



118 E. Seventh St.; Suite 2A \* Anaconda, MT \* 59711  
406.563.5259 [info@medamembers.org](mailto:info@medamembers.org)  
<http://www.medamembers.org>

*It is MEDA's privilege to submit this report for the current contract to the Governor's Office of Economic Development, Montana Department of Commerce, Montana Department of Labor and Industry and Montana BEAR Team participants regarding Business Expansion and Retention (BEAR) Program activity in the state. The following is a summary of MEDA BEAR activities as provided for in the Scope of Work under Amended Contract MT-MEDA-ED-12-01 for the month of June 2015.*

## **ACTIVITY REPORT FOR JUNE 2015**

### **MONTANA BEAR PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS**

#### **BEAR REVISITED**

Due to a conversation initiated by John Rogers, Governor's Office of Economic Development (GOED), the MEDA Board revisited the Statewide BEAR Program and the current process of storing information for BEAR Teams. It was noted that the hundreds of participants in the Main Street Montana Project emphasized the need to reduce barriers between agencies and programs, and to share information, removing possible duplication of services. The re-visit of the BEAR Team process will encourage lower costs and the sharing of information with key partners such as SBDC when possible. The MEDA BEAR Working Group is assisting with revisions to the program.

#### **NEW BEAR SURVEY FORM AND DATA COLLECTION**

There is a new streamlined process for entering your BEAR Team Survey. [New MT BEAR Survey](#) This will be the data input process Bear Teams use beginning July 1st. There is also a [link for the survey in Word format](#) for easy note taking as it matches the form. You can also enter the information directly into the survey.

#### **BEAR WORKING GROUP MEETING SUMMARY**

The MEDA BEAR Working Group has been re-ignited. Minutes from the [meeting are available online](#).

- **BEAR Round Up Plans**

The BEAR Working Group participants felt that holding webinars and conference calls would serve Montana BEAR Teams better at this time, rather than holding an in-person BEAR Roundup event. Topics would include exploring existing BEAR models across Montana, WebGrants training, IWT Refresher, BEAR Refresher, BEAR Team activities, etc.

- **Training Needs**

Mike and Gloria are available either via webinar or in person to conduct a BEAR training, refresher course, or organize presenters for a specialized business topic. Several on the call said

their teams are in the process of rebuilding so a webinar would be helpful and will contact MEDA as needed.

### BEAR Team Updates

**Rural BEAR:** Marissa Hauge reported Stillwater County BEAR partners with Chad Moore, in Billings, Big Sky Economic Development to meet the needs of rural businesses in the area. This branch of the Billings program is called Rural BEAR and is used by Stillwater, Carbon and Sweet Grass Counties.

**Livingston BEAR:** Katie Weaver reported the Livingston BEAR Team has some common themes arising throughout their BEAR visits. Because of this, the Livingston BEAR Team will expand its resource services and offer small group training.

**Missoula BEAR:** Angie McDonald and Carley Markum shared that Warren Vaughan (Bozeman BEAR Director), recently visited their team and shared multiple ideas from what is working in Bozeman. As a result, Missoula implemented some of the practices and is using them with the Missoula BEAR process.

**Kalispell BEAR:** It was noted that Mike Jackson is retiring from Kalispell Job Service but will serve as the BEAR Team Meeting Coordinator for the Kalispell Chamber on a part-time basis.

### IMPORTANT IWT UPDATE

Chris Wilhelm, MDLI/IWT Director held three webinars to update everyone on several important changes with the Incumbent Worker Training Grant program. If you need an update: [View her powerpoint here for a refresher.](#) All IWT applications must go through WebGrants.gov.

