MEDA ONLINE NEWS FOR JULY 2011

- MEDA Fall Conference
- MEDA Statewide Call – More Flood Resources
- New MEDA Members
- MEDA Working Group Activities
- Grant and Funding Opportunities
- Who Qualifies for MTIP?
- Opportunities For You
- Montana BEAR Report
- My Turn: Super reduced registration for MT NDC Training

MEDA FALL CONFERENCE
In case you haven’t heard, mark your calendar for October 6th and 7th. The MEDA Fall Conference will be held in Kalispell, with Professional Development training to be held the morning of the 6th. The MEDA Fall Conference Agenda Committee will meet mid-summer to start planning speakers, tours, etc. Our members submitted many excellent suggestions for agenda topics via the Membership Survey. Instead of reaching our goal of 75 survey responses, 89 members responded. Thus, an ice cream sundae buffet awaits!

MEDA STATEWIDE CALL – More Flood Resources
Thanks to the collaboration of multiple Federal and State partners, MEDA held a statewide conference call on June 21st. Over 60 people participated in the call and learned of flood resources available to communities, businesses and home owners. A summary of the call is available which contains a list of resources.

Senator Jon Tester’s staff will host 17 flood outreach meetings across Montana in early July. The sessions are designed to connect residents affected by flooding to resources available from state and federal agencies. Contact your nearest field office: http://tester.senate.gov/Contact/offices.cfm

NEW MEDA MEMBERS – Welcome!
MEDA gained four new members in June including Jim Bowman, Missoula Economic Partnerships; Tom Rogers and Warren Vaughan, Gallatin County Planning and Community Development; and Cynthia Cleich, MBAC, Helena. Total MEDA membership now stands at 225. For your convenience, the Membership Directory has been updated.

MEDA WORKING GROUPS
Two MEDA Working Groups met in June:
- RLF: The Revolving Loan Fund group discussed match sources and creative ways of finding match funding. For complete minutes, visit http://www.medamembers.org/rfl.html
  Next meeting: September 13th, 3:00pm.
- Energy: The Energy Working Group invited Tom Kaiserski to share information on various issues affecting energy development in Montana. Minutes are available at http://www.medamembers.org/energy.html

Meeting in July:
- The Tourism and Recreation Working Group will meet via conference call on July 7th at 10:00am. Dial in: 712.432.0175 pin 217279.

GRANT AND FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES
1. **New Community Friendly Grants Extension Community Resources Program weblink.** Check out these great community grant links. Thanks to David Young, Professor, Community Resource Specialist Extension Service & College of Nursing, MSU, for providing this information.

2. USDA Rural Development has just published the Notice of Funds Availability (NOFA) for the rural Business Opportunity Grant (RBOG) program (attached). This program provides grants to eligible nonprofit corporations, public bodies and Federally Recognized Indian Tribes for the purpose of community planning or technical assistance for economic development projects. The maximum grants are $50,000 for instate projects and $150,000 for multistate projects with no limitation for the Native American earmarked funds. The application deadline for the Agency to receive paper and electronic applications is 4:00 PM local time on August 1, 2011. If you have any questions please contact any Rural Development office or visit our website at: [http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/MT_bcp.html](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/MT_bcp.html)

3. USDA Rural Development has published a Notice of Funds Availability (NOFA) for the Value Added Producer Grant (VAPG) program. Grants on a 50-50 basis to agricultural producers and agriculture producer groups to fund feasibility studies (up to $100,000) or, for those projects with feasibility studies, working capital for the business (up to $300,000). If there are any questions, please contact any Rural Development Office or visit our website at: [http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/MT_bcp.html](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/MT_bcp.html)

4. The Montana Department of Commerce has a total of $530,000 in state lodging tax funds available for tourism-related facility improvement projects through the 2011 Tourism Infrastructure Investment Program (TIIP). Non-profit organizations, local and tribal governments are encouraged to apply for TIIP grants as part of the funding packages they use to improve Montana’s visitor attractions and facilities. The deadline for the 2011 TIIP grant applications is Wednesday, August 3, 2011. Information about eligible projects, program guidelines and application forms are available on the Montana Office of Tourism’s Intranet site [www.travelmontana.mt.gov/forms](http://www.travelmontana.mt.gov/forms) or you can contact Victor Bjornberg at the Montana Office of Tourism, 406-841-2795, vbjornberg@mt.gov.

5. Regional Woody Biomass Utilization Project Planning Grant
   - **Eligible Applicants:** businesses, public entities, state and local governments, institutions, tribal and non-profit entities; **Eligible Areas:** general vicinity of Bozeman, Helena, Butte, or Whitefish
   - **Eligible Activities:** feasibility study, pre-construction (planning, design, permitting) of biomass utilization projects; **Award Available:** $5,000-$20,000 depending on region of state
   - **Submission Deadline:** July 22, 2011; Application details: [http://dnrc.mt.gov/forestry/Assistance/Biomass/FinAsst/FinAsst.asp](http://dnrc.mt.gov/forestry/Assistance/Biomass/FinAsst/FinAsst.asp)

---

**Who Qualifies for MTIP’s Free Services?**

Do you know a Montana entrepreneur, Montana university researcher, owner of a Montana-based technology business or someone serious about moving technology through the stages-of-development to full commercialization? Then please let them know that they are all eligible for MTIP’s free consulting assistance!

**How it works**

An initial in-take session with one of MTIP’s highly experienced and knowledgeable technology counselors will lead to recommendations tailored to each client’s situation and needs. In most cases, there will be specific steps clients are encouraged to complete in order to advance their objectives. The effort and commitment displayed by a client in completing these steps determines the level and amount of additional assistance provided by MTIP.

Visit [www.mtip.mt.gov](http://www.mtip.mt.gov) and fill out a “Request for Services” form today to begin your free counseling session or call Christine Bell, Program Manager, (406) 841-2749.

**OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOU**

Interested in sharpening your professional skills as an economic and community development practitioner? Looking for new tools to place in your economic development tool box? Check these out.

- Senator Jon Tester’s next **Small Business Opportunity Workshop** will focus on creating jobs by expanding opportunities for Montana’s entrepreneurs with a specific focus on women. Tester’s workshop
will be held on July 22 at Montana State University-Billings’ downtown campus, from 8 a.m. until 1 p.m. It will be Tester’s eighth Small Business Opportunity Workshop. Montanans interested in attending are encouraged to RSVP at tester.senate.gov/workshop.

- **Heartland Center for Leadership Development** Announces Webinar Series on Energizing Entrepreneurs
  This three-part webinar series will equip participants with the tools to implement an entrepreneurial development system (EDS) in their community or region. Visit [http://www.heartlandcenter.info](http://www.heartlandcenter.info) for details. Contact Kurt Mantonya kmantonya@heartlandcenter.info for details on payment options. For specific questions about the webinar content, contact Craig at craigs@neb.rr.com.

- Montana’s senior U.S. Senator Max Baucus announced open registration for the General Electric Aviation Small Business Supplier Symposium to be held in Billings August 8th. Baucus is encouraging all qualified Montana businesses to register for the symposium, which is designed to connect Montana manufacturers and suppliers who match GE Aviation’s commodities with opportunities to do businesses with GE.

- Montana Department of Commerce Finance Program Webinars: Last day to review webinars and complete quizzes for the Montana Department of Commerce Finance Programs for certification of completion is August 1, 2011. Graduates of the webinar series will be recognized at the MEDA Fall Conference. Please review webinars and complete quizzes at the following websites: Community Development Block Grant – Economic Development Program: [www.cdbged.mt.gov](http://www.cdbged.mt.gov); Big Sky Trust Fund Program: [www.bsif.mt.gov](http://www.bsif.mt.gov); Primary Sector Workforce Training Grant Program: [www.wtg.mt.gov](http://www.wtg.mt.gov)

---

**MONTANA BEAR Report** Learn what is new in your region with the statewide Montana BEAR Program.

View the June 2011 [report](#) and catch up on the latest BEAR Team news. There were 31 business visits held in June in the following counties:

- Flathead County – 15
- Deer Lodge County – 1
- Yellowstone County - 10
- Lake County - 1
- Ravalli County - 1
- Missoula County - 2
- Fergus County - 1

**BEAR Training in Ronan, June 28th**

Left to right: George Palmer, Missoula Job Service; Luke Walawander, Lake County Community Development; Mona McCarthy, Flathead Job Service; Carol Cunningham, Lake County Community Development; Mike Jackson, Flathead Job Service; Amber Zygotis, Lake County Job Service, Whitney Gantlon, Lake County Job Service, Todd Erickson, Lake County Job Service and Gib Turner, Lake County Community Development.

**MY TURN: Super Reduced MT NDC Training**

You will soon have the opportunity to register for NDC training, right here in Montana. Thanks to partners like MT Dept. of Commerce, Montana USDA/RD and MEDA, your registration cost will be drastically reduced. I recently spotted an advertisement for NDC training in a neighboring state at the rate of over $1,000. Montana’s registration will be under $500. Terrific! The first training is set for the week of September 12th. Janice Wannebo, MDOC, will be sending announcements any day.