

FILM IN MONTANA

Evaluating the Impacts of Film Production and the MEDIA Act on the Montana Economy 2024-2026

Film productions in Montana attract substantial external investment, which strengthens the state economy by supporting local industries and creating jobs for residents. In 2019, the Montana State Legislature enacted the Montana Economic Development Industry Advancement Act (MEDIA Act), providing income tax incentives to attract film, television, and other media productions. This report examines the economic and fiscal effects of film and television production in Montana, with a particular focus on the MEDIA Act Tax Credit Program and its subsequent positive impact to the state's economy.

Film Production in Montana by the Numbers

Productions that have Filmed, July 2024 to May 2026

213	\$469.7M	\$134.2M	\$241.1M	480 FTE*	\$41.8M	\$\$19.9M
Number of Productions	Total Direct Spending	Total Montana Direct Spending	Total Montana Economic Impact	Total Jobs	Employee Compensation	Total Tax Revenue incl'd non-resident wage tax

	All Productions	MEDIA Act Tax Credit Productions	Other Productions
Direct Output (\$M)	\$133.8	\$91.7	\$42.1
Indirect and Induced (\$M)	\$107.7	\$73.7	\$34.0
Total Impact (\$M)	\$241.4	\$165.3	\$76.1
Direct Jobs Supported (FTE*)	240	170	60
Indirect and Induced Jobs Supported (FTE*)	240	170	70
Total Jobs Supported (FTE*)	480	340	140
Total Employee Compensation Supported (\$M)	\$41.8	\$26.0	\$15.8

Source: IMPLAN (2024)

*FTE is full-time job equivalents

Impact of the MEDIA Act

Direct Spending on Film Productions



Indirect Economic Activity

Small & Local Business Spending
Hotel & Hospitality Industry
Production-Related Businesses

Induced Economic Benefits

Cast and Crew Spending
Increased Tourism

Related Indirect Benefits

Attracts Outside Investment in Montana Communities
Draws Interest in Studio Development

Related Workforce Benefits

Training & Skill Building for Film Production Trades
Reduces Brain Drain



MEDIA Act stimulates a competitive film industry that attracts further outside investment and additional local job support.

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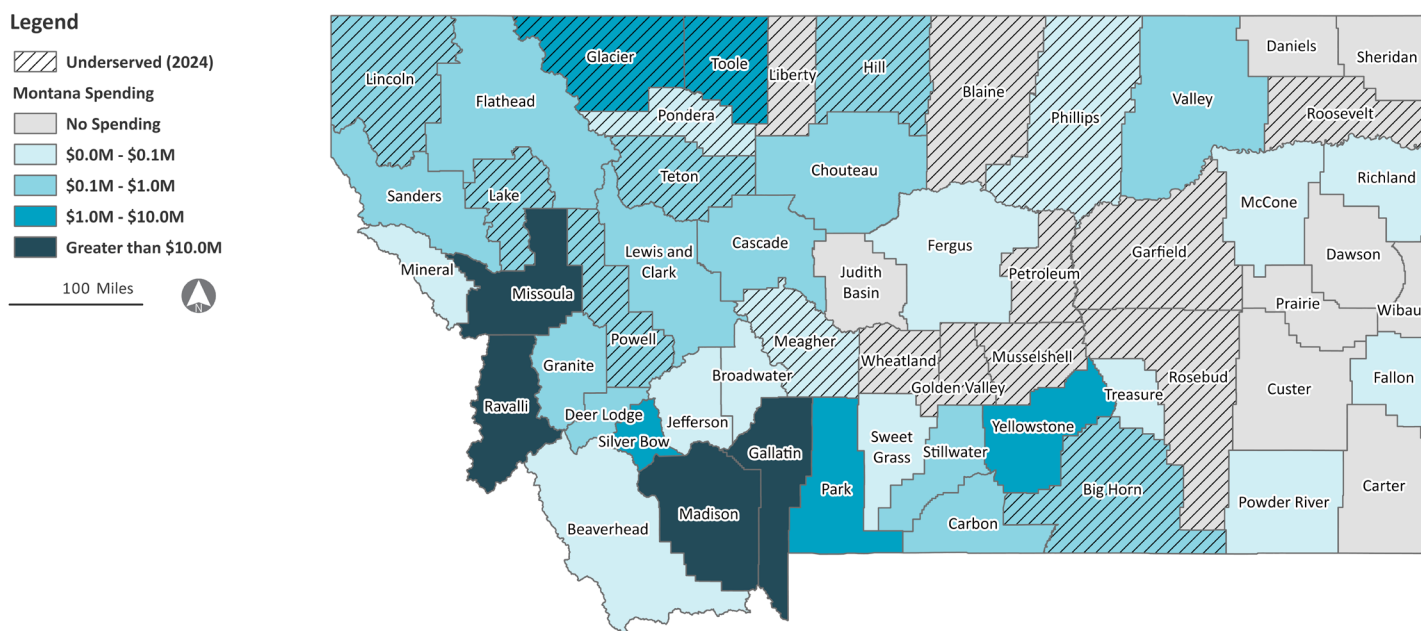
The film and entertainment industry brings considerable benefits to local communities. Film productions frequently hire local businesses to support their operations, from equipment suppliers and florists, to printing and security services. Furthermore, successful on-screen productions often lead to increased tourism, further stimulating the local community and economy.

Montana's statewide workforce development efforts have strategically targeted the film industry as a key industry crucial for economic growth. Recognizing the film industry's potential

to drive economic development and enrich the cultural landscape, Montana has launched targeted programs to attract more film productions and cultivate a skilled local talent pool. These initiatives ensure the workforce is well-prepared to meet current and future demands, making Montana an attractive location for film projects. By focusing on the film industry, Montana not only boosts job creation and stimulates local economies but also promotes high-quality, locally produced content that highlights the state's rich cultural heritage on a national and international stage.

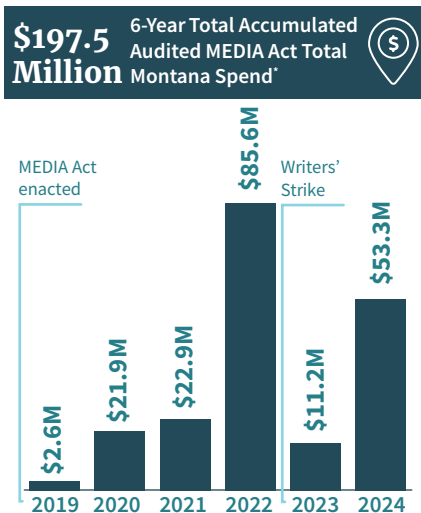
Localized Impacts of Film Production in Montana

Productions that Have Filmed, July 2024 to May 2026



Total Production Spend of MEDIA Act Productions since 2019

Audited expenditures (including Montana resident employee compensation) by MEDIA Act productions grew from \$2.6 million in 2019 to \$85.6 million in 2022, reflecting the ramp-up of major television productions in the state. Spending fell to \$11.2 million in 2023 as industry-wide labor strikes halted production activity nationwide, before recovering to \$53.3 million in 2024 as filming resumed. Across the six-year period, audited Montana spending totaled \$197.5 million.



State of Montana

MEDIA Act

Enacted in 2019, the Montana Economic Development Industry Advancement (MEDIA) Act provides transferable income tax credits on in-state production expenditures. The base credit is 20 percent, with additional incentives that can raise the effective rate to 35 percent, including:

- 25% credit on resident crew compensation (up to \$150K/person)
- 5% bonus for production in under-served counties
- 5% bonus for use of the 'Filmed in Montana' logo
- Credits for hiring veterans and tribal members (added in 2025)

Senate Bill 326, signed into law in May 2025, extended the program through 2045, expanded eligible production types to include documentaries and non-scripted television, and established a new annual credit allocation framework.

* Refer to Figure 3.1 of the full 2026 impact report