



Strengthening Rural Idaho

News

STATE GRANTS ANNOUNCED

Governor Kempthorne has announced funding of two projects that will show an immediate impact on local communities through the creation of jobs. The two projects funding through the Rural Idaho Initiative are in Heyburn and Bonneville County. An additional 22 projects were approved and will use Community Development Block Grant funds. These grants represent nearly \$7 million in water/sewer, downtown redevelopment and senior center projects. Each project was reviewed and recommended for funding by the Idaho Economic Advisory Council at their quarterly meeting, held April 22-23 in Boise. Council representatives are appointed by Governor Kempthorne and serve as a six-member, private sector advisory board to the Idaho Department of Commerce. A complete list of the approved grants is available at <http://www.idoc.state.id.us/news/index.html> under 'news releases'.

ANNUAL RURAL DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE

The 2004 National Rural Development Partnership (NRDP) Annual Leadership Conference will be held in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, August 30-September 2, 2004. This conference will seek to build on the momentum of the NRDP Policy Consultation held this spring in Washington, DC, and will include leadership and representatives of national and Federal partners, as well as the State Rural Development Councils. Oklahoma Rural Development Council, OCD, the NRDP Executive Board, Partners for Rural America and others are working together in the planning process. If you would like to volunteer on one of the planning sub-committees please contact Sharon Colbert at scolbert@ocdx.usda.gov. If you would like to be added to the Conference mailing list, please email Bridzette Lane at blane@ocdx.usda. Please include in the subject line "NRDP Conference Mailing List" and your telephone and fax numbers, as well as your email and mailing addresses in the body of the message.

CDFI FUND IN IDAHO

IRP and the Federal Reserve Bank were pleased to recently host Margaret D. Nilson at an outreach meeting in Idaho. Nilson is with the U.S. Treasury's Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI) Fund and manages the Bank Enterprise Award Program as well as the Fund's Native American Initiatives. In Idaho there are three CDFI Funds that received over \$1.1 million in the last CDFI grant cycle. Idaho CDFIs include Neighborhood Housing Services (based in Boise but has statewide authority), the Pocatello

Neighborhood Housing Services and the Idaho-Nevada Community Financial Institution. For the complete story go to www.irp.idaho.gov.

UI EXTENSION WINS LEADERSHIP GRANT

The University of Idaho Extension will work with the small northern Idaho communities of Orofino, Kamiah and Elk River to reduce local economic and population declines by strengthening each community's leadership, thanks to a new grant. The Northwest Area Foundation announced recently that the three communities were chosen to participate in the 18-month Horizons program designed to help small towns develop leaders to create a promising future and reduce poverty. To be considered, towns had to have a high poverty rate and a population of no more than 5,000. The \$352,000 Horizons grant will connect Orofino, Kamiah, and Elk River with a variety of resources from UI Extension and other state organizations. These include information, training and other assistance available from tribes, state government, and nonprofit groups. Contact Priscilla Salant at (208) 885-6983 or psalant@uidaho.edu.

2004 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

The Idaho Department of Commerce and Association of Idaho Cities have announced the 2004 Northwest Community Development Institute will be held on July 18 - 23 at the Doubletree Riverside Hotel in Boise. The Institute is a three-year certification program that provides community and economic development practitioners with a formal training ground designed to address complex issues and increase effectiveness of existing and potential leaders. For registration information go to www.idahocities.org or call Mindy Hobson at 800-344-8594. For curriculum or scholarship information go to www.idoc.state.id.us or call Gloria Mabbutt at 334-2470.

BROWNFIELD'S CONFERENCE IN BOISE

The National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) Research Foundation is sponsoring a Brownfield's Conference on **June 17** in Boise. The conference will be all day at the Owyhee Plaza hotel. Brownfield's are abandoned, idled or under-used industrial and commercial facilities where expansion or redevelopment is complicated by real or perceived environmental contamination. Both petroleum and hazardous waste (non-petroleum) properties are eligible for assessment. A \$10 pre-registration is requested prior to June 4th. If you have any questions or need more information please contact Kelly Novak, NADO, at 202/624-7809 or knovak@nado.org.



Focus... featuring Idaho success stories and partner agency activities.

THE NATIONAL INTEREST IN IDAHO TRANSPORTATION

GUEST OPINION BY IDAHO SENATOR MIKE CRAPO

Americans' lives are increasingly centered on the "information superhighway." Moving vital digital information from one place to another is a technological and financial priority. But what about moving people, goods, and vital services from one place to another? Vast distances covered by road and rail must be maintained and updated, because, much like a link on a computer, if the pathway breaks down, the whole system breaks down too.

A good transportation system promotes economic growth in Idaho and across the nation while improving our quality of life. It gets product from the farm and factory to the distribution centers, and on to stores and consumers. It enables us to move safely and efficiently to school, work, and across the state and country. Above all, it translates into much-needed diverse employment opportunities.

In 1998, Congress passed the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21). It was intended to last six years and, earlier this year, the Senate version of the reauthorization of TEA-21 was approved. As a member of the committee with jurisdiction over highway and transit programs, I was successful in securing a number of important amendments. These included:

- Considering national and interregional needs in national transportation studies;
- Providing funds to repair or remove culverts and bridges on forest highways to maintain appropriate fish passage and reasonable flow levels;
- Reworking the mass transit funding formula so that Idaho receives its fair share under that program for increased traffic connectivity for communities where services and employment centers are long distances from each other.
- Doubling annual funding levels for active warning devices near highway railway crossings;
- Increasing annual funding for the Safe Route to Schools Program.



Idaho Senator Mike Crapo

Effective transportation legislation must distribute highway funds in a way that recognizes the NATIONAL interest in transportation investment in rural states, not just in heavily-populated areas. Without good interstate and arterial routes in states like Idaho, business and pleasure travel as well as interstate commerce are detrimentally affected. The federal land in Idaho (approximately 64 percent of the total) is unavailable to the state for tax revenue.

Yet, the nation's citizens want access to them, and want roads to be in a reasonable state of repair. This is expensive for sparsely-populated states. Accordingly, the federal highway program needs to make a substantial investment in Idaho highways.

Idaho has clear transportation priorities - preserving our roads and bridges; improving the overall transportation network; safe sidewalks and streets for our families; environmentally sensitive construction such as providing passage for fish populations under roads; federal dollars for surface transportation repair and improvement; and overall economic development including the generation of job opportunities.

Clearly, federal surface transportation funding legislation is extremely important. The Senate authorized transportation reauthorization will create millions of jobs, thereby strengthening our economy. Additionally, the financing of this legislation ensures this economic benefit without raising taxes.

We're all on the move every day. We want to move efficiently and safely. I will continue to work to help keep the vital pathways of transportation open, efficient, and economical.

Conferences/Training Opportunities.....

YOUTH LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

The Association of Idaho Cities is proud to offer the Youth Leadership Conference in conjunction with its 57th Annual Conference. The program provides young people, ages 15- 18 with a broad array of leadership skills and the fundamentals of understanding how to apply those skills to community problem solving. The Youth Conference will convene on Wednesday, June 16 and end on Friday, June 18 2004 at the Doubletree Riverside Hotel in Garden City/Boise. Centering on the theme "Visionary Leadership for Quality Communities," the Youth Leadership Conference is designed to empower youth to be competent and confident leaders. To download a registration brochure please visit www.idahospromise.org or you may register online at www.idahocities.org under the AIC Conference Heading. If you have any questions or would like more information, please

contact Mandy De Castro at AIC at (800) 344-8594 or email at mdecastro@idahocities.org.

LEADERSHIP TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Based on a request from IRP's Leadership Committee, a preliminary list of leadership training opportunities has been compiled and posted on the IRP website. Featured programs include various Chambers of Commerce across the State, Leadership Idaho Agriculture, Northwest Community Development Institute and more. Listings for each program include the location, contact info, training topics, target audience, and registration details. Our thanks to the Idaho Department of Commerce intern Laryssa Mereszczak for researching and compiling this list. To view the list go to www.irp.idaho.gov/getinvolved/idaho_leadership_programs.pdf.

PILOT PROJECTS FOR COLLABORATIVE MANAGEMENT OF FEDERAL LAND IN RURAL IDAHO

Robert A. Maynard¹

The Idaho Rural Partnership (IRP) mission emphasizes “innovative collaborations to strengthen communities and improve life in rural Idaho.” One of the important elements of life in most rural Idaho communities is their interdependence with the use and management of nearby federally managed public lands, which comprise most of the land in Idaho’s rural counties. At the recent initial meeting of the IRP Environmental Committee, I briefed the committee members on two proposed pilot projects for collaborative management of federal public lands in rural Idaho: the Clearwater Basin Pilot Project, and the Cassia/Twin Falls Federal Lands Pilot Project. These two projects may be of particular current interest to IRP newsletter readers.

BACKGROUND

Both of these pilot project proposals grew from dissatisfaction in rural Idaho with federal agency management of public lands in Idaho, particularly by the U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management (“BLM”). Polarizing conflict over management of over the 63 percent of Idaho’s lands administered by these two agencies and related procedural “gridlock” have been identified as causing harm to the environment as well as to rural economies, from lack of responsible “on the ground” management and use of natural resources.

In response to these concerns, the Idaho Legislature and Idaho Board of Land Commissioners established the Idaho Federal Lands Task Force to explore alternative ways to manage federal public lands in Idaho. The Task Force, comprised of citizen leaders representing a range of interests, held public meetings across the state and issued a report in 1998. The report confirmed problems with BLM and Forest Service management of public lands in Idaho. In the report, the Task Force recommended that pilot projects be developed to test alternative approaches to management, including collaboration among stakeholders as an important component.

The Board of Land Commissioners then appointed the Federal Lands Task Force Working Group to review and make recommendations regarding particular pilot projects to test the alternative approaches and principles in the 1998 Task Force Report. The Working Group, also composed of citizen volunteers with a range of perspectives and experience, reviewed pilot projects proposed by several groups of rural Idaho community leaders, citizens and businesses. In December 2000, the Working Group issued a report, Breaking the Gridlock, which recommended further consideration of five such pilot projects.

The projects recommended in the Working Group report were geographically distributed from northern to southern Idaho. Each project incorporated collaboration among rural Idaho and other stakeholders to better inform and facilitate BLM and Forest Service management of public lands. None of the projects involved transfer of federal lands to the state or anyone else. Two of the projects recommended by the

Working Group were the Clearwater Basin Collaborative Stewardship Project and the Twin Falls/Cassia Resource Enhancement Project.

The Working Group report recommendations received wide public distribution and several hundred comments. Over 80 percent of the comments received from within and outside Idaho were favorable.

As a consultant to the Idaho Department of Lands and Board of Land Commissioners, I have more recently been collaborating with Working Group members and interested rural community leaders and citizens to implement one or more pilot projects incorporating recommendations in the Working Group report. The current Clearwater Basin and Cassia-Twin Falls project proposals have evolved as the prime, fully developed candidates for implementation.

THE CLEARWATER BASIN PILOT PROJECT

The legislation would empower an inclusive collaborative advisory panel to work with the Forest Service, Nez Perce Tribe, and other interested groups and citizens to reach consensus agreement on high priority “stewardship” activities to implement on national forest lands in the Basin. These individual “stewardship” projects would address habitat, fire, and other resource management needs requiring priority attention. Environmental review and approval of consensus projects would be reasonably expedited.

The advisory panel would function like the existing North Central Idaho Resource Advisory Committee, (“RAC”). The North Central Idaho RAC was established under the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 to oversee allocation to stewardship projects of limited money previously dedicated to county roads and schools as “25 percent Fund” payments. This RAC, which appears to be operating well as a collaborative group despite divergent viewpoints among its conservationist, local government, business, and recreationist members, could serve as the pilot project advisory panel. However, its role would be reasonably expanded to assisting the Forest Service to select, from a full range of eligible projects, priority activities to implement to serve forest restoration and other stewardship needs.

CASSIA-TWIN FALLS FEDERAL LAND PILOT PROJECT

In the Cassia County and Twin Falls County areas of southcentral Idaho, federal lands managed by the Forest Service as part of the Sawtooth National Forest are intermingled with federal lands administered by the BLM. Ranchers, recreationists and other users must deal with two different federal agencies, each with its own procedures and other rules, to address many resource management issues and operations.

The Cassia-Twin Falls Federal Land Pilot Project is proposed to facilitate integration and coordination of Forest Service and BLM services in this area, as well as promote better steward-

(continued on page 4)

PILOT PROJECTS FOR COLLABORATIVE MANAGEMENT *(continued from Page 3)*

ship of the land through a collaborative advisory panel that would work with both agencies. Central, innovative components of this pilot project are: 1) designating a single coordinating manager for both Forest Service and BLM administered lands in the pilot project area; 2) establishing a single collaborative resource advisory group, comprised of a broad and representative set of stakeholders, for both the BLM and Forest Service administered lands; 3) to the extent reasonably practicable, implement a unified set of land and resource management rules for both the BLM and Forest Service administered lands.

The BLM and Forest Service are moving forward in the southcentral Idaho area with office co-location and other integrative steps under their existing "Service First" pilot authority. The proposed pilot project would build upon these efforts, and much of the project, including designation of a single coordinating manager, can be implemented without additional legislation. To facilitate full implementation of the project, draft federal authorizing legislation has been submitted to the Idaho Congressional delegation to consider.

Authorizing legislation may be introduced within the next few months.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Detailed information regarding both the Clearwater Basin and Cassia-Twin Falls pilot projects, including the text of proposed legislation, is available on the Idaho Department of Lands, Federal Lands Task Force website at www2.state.id.us/lands/LandBoard/fltf.htm. You may also contact Bob Maynard at (208) 343-3434.

(Footnotes)

¹Mr. Maynard is a partner in the Boise office of the law firm Perkins Coie LLP. He has been working with W. H. "Buzz" Fawcett of the Washington, D.C. office of Perkins Coie as a consultant to the Idaho Department of Lands and Board of Land Commissioners to facilitate implementation of collaborative pilot projects on federal lands in Idaho. He was previously a citizen member of the Idaho Federal Lands Task Force Working Group that reviewed and made recommendations to the Board of Land Commissioners regarding implementation of federal land pilot projects.

COMMUNITY REVIEW NEWS . . .

SALMON COMMUNITY REVIEW

On May 12-14, 2004, a group of 27 economic and community development professionals participated in the Salmon Community Review, touring the community, surveying and interviewing residents and community leaders, and giving recommendations and resource suggestions in the areas of economic development (emphasizing infrastructure and the regional airport), community design, identity, & land use (emphasizing land use planning, community beautification, and cultural heritage tourism), and civic life & community involvement (emphasizing seniors and youth).



Residents of Salmon meet with the visiting team members as part of their Community Review.

The team made an oral presentation of its preliminary findings on May 13 addressing change management strategies, communication and relationship building suggestions to inspire a shared community vision, and a brief assessment of community strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. A written report will be delivered to the community in coming months providing more detailed recommendations and resources, as well as the compiled survey results of hundreds of resident reflections.

The project represents an excellent model of federal, tribal, state, local, and private collaboration. Visiting team members included representatives from the Cities of Hailey, Jerome, Kuna and Pocatello as well as Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, Commerce, Labor, Transportation, Parks & Recreation, USDA Rural Development, Idaho State University's Institute of Rural Health, Idaho Kids Count, Idaho's Office on Aging, City of Shoshone/Lincoln County, Idaho Rural Partnership, Partners for Prosperity, Mountain States Group, World Portico, Planmakers, Idaho Housing & Finance Association, and the Idaho Commission on the Arts.

FUTURE COMMUNITY REVIEW

The next Community Review is scheduled for Rexburg on September 8-9. If you are interested in having a review completed in your community you can find program details and an application at www.idahocities.org under 'Idaho Community Review.' The next available review will be in the first quarter of 2005. To be considered a complete application package must be submitted no later than July 1, 2004. For additional details contact Michael Shaw (208/344-8594 or mshaw@idahocities.org).

IRP BOARD MEMBERS

STEVE ALLRED — Idaho Department of Environmental Quality

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ASHLEY & KATRIN THOMPSON — The Ashley Inn, Cascade

RICK TREMBLAY — Economic Development Administration

JIM WERTZ — U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

News Briefs.....**AG TRADE REPORT AVAILABLE**

The Idaho State Department of Agriculture has updated its Agriculture Trade Issues Report that identifies current trade issues impacting Idaho food and agriculture products. ISDA's goal is to further improve the communications with federal agencies on Idaho's trade policy issues and to actively address trade issues on a consistent basis. This document and other trade related documents can be found at the ISDA website <http://www.agri.idaho.gov/marketing/publicat.htm>. Contact Mary Symms-Pollot, ISDA, at msymms@agri.state.id.us or 208/332-8538.

EDA SEEKS BUSINESS PROPOSALS

The Economic Development Administration (EDA) is soliciting proposals for funding to support comprehensive, entrepreneurial and innovation-based economic development efforts. The goal is to enhance the competitiveness of regional business environments that result in increased private investment and higher-skill, higher-wage jobs. Grant awards will not exceed 50 percent of a project's cost. Eligible applicants for and eligible recipients of EDA financial assistance are defined at 13 CFR 300.2. Proposals are accepted on a continuing basis. More information about this specific proposal is available at <http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/14mar20010800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2004/04-9810.htm>. Applicants from this region, including Idaho, should send proposals to: EDA, Seattle Regional Office, Jackson Federal Building, Room 1890, 915 Second Avenue, Seattle, Washington 98174, Telephone: (206) 220-7660, Fax: (206) 220-7669. Additional information can be found at <http://www.eda.gov>.

IDAHO TECH LAUNCH 1.0

Several Idaho organizations have banded together in developing a special conference on Wednesday, June 30, in Sun Valley to assist individuals and emerging businesses in reaching their potential. Idaho's emerging technology business sector is growing rapidly. With the encouragement of key organizations it is bound to grow even faster. The many details required before launching a business, especially in high tech, can be daunting. *Idaho Tech Launch 1.0* is an opportunity for aspiring Idaho technology companies to experience the planning process, witness it's impact and learn the 'best practices' of introducing new technologies. This forum will address how to advance and refine your business planning, while at the same time help validate the viability of your concepts. Conceived to invigorate emerging technologies and the companies that can launch them, *Idaho Tech Launch 1.0* offers a special opportunity for Idaho businesses, and potential technologies, to get off the ground. During this one-day technology conference, selected companies will present their initial business plans for launching their business ideas. The three Idaho TechConnect offices will screen applicants and those selected will receive support from faculty and students at Idaho universities. Each business plan will be reviewed, along with initial marketing approaches and schedules for major activities in launching new technologies, to refine and advance their concepts. This will help Idaho business people learn what it takes to get new and innovative businesses up and moving in the right direction. Among those organizations sponsoring the day are TechConnect East, West and North; Idaho's Office of Science & Technology; the Regional Development Alliance; and the Idaho Engineering and Environmental Laboratory. Conference cost is \$50 and pre-registration is due by June 9, 2004. Any questions regarding registration can be directed to Char DeWall at 208-233-3500 or char@bannockdevelopment.org. Room reservations can be made by contacting the Sun Valley Resort at 800-786-8259. For more information contact Bill Sellers at 208-523-9898 or Nancy Bergman at 208-526-1375.



Upcoming Events

Please notify us if you have an upcoming event you would like listed and we'll include it on a space available basis. A complete calendar is available at www.irp.idaho.gov including an event submission form.

- June 16-18** Association of Idaho Cities Annual Meeting, Boise
- June 22** IRP Economic Development Committee Meeting, 10 a.m. – Noon
- June 22-23** Economic Advisory Council
- July 27** IRP Environment Committee Meeting, 9 a.m. – Noon
- August 4** IRP BOARD MEETING, Albion, All day
- August 30-September 2** National Rural Development Partnership Annual Leadership Conference, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
- September 8-9** Rexburg Community Review
- September 15-17** Hispanic Issues Training Conference, Boise, sponsored by the Idaho Commission on Hispanic Affairs, contact 334-3776 for details and registration.
- September 20-24** Idaho Association of Counties Annual Meeting, Coeur d'Alene
- October 21-22** Economic Advisory Council
- November 4** IRP Board Meeting, Eastern Idaho

Address Service Requested

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