Volume

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#### **AREA BUSINESS**

As announced in the last quarterly newsletter, the EPEDC was able to utilize their USDA Revolving Loan Funds to assist a business in Prairie County. Agri-Industries of Miles City purchased the shop facility from Buffalo Rapids District II in downtown Terry, thereby expanding their pump service operations. The EPEDC is working in conjunction with the regional SBDC to market recaptured loan funds as they become available for smaller projects as a viable means of reinvesting in the local economy.

If you would like more information about obtaining additional RLF financing, a small business loan, or business planning assistance, please contact EPEDC Executive Director Jason Rittal.

# Next EPEDC Quarterly Board Meeting

May 25, 2011
Plevna, MT
at the Plevna Community Center
9:30 AM

## Contact Information

Comments or questions?

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### **Local Project Updates**

Construction on the North Baker Water and Sewer District project formally halted in December for a winter shutdown period that will be followed by the final stages of project completion this spring.

Meanwhile, it was announced just before Thanksgiving that Evelyn Cameron Heritage, Inc. (ECH) and the Prairie County Museum both received the full amount of their requests from the State of MT Tourism Infrastructure Program (TIIP). ECH's \$24,000 is matched with \$12,000 in local funds to provide the non-profit group with a total of \$36,000 toward remodeling efforts that are to take place on the main floor of the Evelyn Cameron Cultural Center over the course of the remaining 15 months in the 18month grant period allotted by the state for TIIP projects. These efforts are expected to result in increased revenues for the organization as the Center's doors are opened to a variety of public and private events, including the ECH's annual Evelyn Cameron Gala scheduled for September 17<sup>th</sup>. (Pictured above are members from the ECH Board of Directors accepting their October award of \$10,000 from PPL Montana's Lisa Perry in front of the Center's current rear façade.) The Prairie County Museum's award of \$20,000 was matched with \$10,000 in local funds for a total of \$30,000 that will have the facility in excellent condition for the hundreds of visitors that tour the museum campus in the summer time.

The new and improved EPEDC website is finally up and running! The old address was changed to epedc.com a few months ago, but a web designer was still in the process of uploading information that was arranged for the previous web manager. Now, EPEDC staff is busy coordinating new information for the site and scheduling training that will help them maintain and update the site on a regular basis.

The EPEDC recently submitted their annual EDA renewal application and annual CRDC report, on the heels of a successful RFP application for independent CRDC status that was awarded in December.

In regional news, TransCanada's Bison pipeline—80 miles of which runs through Carter County as it heads from Wyoming to North Dakota—began carrying natural gas on January 14<sup>th</sup>. At an initial capacity of 407 million cubic feet of gas per day, the pipeline may bring

an estimated \$6-9M in future tax revenues to the county.

#### **CRDC** Funding

The 2003 MT Legislature created the Certified Regional Development Corporation (CRDC) program. The legislative intent of the program is to encourage a regional approach to economic development by supporting local capacity building.

CRDCs are responsible for helping local officials, communities, and businesses "assess, plan, and facilitate action" within their regions. CRDCs assist the areas they serve identify and prioritize their economic needs. CRDCs also provide business technical assistance and financing via the management of various Revolving Loan Funds. They receive capacity building grants from the Department of Commerce on a quarterly basis.

The EPEDC was already functioning as a CRDC under a memorandum of understanding with the regional RC&D but applied for and was awarded independent CRDC status as of January 1, 2011. Nine other CRDC regions were also awarded funding for a total of 10 CRDCs in the state of Montana. Each award is for a period of five years.

CRDC funds are used on a quarterly basis to match federal EDA dollars and help provide vital regional support to the counties the EPEDC serves. EPEDC Director, Jason Rittal, traveled to Helena January 25th and 26th to promote the benefits of the CRDC program and discuss the myriad of positive impacts the added capacity has had on our area with legislators and other regional directors.

The year 2010 saw an impressive increase in the EPEDC's ability to deliver real economic results as its local funding contributions jumped from \$5,000 to \$11,000 and the amount that was invested in area communities reached an EPEDC all-time high of well over \$2.5M that was utilized to fund projects pertaining to infrastructure, housing, tourism, and general development.

"Optimism is essential to achievement and it is also the foundation of courage and true progress."

-Nicholas Murray Butler

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The EPEDC serves the following participating counties and municipalities:
Carter County, Dawson County, Fallon County, Prairie County, and Wibaux County,
as well as the City of Baker, the Town of Ekalaka, the City of Glendive, the Town of Plevna,
the Town of Richey, the Town of Terry, and the Town of Wibaux.