



**MINUTES**

Beartooth RC&D Area, Inc. Board of Director's Meeting  
 Thursday, July 19th, 2012 – Joliet, MT

<p><b>Board Members Present</b>          Chuck Egan, Chairman, Town of Columbus          Gerald Dell, Stillwater County          Bill Wallace, Sweet Grass County          Jeffrey McDowell, City of Hardin          Dan Lowe, Big Horn Conservation District          Ed Ulledalen, City of Billings          Bob Van Oosten, Stillwater Conservation District          Marvin Carter, Vice Chairman, City of Laurel          John Pulasky, Yellowstone Conservation District          Clinton Giesick, Town of Bridger          Steve Arveschoug, Big Sky EDA          Royce Njos, City of Red Lodge          Yolanda GoodVoice, Crow Nation</p> <p><b>Members at Large Present</b>          Ken Gomer, Stillwater Mine Corp.          Kendall Hartmann, Billings Job Service          Lisa Skriner, MSU-Billings, College of Technology          John Klamann, SBA</p>	<p><b>Sponsors Not Represented</b>          Page Dringman, City of Big Timber          Sidney (Chip)Fitzpatrick, Big Horn County Commissioners          Penny Landon, Treasurer, Carbon Conservation District          Jim Reno, Yellowstone County          Kathryn Callahan, Town of Joliet</p> <p><b>Members at Large Not Present</b>          Melissa Kramer, Stillwater Economic Development</p>
<p><b>Guests</b>          Clara Caufield, Editor, "A Cheyenne Voice"          Mrs. Dan Lowe</p> <p><b>Congressional Staff</b></p>	<p><b>Staff</b>          Chris Mehus (present)          Joel Bertolino (present)          Jilann Knutson (present)          Dick Rath (not present)          Valentine Smith (present)          Earl Atwood (present)</p>

**INTRODUCTIONS**

Meeting Called to Order at 5:30 p.m. by Chairman Egan in Joliet, MT at the Rebekah Lodge Hall on Main Street. Pledge of Allegiance was led by our Royce Njos.

Chris Mehus announced that Ada Iron will not be able to continue as a Board Member, due to the demands of her new job. **Yolanda GoodVoice** was introduced as her successor, representing the Crow Nation on the Board. Yolanda is Loan Fund Manager at the Apsaalooke Nation Economic Development Department office. We welcome **Yolanda** to our Board!

The meal for the evening was catered by the new Joliet eatery, Jane Dough's. While food was enjoyed, our guest presenter, Clara Caufield gave a brief history and explanation of her newspaper, A Cheyenne Voice, which is now being published from her new office in Busby, Mt on the Northern Cheyenne reservation. Clara explained the projects she has undertaken recently to restore a historic building, and develop new tourism options in the Busby area, extending the attraction of the Little Big Horn Battlefield.

**Minutes** from the May 17, 2012 (1), meeting were reviewed. **Bob VanOosten moved for approval of the minutes as written, seconded by Dan Lowe. APPROVED.**

**Current Beartooth RC&D Financial reports (2), and RLF Financial Statements (3)** were presented to the Board by Jillann Knutson. **Jerry Dell moved and Bill Wallace seconded to accept the reports and authorize Knutson to file them for audit purposes. APPROVED.**

**Beartooth RC&D Business Plan update.** Staff continues to work on the RC&D business plan, and had their first meeting with the Board's Business Plan subcommittee (Ulledalen, McDowell, Gomer) prior to the Board meeting. The draft plan should be in front of the entire board for review for the September meeting.

Discussion was raised by staff with Board members about improving communications with the Board between meetings about current events and activities at the RC&D. Options including off-month conference calls, newsletters, etc. were discussed. Ultimately the consensus expressed by Board members was preference for an interim email update circulated to Board members including a bullet list of key items and activities for their review (no attachments). The email will begin in August.

## **SERVICES**

**New Project Requests** were presented to the Board for approval to proceed:

(4) **Native Seedsters.** Chris Mehus reported to the Board on the status of this project, which involves a short term contract with Native Seedsters, Inc. to develop a marketing plan and initiate sales efforts for their line of specialized seed harvesting equipment. Then contract will be for reimbursement to the RC&D for Mehus' time (estimated at 8-12 hours per week) based on his actual organization cost as calculated by our financial staff.

**Ken Gomer moved for approval, seconded by Bob VanOosten. APPROVED.**

(5) **Muddy Lamb Studios.** This project is to assist the small rural business in Fishtail, Mt develop a marketing effort that will assist them in capturing a larger market share through effective advertising of their diversified unique business Muddy Lamb, where they utilize wool from their own sheep in creating a line of wool products. **Clinton Geisick moved for approval, seconded by Dan Lowe. APPROVED.**

(6) **Fishtail General Store.** This project is to assist the small rural business in Fishtail, Mt develop a marketing effort that will assist them in capturing a larger market share through effective advertising of their diversified unique business that bakes fresh pastries every day, hosts a deli and carries everything from groceries to fishing tackle and nuts and bolts. They have also recently began supplying their fresh breakfast

burritos to the City Brew locations in Montana. **Dan Lowe moved for approval, seconded by Ken Gomer. APPROVED.**

**(7) Develop Rural BEAR Group.** This project is to assist the small rural businesses in our region by assessing the potential need for an extended network of business advisors to meet once a month and review BEAR proposals and potentially review Incumbent Worker Training Application. The proposal is to work with our ED partners (Stillwater EconDev, Big Sky EDA, Two Rivers Authority, SBDC, SBA and Reartooth RC&D) to determine interest in the project and IF interest exists to facilitate the meetings and organize a consistent group of people interested in assisting small rural business development. **Jerry Dell moved for approval, seconded by Dan Lowe. APPROVED.**

### **Housing Program Update – Valentine Smith**

Val Smith attended the 2012 Montana Housing Partnership Conference held June 26-28 in Billings offering Keynote speakers and many breakout sessions.

The **2012 Housing White Paper** produced by MT Dept of Commerce outlining MT's housing needs, available stock, capacity, and projections. The 'quick facts' US Census data was distributed which provides Demographic data that can be helpful to identify housing challenges and shape housing program for each county.

Info was given re: **Census and Economic Information Center (CEIC)**. Which provides tools and resources using reports, data sets/filters, interactive maps, and economic dashboard to utilize census data for your unique inquiries. Additional training will be available in October.

[www.ceitc.mt.gov](http://www.ceitc.mt.gov)

Val offered to meet with individuals to share additional information on housing programs/initiatives that are available.

**Resource Selection Policy (8)** - A draft policy was presented to the Board for consideration. It describes the Wildfire Mitigation Program, outlines the process for fuels reduction projects, and creates a policy statement relating to the selection of contracted resources by landowners. The policy was presented by staff, and discussed by Board members. The policy will be under review by the Board until the September meeting.

### ***Regional Round Table—Board Member discussion***

A round table discussion was conducted, providing each Board member an opportunity to describe projects or events of importance in their home area.

***NEXT MEETING – 6:00 pm - September 20, 2012 - Joliet, Mt.***

*Requested topic for next meeting: Update on the Wild West Project (Mehus)*

*Recommended we invite Red Lodge Area Chamber people to listen to the presentation.*

**Adjournment:** 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted, ***Earl Atwood***, Special Projects Coordinator