

March 14-15, 2024

ITEM 211-2302-R0324

Request for Authorization to Design the Agricultural Research Labs; Montana Agricultural Experiment Station

THAT

Consistent with MCA 18-2-102, and BOR Policy 1003.7, the Board of Regents authorizes Montana State University to spend up to \$1,600,000 for the planning and design of research labs and shop improvements at agricultural research centers across Montana.

EXPLANATION

1. MSU received \$11,000,000 of Long-Range Building Program (LRBP) funding for the construction of a new MSU wool lab and Montana Agricultural Experiment Station (MAES) research facilities in House Bill 14 of the 67th Legislature Session, \$6,000,000 of which is allocated specifically to the research labs, including the Western Agricultural Research Center (WARC) horticulture lab.
2. MSU received \$1,300,000 of authority-only for the MSU wool lab and MAES research facilities in House Bill 14 of the 67th Legislative Session, \$300,000 of which is allocated specifically to the WARC horticultural laboratory and office space.
3. MSU received \$4,396,000 of supplemental LRBP funding for the research labs in House Bill 5 of the 68th Legislative Session to account for inflation and increasing material costs related to the project.
4. MSU received \$600,000 of LRBP funding for renovations and safety upgrades to shop facilities at WARC in House Bill 5 of the 68th Legislative Session as previously approved in BOR Item 206-106-R0523.
5. MSU is requesting to spend up to \$1,600,000 for the planning and design of this project.
6. MAES and the Agricultural Research Centers (ARC) have served the State of Montana for 130 years, providing critical research that increases agricultural production and profitability.
7. The project will resolve space limitations, environmental control issues, insufficient wet lab capabilities, shop space deficiencies, and other issues existing at the research centers.
8. The work will ensure research space and equipment are modernized to better service Montana for years to come while ensuring researcher safety.
9. The research labs at Moccasin (Central ARC, CARC), Havre (Northern ARC, NARC), Creston (Northwestern ARC, NWARC), Huntley (Southern ARC, SARC), Conrad (Western Triangle ARC, WTARC), and Corvallis (WARC) will be evaluated and prioritized for facility improvements under the project.
10. MSU will request construction authority at a later date.
11. Funding for the planning and design will come from LRBP funds allocated by the Legislature.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment #1: Project Details (BOR Policy 1003.7)