



118 E. Seventh St; Suite 3F Anaconda, MT 59711  
Ph: 406.563.5259 [www.medamembers.org](http://www.medamembers.org)  
[info@medamembers.org](mailto:info@medamembers.org)

**MEDA Tourism and Recreation Working Group**  
**March 3, 2017**  
**1:00pm**

**On the call: Jan Stoddard, Dax Schieffer, Joe Willauer, Racene Friede, Adam Vauthier and Gloria O'Rourke.**

**Introductions and Interests**

MEDA Tourism and Recreation Working Group Chair Dax Schieffer welcomed everyone to the call and requested introductions. Each person shared about their work and their interest in joining this working group. Participants also shared what they would like to accomplish through this group.

- ★ Racene Freide – Executive Director of Glacier Country Tourism. Racene plays an educational and participatory role in Glacier Country. She looks forward to collaborating with this group as well as other partners. Racene has educational materials to share and is interested in discovering new collaborations with the Tourism Division melding with the Business Resource Division within MT Dept. of Commerce.
- ★ Jan Stoddard - Bureau Chief, Montana Office of Tourism and Business Development. Jan's focus is on sales and constituent services. Jan worked with tourism in West Yellowstone and is now with the state. She would like for communities to discover tourism development earlier in their community development process. A focus of Jan's is to discover and fine-tune what is best for a community to do – and when; answer the question as to what point is best to apply for a tourism grant.
- ★ Adam Vauthier – Anaconda Development Corp/Accelerate Anaconda. Adam wears many hats in the community of Anaconda and is currently

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putting together a TBID. Anaconda is currently without a Chamber director so Adam is heavily involved in chamber-like activities. Adam wants to have his tourism tool box up-to-date so he does not miss an opportunity.

- ★ Joe Willauer – Executive Director of Headwaters RC&D. Joe serves a seven county area and is very interested in tourism as it was his main reason for coming to Montana. Joe moonlights as a fly-fishing guide when time allows. Joe would like to learn best practices from this group. He realizes Butte and other communities he works with are ½ way between Yellowstone Park and Glacier Park and would like to learn how to capture some of that traffic.
- ★ Gloria O'Rourke – Coordinator for MEDA. Gloria is interested in digging deeper into the tourism data to find those that would be the best fit for returning to Montana to start a business or expand their business to Montana. She also wants to plug in the tourism know-how to the Resource Team Assessment communities she works with through MEDA. Gloria would like to see MEDA and MT Ambassadors use the tourism data to better collaborate as MEDA has the tools and Montana Ambassadors have the high level business connections.
- ★ Dax Schieffer – Executive Director, Voices of Montana Tourism. For 20 years Dax worked in the private sector promoting Big Sky Resort. With Voices of Montana Tourism, Dax works with a well-established group of marketers, ad agencies, hoteliers, etc. In a nutshell, Voices wants to be available 12 months of the year to share the story of the value of tourism.

### **Action Items**

- ★ Meet up in May – the group will find a time to meet face-to-face during the MEDA conference, scheduled for May 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>, in Great Falls.
- ★ A conference call will be held in June.
- ★ This working group will plan to present during a webinar for MEDA in November.