sports a full-size gymnasium to accommodate basketball, volleyball and pickle ball; cardio and weight training areas; a child-care area with an outdoor playground and outdoor splash pad; and multipurpose classrooms/meeting rooms which can accommodate exercise classes as well as parties. A walking track above the gym provides the community, especially seniors, a safe place to walk and exercise. A sauna is easily accessible between the locker rooms. The lobby houses a sitting area as well as a fireplace that provides an inviting atmosphere to the building design.

2024 MCA Partnering Award

Level 1 Project

Presented To: Kiewit Infrastructure Co.

Project: Salmon Lake, MDT District: Missoula

There were ongoing issues with sizable rocks falling from the mountain, occasionally landing on the roadway and, at times, hitting vehicles. To mitigate this hazard, a wire mesh attenuator was installed on one slope, and rock catchment ditches with concrete barriers were placed along the mountainside to keep fallen rocks on the road. The original roadway lacked shoulders, creating unsafe conditions for drivers and bicyclists who frequently travel the route. The project added 4-foot shoulders to both sides of the roadway throughout the corridor, as well as frequent turnouts on each side of the road. Guardrails and permanent concrete barriers were installed on both sides to further enhance safety. Managing traffic was a significant challenge, as this is a major corridor to Glacier National Park. Trac-actuated signals, paired with level two monitoring, PTZ cameras, and driveway-automated devices, were used to minimize wait times for the public traveling through the project area. The corridor was paved with plant mix asphalt and finished with chip and fog seal.

MCA is in its third decade of presenting construction awards. The first recipients were recognized for concrete excellence in 2003. Additional categories have been added throughout the years. The MCA/MDT partnering award was presented for the first time in 2021. Contractors submit their projects for consideration, projects are reviewed and judged by a panel of their peers.

A list of all 2024 Excellence in Construction award winners is available at <https://mtagc.org/member-benefits/mca-excellence-awards/>.

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The Montana Contractors Association, a chapter of the Associated General Contractors of America (AGC), is a trade organization representing commercial, industrial, and public works construction firms. Our Mission is simple: Working together, we advocate for quality contractors, people, and projects by providing value and opportunity for our members. Learn more at www.mtagc.org, or contact David Smith, Executive Director david@mtagc.org, or 406-442-4162.