



Eastern Plains Area Newsletter

Working together for the future
of Eastern Montana

January 2009

Eastern Montana Economic Development Organizations to Meet in Sidney on Wednesday, February 4th at 9:30a.m.

The annual council meeting of the Eastern Plains Resource Conservation and Development Area, Inc. will be held on Wednesday, February 4th, at The Sidney Country Club, Hwy 16 N. **The business meeting will begin at 9:30a.m.**

Highlights of the meeting include an update on office staff changes, update on current projects, and election of officers.

A no-host lunch will be served at 12:15 PM. During lunch, Chuck Flynn of MSU Research Center will be giving an informational talk about the Bio-Diesel lab scale refinery.

Please note the date of the meeting has been changed!!

Staff Changes at the Eastern Plains RC&D Office

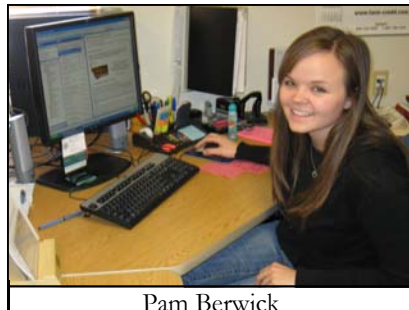
Change is good! We need to keep telling ourselves that! Even if we do not like it! There have been lots and lots of changes in the Eastern Plains RC&D Office this past couple of months.

It all started when Nicole Zimmerman, who had been doing a great job with the Bio-Products Innovation Center position, resigned in October. She moved on to a full time job with the Plevna School District.

Next Sarah Herman, who had been our outstanding Administrative Assistant for the past three years, also decided to move up the hill in Sidney to Richland Opportunities Inc. This also was a full time position for Sarah.

Sarah and Nicole have been missed and we all wish them the best of luck. The RC&D Board decided to try to make these two positions into one good full time

position. The Board felt that by making a full time position, we could attract and keep quality people, like Sarah and Nicole. Pam Berwick has been chosen to fill Sarah and Nicole's positions. Pam started on December 2, 2008 and has been doing a great job learning all the



Pam Berwick

ropes. Pam is originally from Culbertson. Her parents are both employed there. She attended and graduated from Dickenson State University with a degree in Business Administration with a minor in Human Resource Management. She graduated in May of 2008 and had been working at the Farm Service Agency in Culbertson since graduation. This will be a huge learning curve for Pam while she learns two jobs at the same time. However, she is very capable and has been doing a great job.

Also during the October RC&D meeting Khrystye Earle announced she desired to resign from the Home Buyer Education Position. Khrystye has been teaching and providing one-on-one counseling for first time homebuyers for the past three years and has been doing an excellent job. Her plans are to help teach the February 2009 class and then resign her position. Currently the RC&D board is looking into ways to fill this position.

The most recent change taking place is Dick Iversen, coordinator since January 2008, has decided to retire from the NRCS effective January 2, 2009. Dick had been the assistant coordinator with Mike Carlson for four years prior to accepting the Coordinator position. He is working with the NRCS State Office to fill the coordinator position as quickly as possible. There will be an interim Coordinator while that selection process is happening. Dick is not leaving the country and agrees to assist the office in anything needed. He wants to thank the RC&D board for being an excellent board to work with and appreciates all the volunteer hours they donate to make the RC&D successful.

Eastern Plains RC&D Area, Inc.
Annual Meeting
Wednesday, February 4, 2009 9:30 A.M.
Sidney, Montana
@ The Sidney Country Club

9:30	Council Call to Order Introductions Motion to Approve Agenda	Dixie Berwick, Chairman Council Members and Guests Council Members
10:40-10:55	Meeting Minutes Approval	July 16, Quarterly Meeting in Miles City October 22, Quarterly Meeting in Culbertson
	Treasurer's Report	July 1 – September 30 / October 1 – December 31
10:55-11:20	Acting Coordinator's Report	Paul Finnicum
	Certified Regional Development Corp (CRDC)/Economic Development Corp (EDD)	Jason Rittal
	First Time Home Buyer Educational Specialist	Khrystye Earle
	Bio-Product Innovation Center	Pam Berwick
11:20-12:05	Old Business	Annual Plan of Operations—Draft Approval GTO
	New Business	Election of New Officers
		2008 Annual Report
		Administrative Assistant/BPIC
		Combined Position—Mickey McCall
		Open Coordinator Position – Randy Phelan
	Draft Budget – Approval	
12:05	Reports, Happenings, and Issues in RC&D Area	
12:15	Adjournment	Next Quarterly RC&D Council Meeting—Glendive Date: April 16, 2009 Time: 9:30 AM Place: TBA
12:15	No-host Lunch	Sidney Country Club
	Lunch Speaker	Chuck Flynn, MSU Research Center
1:00 pm	Open to go over anything that didn't get enough time to discuss earlier	
2:00 pm	Adjournment	

The Eastern Plains RC&D Area, Inc. is operated in accordance with Federal law which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, marital status or handicap. Reasonable arrangements for persons with a disabilities will be made if request is made to the RC&D office in Sidney, MT, phone (406) 433-2103 Ext. 125, at least one week in advance.

Toddle Time Childcare Center Receives Funding

The Eastern Plains Economic Development Corporation (EPEDC) and Eastern Plains RC&D, in conjunction with the Southeastern Montana Development Corporation, are pleased to announce that the agencies have approved funding to assist the **Toddle Time Childcare Center** in Glendive. The funding will be used to pay for moving and start up costs incurred over the last several months, as well as capital improvements to their new facility including the playground.

Toddle Time Childcare is a licensed childcare center located at 112 S. Douglas in Glendive.

Since its transition from a group-sized facility, caring for up to 16 children into the new location in early 2008, the business has expanded with the capacity to care for up to 100 children.

Currently the facility is caring for about 50 children of varying ages.

Toddle Time Childcare is owned and operated by Ted and Kim Trejo. Kim has successfully completed an Early Childhood Education Development Core through the University of Montana Western, obtained an Associate's Degree in Early Childhood Education through Dawson County Community College and has a level 5 registry as a Montana Early Care and Education

Practitioner. She has nearly 10 years of experience in the field. Ted has eight years of experience as a child care provider and brings office management experience after having worked in that capacity for over 20 years. The funds utilized are held by the Eastern Plains RC&D and are made available to enhance business development and job creation in the Eastern Plains EDC five-county area of Wibaux, Dawson, Carter, Fallon, and Prairie Counties. For more information contact Jason Rittal at 698-3255.



L-R Jim Atchison (SEMDC), Ted Trejo, Kim Trejo, Jason Rittal (EPEDC)

Business Expansion and Retention (BEAR) Training Held in Glendive

The Eastern Plains EDC in partnership with the Workforce Services Division and the Glendive Job Service sponsored a BEAR training program in Glendive on December 1. The training was an opportunity for local representatives to get an overview of how the BEAR program works. Gloria and Mike O'Rourke, administrators for the program statewide, gave a great presentation on the program. The BEAR program is sponsored by the Governor's Office of Economic Development and is initiated and developed at the local level.

The Eastern Plains Economic Development Corporation and Workforce Services Division and Glendive Job Service are now working toward implementing the program. The initial step in the process is molding the overall strategy for the program that fits local needs and concerns. Eastern Plains EDC and the Glendive Job Service are beginning that process now.

As stated in the BEAR brochure, the Bear program's collaborative, community-wide team offers experts uniquely knowledgeable about your local economy that can help you expand your business or refine its operations.

If you are interested in further information about the BEAR program or are interested in participating, please contact:

Jason Rittal at 406-698-3255 or email at jrittal@midrivers.com

EASTERN PLAINS RC&D AREA, INC.
 QUARTERLY COUNCIL MEETING
 October 22, 2008

The Eastern Plains RC&D Area, Inc. quarterly council meeting was held on October 22, 2008, at The Senior Center in Culbertson, MT. Those present were Dixie Berwick (Town of Culbertson), Dick Iversen (RC&D Coordinator), Sarah Herman (RC&D Administrative Assistant), Ginny Archdale (Town of Wibaux), Jason Rittal (Eastern Plains EDD), Jim Shanks (Roosevelt County), Gary Macdonald (Roosevelt County), Nicole Zimmerman (BPIC), Ray Trumpower (City of Fairview), Monica Haaland (Daniels County), Willie Barnard (Daniels CD) and Khrystye Earle (RC&D).

Chairman Dixie Berwick called the meeting to order and meeting participants introduced themselves. Since there wasn't a quorum no business could be conducted. **The agenda was reviewed.**

MINUTES AND TREASURER'S REPORT: The minutes were reviewed. The Treasurer's report was reviewed.

COORDINATOR'S REPORT: Dick Iversen told the group that Nicole Zimmerman will be leaving us at the end of October and it is funded through the State. Dick talked about the 2008 Ag Open and that he encouraged people to come and participate. Dick took Chuck Stadick on a potato tour around eastern Montana. Fort Kipp Irrigation Project is chugging along and they have hired a firm to get all of their easements going. There will be a Montana State Association Meeting in Billings on either November 12th or 13th and they would like a coordinator, chairman and vice chairman to go.

EASTERN PLAINS ECONOMIC

DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT: Jason Rittal talked about the CRDC meeting that he went to in Helena. He learned that the State of Montana will be receiving \$19.6 million from the bail out bill. He asked the group how they would like the money to be spent and who would give it out. Jason talked about the previous CRDC reports and that they are not were they should be so he will be working on coming up with a plan to make the reports better. Jason then gave a brief summary of what he has been working on in each county:

DAWSON COUNTY- RLF application- Jason and one board member will be sitting on the board to grant the loans. Glendive and Miles City are working together to get something figured out for the Flood Plain that seems to be getting bigger and causing a lot of problems for both towns.

TERRY- Cameron Gallery- has purchased the building and cleaning up, they are working on a new business plan also.

WIBAUX- waiting to hear about the water/ sewer grant that they had put in for.

CARTER- Working to find grants for the court house- currently the library is in the basement, and the food bank is in the closet. They also are needing a community center.

Wind Energy- Need money for counties to purchase equipment to get data and then sell to big companies. The RC&D needs to have wind rights and info incase landowners need them, someone suggested that we put a link on our websites that will link them to some reliable information for the landowners to read.

Brownfield Grant- working on application and looking for possible buildings to include in their grant. Let us know if you have any buildings in your county that you would like help with.

HOUSING EDUCATION ASSISTANT:

Khrystye Earle discussed briefly what she does at her first time homebuyer class. Khrystye explains the home buying process, how to stay

out of foreclosure, how to budget, what to expect during a home inspection and how to know your credit score. Khrystye also tells you your legal rights from creditors, realtors, and bankers. Khrystye likes to teach the classes to make people aware of the help out there.

BIO-PRODUCTS INNOVATION CENTER:

Nicole Zimmerman told the group that this meeting would be her last and that she will now be working at the Plevna School as the clerk. She has enjoyed this job and will help train the new employee as much as she can. Lately she has been working with the Beaver Creek Brewery in Wibaux. They make their own beer, bread and even root beer. The brewery is open Thursday- Sunday from 4-8pm. Nicole is also working on the Organic Growers Meeting that will be held on October 30th from 11-2 with lunch being provided.

OLD BUSINESS: Ag Open- This year was the first year that we have changed the menu. We made finger steaks and fries and got great reviews. We will definitely try it again next year, and everyone is invited to come out and enjoy the fun.

Fort Kipp Irrigation Project- Dick Iversen discussed this earlier in his report.

NEW BUSINESS: Ray Trumpower- Has recently went to the NCOC conference where there was a lunch speaker from Australia that was very interesting. Ray gave us a brief history of the NCOC, he stated it was formed in 1996. Currently they have 1 million tons of carbon ready to be sold but they are waiting for credits to go up, right now they are at \$1.70-1.80. They will wait till March and if they don't go up they will sell them anyways. You can check out the NCOC at their website- www.ncoc.us.

STI Grand Opening-Safflower Technology Incorporated, Fairview Montana. They have received a grant for infrastructure, vehicle, and working capital, they have 5 new full time

UPCOMING MEETINGS:

January 23, 2009- 2nd Annual State of the Community at the St. Matthews Church, Sidney, MT

NEXT MEETING: The next meeting will be held on January 21 at 9:30 am in Sidney. Place to be announced.

After lunch there was a tour of Dry Prairie Rural Water given by Clint Jacobs.

First Time Homebuyer's Class Update



Our First-time homebuyers class will be changing leaders as of February 1st. I'm sorry to be leaving the program but I must for family reasons, it has been great working with Eastern Plains RC&D. Pam Berwick will be taking over the program. She will be attending a training session in February and she is looking forward getting started!

More secondary lenders (investors who lend to banks for mortgages) are requiring first-time homebuyers to take the class. Montana Board of Housing loans are also now making it mandatory for first-time homeowners to take the class.

As we continue the classes, we will need to spend more time finding funding for the class to continue, as the HUD grant does not pay for all of the class. Also, once the HUD grant is eliminated the program should be completely self-sufficient.

Montana Board of Housing is starting a Statewide Individual Development Account (IDA) for below median-income households. People participating in this program will need to participate in one-on-one housing and financial counseling for at least 6 months as well as contribute to a savings account, which will be monitored by NeighborWorks Montana. This program allows participants the opportunity to earn \$4.00 to \$1.00 match, up to \$1,000 saved by the participant. For more information on the program, call NeighborWorks Montana at (866) 587-2244.

For more info on the classes or housing counseling available call Pamela Berwick at 433-2103 ext 125.

EASTERN PLAINS RESOURCE CONSERVATION
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Eastern Plains RC&D
Quarterly Council
Meeting will
be on April 16th
9:30 am—Glendive, MT



Eastern Plains RC&D Area, Inc

Staff

Paul Finnicum, Acting Coordinator
Pamela Berwick, Administrative Assistant
& BPIC Coordinator
Khrystye Earle, Housing Education Specialist
Jason Rittal, Executive Director— CRDC/EDD
(Carter, Dawson, Fallon, Prairie, Wibaux)

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Office hours: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday
Email: sarah.gullickson@rcdnet.net

Council

One representative from each county, tribal and
municipal government, and conservation district;
and the chairman of each resource committee.

Officers

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