



# July Newsletter

July, 2014

## LYIP: Yesterday, Today And Tomorrow

In 1908, the Lower Yellowstone Irrigation Project (LYIP) was created in the hope of bringing irrigated farming to a relatively dry area. Over the past century, over 55,000 acres of farmland have been successfully farmed with the aid of a rock diversion created on the Lower Yellowstone River, just south of Savage. As time has gone on, the project has faced multiple challenges, yet the one constant has been successful irrigation yielding plentiful crops.

There is now another struggle the LYIP is facing; meeting the requirements of protecting the endangered pallid sturgeon. In order to stay in compliance with the Endangered Species Act, the current system must be modified, as it's perceived that the fish aren't reaching maturity. Over the last few years, the Army Corp of Engineers has worked with the LYIP and Fish, Wildlife & Parks to develop a solution that will keep water plentiful for farmers, while giving the endangered pallid sturgeon the ability to travel upriver to spawn. Early this spring, the Army Corps presented what they have named "The Fish Bypass with Concrete Weir" which, at its

most simplistic explanation, is constructed along the Yellowstone River, which will allow the fish to avoid the diversion. Swimming in the bypass further up river, will reduce the pace which is optimal for spawning and maturation.

The REDC office & board of directors, in conjunction with LYIP, multiple community and state leaders have been vocal about the continued support for the bypass & LYIP. As we all know, reliable water and irrigated farming is imperative to the success of our region, as well as a defining part of our history. We have been following the progress of the project closely; and will continue to keep you updated as decisions are finalized. We would like to thank our membership, community leaders and board directors who wrote letters in support of this effort.



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## Here's to 100 more.....

In 1914, Richland County separated from Dawson County under the leadership of Lossie Dawe and others. It was due to this foresight and passion that we are all here today.

Jamie Larson, Chair, and the Centennial Committee, in conjunction with the County Commissioners, planned a weekend long celebration.

The festivities offered were: historical tours, including

tours of the newly renovated court house, tractor pulls, vendor shows and concerts at the fair grounds. The Centennial Celebration also provided the perfect backdrop for many class reunions including the 40th reunion of the SHS Class of 1974.

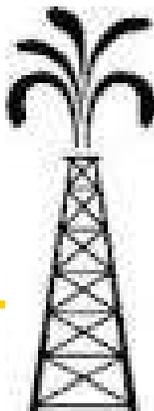
Hundreds participated to celebrate our collective history by dancing the night away to The Sawyer Brown Band. Judge Mohr catered free feeds and

Central Avenue was taken over by horseback riding dog trainers, candy throwers and smiling Richland County Residents in the largest EVER parade in Sidney. Thank you to all who participated in and planned a wonderful 100th Birthday for Richland County. Here's to 100 more!!!!



## Montana Energy Expo

This February, our office had the pleasure of attending the Montana Energy Expo in Billings. The goal of the event was to bring vendors and educators together to discuss the growth and challenges of energy development within the region. The trade show featured banks, frack-sand companies, welders and many more diverse companies with the same predominant goal: Energy development. Along with the trade show, we were able to listen to keynote speakers covering everything from coal transport to how to appraise oil assets. The Expo also played host to Governor Steve Bullock, Chairman Darrin Old Coyote of Crow Nation, Karen Alderman, CEO of the Institute for 21st Century Energy and Author Robert Bryce. The event provided us many different perspectives on energy development and invaluable insight for moving forward in an energy-rich region.



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## Just what IS the cost of living in Richland County?

As citizens of Richland County, we often find our area in the news regarding the unprecedented growth in the Bakken. In many of these articles, we are frequently told that living here is so expensive that it's not worth coming.

We at REDC saw these comments as a challenge. Since our mission is to help the economy grow, we decided that we would conduct research and create a realistic picture of how much it actually costs to live in Sidney, Williston, Bismarck, Billings, Bozeman or Denver.

Astonishingly, or maybe not so much so, we discovered that while some items may be more expensive here, the bottom line is not far off of the mark regionally.

To obtain this information we went to grocery stores in the areas, excluding "big box stores" like Walmart. We called several dentists,

eye doctors and general practice doctors listed in the area phone book and averaged their non-insured prices. Finally, we spent copious amounts of time scouring rental adds and homes for sale to determine an average price.

While we understand these costs are all subject to change, and that they do not include sales or property taxes, we are hopeful that this will become an invaluable resource for potential employers and employees in Richland County.



# Cost of Living: Lifestyle



| Lifestyle Items        | Cost in Denver    | Cost in Billings  | Cost in Bozeman  | Cost in Williston | Cost in Sidney    | Cost in Bismarck  |
|------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Dry Cleaning           | \$13.14           | \$7.75            | \$15.06          | \$13.35           | \$8.75            | \$10.16           |
| Detergent              | \$5.16            | \$6.99            | \$5.63           | \$6.77            | \$6.00            | \$5.35            |
| Facial Tissues         | \$1.74            | \$1.79            | \$2.20           | \$1.79            | \$1.92            | \$1.91            |
| Toothpaste             | \$2.44            | \$2.99            | \$2.52           | \$3.19            | \$2.89            | \$2.85            |
| Shampoo                | \$0.95            | \$1.09            | \$1.15           | \$2.09            | \$0.96            | \$0.96            |
| Men's Dress Shirt      | \$27.19           | \$26.99           | \$24.81          | \$34.00           | \$34.00           | \$30.98           |
| Boy's Jeans            | \$18.98           | \$19.99           | \$24.91          | \$21.00           | \$21.00           | \$26.40           |
| Women's Slacks         | \$29.63           | \$27.99           | \$27.63          | \$35.00           | \$33.00           | \$42.56           |
| Washer Repair          | \$66.25           | \$77.77           | \$72.75          | \$85.00           | \$72.00           | \$53.68           |
| Newspaper (annual)     | \$286.00          | \$248.35          | \$186.60         | \$132.00          | \$66.00           | \$265.15          |
| Movie                  | \$10.50           | \$11.50           | \$9.81           | \$10.00           | \$8.00            | \$9.38            |
| Bowling                | \$4.82            | \$3.25            | \$3.50           | \$3.75            | \$4.00            | \$4.20            |
| Beer                   | \$8.03            | \$7.49            | \$7.96           | \$6.59            | \$6.79            | \$9.02            |
| Wine                   | \$6.11            | \$14.00           | \$7.24           | \$14.15           | \$11.10           | \$14.77           |
| Salon- Cut/Color women | \$175.00          | \$85.00           | \$115.00         | \$100.00          | \$90.00           | \$100.00          |
| Apartment Rent         | \$989             | \$727.00          | \$826.00         | \$2,000.00        | \$1,500.00        | \$866.00          |
| Home Price             | \$347,250.00      | \$216,524.00      | \$340,085.00     | \$300,000.00      | \$250,000.00      | \$308,015.00      |
| Total Energy           | \$159.46          | \$182.68          | \$161.29         | \$187.93          | \$150.00          | \$148.29          |
| Phone                  | \$27.63           | \$25.00           | \$23.32          | \$23.68           | \$20.00           | \$27.34           |
| Tire Balance           | \$40.00           | \$40.00           | \$48.00          | \$52.00           | \$40.00           | \$70.19           |
| Gas per gallon         | \$3.53            | \$3.41            | \$3.55           | \$3.78            | \$3.78            | \$3.67            |
| Eye Doctor             | \$102.35          | \$110.00          | \$94.93          | \$147.00          | \$140.00          | \$99.11           |
| Dentist                | \$80.32           | \$195.00          | \$79.52          | \$105.00          | \$187.00          | \$88.89           |
| Doctor                 | \$124.85          | \$86.00           | \$118.32         | \$140.00          | \$189.00          | \$128.39          |
| Ibuprofen              | \$9.26            | \$4.99            | \$10.63          | \$5.89            | \$7.69            | \$9.77            |
| Lipitor                | \$205.19          | \$166.69          | \$212.51         | \$166.47          | \$275.18          | \$219.55          |
| <b>Monthly-Rental</b>  | <b>\$2,397.53</b> | <b>\$2,083.71</b> | <b>\$2,84.84</b> | <b>\$3,300.43</b> | <b>\$2,879.06</b> | <b>\$2,238.57</b> |

\*ALL medical costs are totals WITHOUT health insurance

\*Energy costs are figured on an average between both summer and winter months

\*Salon visit costs vary from stylist to stylist and is an average of many stylists

\*Housing costs determined by adding total cost of all available listings and dividing by the number of listings

\*Rent costs DO NOT include utilities/trash

# Cost of Living: Grocery

| Grocery Item        | Cost in Denver | Cost in Billings | Cost in Bozeman | Cost in Williston | Cost in Sidney | Cost in Bismarck |
|---------------------|----------------|------------------|-----------------|-------------------|----------------|------------------|
| T-Bone Steak        | \$11.28        | \$9.99           | \$9.37          | \$9.98            | \$10.99        | \$10.06          |
| Ground Beef (1 lb.) | \$3.48         | \$3.89           | \$3.13          | \$5.38            | \$3.90         | \$3.92           |
| Sausage             | \$3.61         | \$2.99           | \$4.41          | \$3.98            | \$4.49         | \$3.98           |
| Frying Chicken      | \$1.28         | \$6.59           | \$1.50          | \$2.15            | \$1.35         | \$1.48           |
| Chunk Light Tuna    | \$1.14         | \$1.59           | \$1.05          | \$1.79            | \$1.69         | \$0.99           |
| Gallon Whole Milk   | \$1.99         | \$3.59           | \$2.27          | \$4.98            | \$3.98         | \$2.67           |
| Eggs                | \$1.78         | \$2.09           | \$1.61          | \$1.58            | \$1.69         | \$1.68           |
| Margarine           | \$1.03         | \$1.09           | \$1.13          | \$1.29            | \$1.19         | \$1.22           |
| Parmesan Cheese     | \$3.94         | \$3.69           | \$4.68          | \$3.69            | \$3.69         | \$3.79           |
| Potatoes            | \$2.28         | \$1.79           | \$3.06          | \$2.49            | \$2.19         | \$2.67           |
| Bananas             | \$0.54         | \$0.59           | \$0.06          | \$0.59            | \$0.89         | \$0.59           |
| Head of Lettuce     | \$1.39         | \$1.49           | \$1.28          | \$1.47            | \$1.25         | \$1.34           |
| Loaf of White Bread | \$1.49         | \$2.29           | \$1.52          | \$2.99            | \$1.99         | \$1.61           |
| Orange Juice        | \$3.73         | \$3.00           | \$3.31          | \$4.79            | \$3.25         | \$3.73           |
| Coffee              | \$5.22         | \$10.99          | \$4.80          | \$4.29            | \$6.19         | \$4.67           |
| Sugar               | \$2.54         | \$4.89           | \$2.67          | \$3.19            | \$2.73         | \$2.69           |
| Corn Flakes         | \$3.52         | \$4.99           | \$4.45          | \$3.99            | \$4.25         | \$3.42           |
| Sweet Peas          | \$0.97         | \$1.89           | \$1.38          | \$1.15            | \$1.02         | \$1.10           |
| Peaches             | \$1.88         | \$2.09           | \$2.20          | \$1.98            | \$1.89         | \$2.08           |
| Shortening          | \$3.23         | \$3.19           | \$4.05          | \$2.83            | \$3.25         | \$3.47           |
| Frozen Dinner       | \$2.48         | \$3.00           | \$2.57          | \$1.69            | \$2.25         | \$2.92           |
| Frozen Corn         | \$1.53         | \$2.19           | \$1.42          | \$1.69            | \$1.99         | \$1.12           |
| Chips               | \$3.62         | \$3.00           | \$3.58          | \$4.99            | \$3.69         | \$3.77           |
| Soft Drink          | \$1.57         | \$1.80           | \$1.75          | \$1.68            | \$1.55         | \$1.51           |
| Burger/ Restaurant  | \$4.16         | \$5.99           | \$3.99          | \$5.00            | \$4.00         | \$3.76           |
| Pizza               | \$8.00         | \$10.00          | \$8.00          | \$7.99            | \$10.00        | \$9.34           |
| Fried Chicken       | \$3.58         | \$4.00           | \$3.66          | \$2.48            | \$3.75         | \$3.85           |
| <b>Weekly Total</b> | <b>\$81.26</b> | <b>\$102.69</b>  | <b>\$82.90</b>  | <b>\$90.10</b>    | <b>\$89.10</b> | <b>\$83.43</b>   |

\* All totals are determined WITHOUT coupons and are an average found on multiple brands

\* Walmart was NOT used in this study, only local grocery stores

\* Sales tax for Colorado and North Dakota NOT included



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# Governor Bullock Infrastructure Plan

On April 17<sup>th</sup>, Governor Steve Bullock made stops in Culbertson, Sidney, Glendive and Billings to announce his Eastern MT Infrastructure and Impact program.

The \$45 M funding program is to be used to facilitate water and wastewater improvements in the communities most heavily impacted by the oil & gas development.

Three methods of assistance were described to audiences at each stop:

- 1) An immediate reduction of interest rate in the State Revolving Loan Fund.
- 2) The creation of a new grant fund that would be administered as a quick start program through the Dept of Commerce. This will require legislative approval; as the Governor is proposing a bond by the state of MT, then grants to communities.
- 3) The mobilization of a state technical assistance team to provide planning or other TA expertise.



At each stop, members of the Eastern MT Impact Coalition were present. Martin DeWitt in Culbertson, Leslie Messer in Sidney, Jason Rittal in Glendive, and Jim Atchison in Billings.

We will continue to do our part to learn the best means of becoming educated on the funding to assist our communities.

While the Governor visited with community members of Sidney and Richland County, Leslie presented a letter to him with the EMIC's support for nominating Jason Rittal, Eastern Plains EDC, as a TA resource representative. Jason has a great deal of expertise in the infrastructure programs that the State has in place.

# STATE OF MONTANA

## EASTERN MONTANA IMPACT AND INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT

Governor Steve Bullock | Lt. Governor Angela McLean

### PROPOSED GRANT PROGRAM

\$45 million in grants, financed through state bond proceeds, will be made available for the 2015 biennium through a new program at the Department of Commerce to affected cities, towns, tribal governments and water and sewer districts to provide adequate water and wastewater services to communities experiencing rapid growth as a result of oil and gas development in the Bakken region.

#### ELIGIBLE PROJECTS

Projects may include planning and design, repairs, improvements, enhancements, expansions or deferred maintenance on an existing (or construction of a new) water or wastewater system. Grant funds may also be used to repay existing debt incurred on or after July 1, 2011 for water or wastewater projects already underway or completed.

#### FUNDING SOURCE

Bond financing will allow the state to use its sterling bond rating to raise money for long-term facility and infrastructure projects. With today's historically low interest rates, using bond financing costs the state less money in interest over the life of the bond. This will also avoid any short- and long-term impacts on the state's general fund resulting from the diversion of other sources of general fund revenue.

#### QUICK START GRANT PROGRAM

Applications for grant funding will be streamlined and available immediately following appropriation of funds to the program by the Legislature. The first round of awards will be announced in summer 2015.

### STATE REVOLVING LOAN FUND

Through immediate changes already made to State Revolving Loan Fund (SRF) loan programs, short-term interim construction loans to impacted communities are now available at an interest rate of 1.25 percent, and long-term construction loan interest rates have been reduced from 3% to 2.5%. The SRF program is co-managed by the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC). DEQ provides engineering and technical assistance that ensures water quality and proper system design. DNRC provides the financial services for the program through the sale of state bonds and financing terms with local governments.

#### IMMEDIATE IMPACT

Water and sewer ratepayers in communities that take advantage of the SRF construction loan programs will realize immediate cost savings over other potential financing options. Combined with a reduction in the amount of reserves and debt service coverage required by the SRF program, these interest rate reductions changes will result in \$29 million savings for Montana ratepayers.

### TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

#### RAPID RESPONSE TEAMS

Customized teams of technical assistance providers, dubbed "Rapid Response Teams" will be created according to the needs of the local entity and focus on land use planning, engineering design and review, affordable housing, and assistance with obtaining financing through the new Eastern Montana Impact and Infrastructure Grant program as well as other funding programs.

The Rapid Response Teams will be made up of experienced staff from the Departments of Commerce, Environmental Quality (DEQ), and Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC). Each of these agencies addresses a different area of expertise but has many years of experience coordinating together to assist local communities in meeting their public infrastructure needs.

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## **EMIC Participates in Helena Discussions**

On June 17, the Eastern MT Impact Coalition (EMIC) traveled to Helena to participate in meetings with the Governor's office, as well as several department heads. The objective of this trip was to learn specific details about the Governor's Infrastructure Package as well as the state's business plan, the Main Street Montana Project.

The start of the day was coffee with the John Rogers, the Governor's Economic Development Officer. John relayed the success of the Canadian trade show that Montana had just participated in.

The first scheduled meeting of the day was with Lieutenant Governor Angela McLean and Director of the Dept of Commerce, Meg O'Leary. The infrastructure funding mechanism was outlined to us, as well as how each of us may be able to assist in the process.

Immediately following, we held back to back meetings with several program heads all housed within the Dept of Commerce. Representatives were from: Montana Main Street, Coal Board, Treasure State Endowment, Housing, Economic Development, Community Development, and Community Technical Assistance Programs.

We had a working lunch to discuss specific projects within each of our regions, and what action steps or advice we could glean from the departments.

Our final meeting of the day was held with the Main Street Montana Project representative. Mae Nan Ellingson gave us an overview of the program, and asked each of us to provide her with names of industry representatives to serve on her task force. She and the Governor would like a demographic cross section of individuals to serve.

This trip was an incredible and timely opportunity for each of us to become educated on the process and programs for providing assistance to our regions.



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## State Wide Housing Conference



May 20, 2014, the Eastern MT Impact Coalition was invited to give a housing report to the 2014 Housing Conference attendees. This event was held in Miles City with 185 folks participating from all across Montana.

Great Northern Development Corp, SE Montana Development Corp, and Eastern Plains Economic Development Corp each provide services for housing assistance and support in their perspective regions. Meanwhile, in Richland County, the Richland County Housing Authority does an amazing job to provide this service here. Leslie interviewed Stacey Netz, Rick Norby, Leif Anderson, and Justin Jones, to have the most up-to-date information from our area regarding housing, rentals, construction, and current market trends.

## Workforce Training Survey

The economic and business environment in Richland County is both exciting and challenging. One of the primary challenges for local businesses is securing, training, and retaining an effective workforce. With this challenge in mind, Richland Economic Development Corp. is pleased to pass along a survey to gage the workforce needs of our business community. Miles Community College (MCC) and Dawson Community College (DCC) are committed to providing workforce training in Richland County that is convenient, timely, relevant, and valuable. The colleges are asking local employers to complete a survey to help the faculty and staff from both institutions meet this commitment. The colleges hope to receive completed surveys by July 28. People who prefer to complete the survey on paper and fax it, can send it to **406-377-8132**.

Then in early August, MCC President, Stacy Klippenstein, and DCC President, Michael Simon, will host a meeting in Sidney for survey respondents to prioritize regional needs and discuss training delivery options.

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## The Workforce survey questions are as follows:



1) How interested are you in training opportunities for your employees? (Select one)

Interested: \_\_\_\_\_

Neutral: \_\_\_\_\_

Not interested: \_\_\_\_\_

2) What types of training format interests you most? (Select one)

On-site: \_\_\_\_\_

Online: \_\_\_\_\_

Off-site: \_\_\_\_\_

Interactive Television / Distance: \_\_\_\_\_

3) Please indicate the importance of **each** factor for training: (Important; Neutral; or Not important)

A) Employee Promotion: \_\_\_\_\_

B) Employee Certification: \_\_\_\_\_

C) Skill Building: \_\_\_\_\_

D) Team Building: \_\_\_\_\_

E) Quality of Material Presented: \_\_\_\_\_

4) Rank, in order of importance for your business, the following features of training (**1 is least important, 5 is most important**)

Time of day: \_\_\_\_\_

Content: \_\_\_\_\_

Price: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Quality of materials provided: \_\_\_\_\_

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5) Would the following features make you more or less interested in enrolling employees for training? (Answer **each**: Interested; Neutral; or Not interested)

A) Group Discounts: \_\_\_\_\_

B) Personalized Training: \_\_\_\_\_

C) Continuing Education Credits: \_\_\_\_\_

D) Class Sessions after Normal Business Hours: \_\_\_\_\_

6) Are you looking for specialized skills for your employees, and if so, what are those skills?

7) What would be an ideal time frame for training sessions for your employees (**Select one**)

Less than 2 hours: \_\_\_\_\_

Half day: \_\_\_\_\_

Full day: \_\_\_\_\_

Day and a half: \_\_\_\_\_

Two days: \_\_\_\_\_

Three days: \_\_\_\_\_

Other (please explain)



8) Please provide any additional comments you have and specific training you would like for your employees:

9) Survey Respondent Information

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you for participating in our survey! We will forward this information onto the colleges!**

DON'T FORGET TO STOP  
BY OUR BOOTH DURING  
THE RICHLAND COUNTY  
FAIR AND RODEO JULY  
30- AUGUST 2!!!!



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ECONOMIC

DEVELOPMENT

