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**MDOC MEDA Opportunity Call
 July 27, 2016
 10:30am – 11:30am**

On the call from MDOC: Karyl Tobel, Debi Davidson, Alyssa Townsend, Janice Wannebo, and Dave Desch.

On the call from MEDA: Paul Tuss, Sue Taylor, Russ Fletcher, Elizabeth Smith, Brett Doney, Gypsy Ray, Jason Rittal, Kirk Keysor, Tori Matejovsky, and Gloria O'Rourke.

Welcome and Program Updates

Karyl Tobel welcomed everyone to the call and requested the following program updates from MDOC:

MT Board of Research and Technology Dave Desch	Dave reported 26 applications were considered and nine were funded. All but one was a business; \$919,000 was committed to projects. The next round deadline is March 1 st 2017.
BSTF Debi Davidson	BSTF is wrapping up a review on applications submitted from the deadline of June 30 th . Applications are for job creation and technical assistance. The next round of applications is due August 30 st .
Workforce Training Grant Janice Wannebo	Janice reported two applications are in the pipeline from the June 30th deadline.
BSTF Alyssa Townsend	Alyssa confirmed that when a business calls their office directly the person is passed on to his/her CRDC. The summer has been very busy. During August 7 – 9, Alyssa will be in Libby and happy to stop for informational visits along the way.

MEDA Update

Paul Tuss began the MEDA reports and requested others join in beginning with CRDC/EDDs. Paul noted peer review time is here for EDDs and Paul hopes the reviews can take place during the CRDC meeting in August. Kirk is working on who the out-of-state peer will be.

Bear Paw Development	Paul reported Bear Paw is nearing an end of a project regarding the area border station between Alberta and Montana. Value Added Ag projects are on the increase. Bear Paw is one of the Food and Ag Centers experiencing more activity. Bear Paw submitted Sen. Tester for a NADO Congressional Award to be recognized for his incredible support and accomplishments. Sen. Tester will be officially awarded – perhaps at the fall MEDA Conference.
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Great Falls Development Authority Brett Doney	<p>Brett Doney said GFDA is also seeing increased activity with their Food and Ag Center and hopes the legislature will increase funding. Entrepreneurial activity is very on the rise – with business expansion projects on the rise as well. The first train should run in September for the Agra Park and a call center project will soon be announced. Brett recently participated in the Food Expo in Chicago in which there was a Montana Pavilion with six Montana food processors three of which were from Great Falls. One outcome: a company is opening an office near Shelby. Brett reported several pulse crop snacks are in early stages of development. Brett will be at the EDA conference in Denver.</p>
Beartooth RC&D Sue Taylor	<p>Sue reported Beartooth obtained a BSTF Planning Grant for Many Arrows to establish their own economic development group to avoid the stop/start cycle with tribal re-elections and leadership shifts. A food co-op is coming together as a result. In addition, the final approval was obtained from EDA to conduct a coal impact study for 15 counties in Montana. Strategies will be added to CEDS documents. A third project: a four state regional tourism project that kicked off in 2010 is finally making progress. The project involves becoming a geo-tourism region.</p>
Lake County Community Development Corp. Gypsy Ray	<p>LCCDC recently submitted a USDA grant; Gypsy will attend the EDA conference even though not currently an EDD. Two BSTF grants were obtained for feasibility studies. LCCDC is co-hosting the MEDA Fall Conference and looking forward to the event. Momentum continues as a result of the Ronan Resource Team Assessment.</p>
Great Northern Development Corp. Tori Matejovsky	<p>Feasibility Studies include a marina and an independent living business in Circle (funding from EDA and BSTF). Construction is beginning soon on a multi-family housing project. A profit Mastery training is pending.</p>
Sweetgrass Development (reporting for Sarah Converse)	<p>Loans are pending for existing and new businesses.</p>
Fallon County Jason Rittal	<p>Due to storms, Fallon County is experiencing at least a million dollars in damage from hail and a tornado. Jason is treating the recovery as a huge economic development project. A sewer collection and lift station is pending; Jason is working on easements and a hospital project as well.</p>
GOED Liz Ching	<p>Liz thanked everyone who participated in Innovate Montana. She has received great feedback and anticipates more peer-to-peer events in the future. Tourism Business Development event is taking place September 11 – 12, with Commerce leading the charge.</p>

MEDA Office

Paul and Gloria reported on an interview with Phil Drake, Great Falls Tribune, regarding MEDA and Resource Team Assessments. The article should be published on Sunday, July 30th. There next Resource Team Assessment will be in Seeley Lake, September 19 – 20; more volunteers are needed.