

Yampa Valley Economic Development Council
In cooperation with Yampa Valley Partners
Holiday Inn – Craig, CO May 5, 2004 5:30 pm

AGENDA

5:30 pm Dinner Tom Gilchrist

Welcome / Introductions of YVEDC members:

Tom Gilchrist - Craig City Councilperson, Chair; Dan Ellison - Routt County Commissioner
Marianna Raftopoulos - Moffat County Commissioner; Festus Hagins - Hayden Town Councilperson
Nancy Kramer - Steamboat Springs City Councilperson; Kim Cook - Rio Blanco County Commissioner

- YVEDC is staffed by Winnie at City of Steamboat Springs
- Meet EDC, business, health care and local government using telecommunications as a tool in their business
- Intent of YVEDC is to continue encouraging telecommunication development in NW Colorado
- Next discussion of YVEDC in cooperation with Yampa Valley Partners and Community Agriculture Alliance will focus on agriculture, such as value added agriculture products and projects.

6:30 pm YVEDC Marianna Raftopoulos

Describe purpose of YVEDC – Began with an Intergovernmental agreement August 1990 including statements of:

- *'We share common assets in the Yampa River Valley*
- *Our economies have been dependent upon mining, agriculture, recreation*
- *We need to strengthen a diversified, regional economy'*

Describe telecom involvement of YVEDC and opportunities:

- Developed in 1990 for regional economic diversification
- Telecom as an economic development tool
- 1997 vision to 'increase telecommunications capacity and infrastructure' in 3 counties
- Planning; Building a business case; Beanpole Grant \$1.375 million -3 year
- Rio Blanco county participation solidified our Northwest Colorado presence

6:45 pm 'Putting Broadband to Work', Jeff Richardson and Margaret DeLany, Colorado Dept. of Information and Technology – Multi Use Network

- Multi Use Network connections and users described
- Public Side and Private Sector Access with future plans
- The 'New Economy' – jobs and wages; High tech serves as indicator of 'New Economy'
- The Multi Use Network will survey the needs of MNT users and determine 'last mile' infrastructure needs.

- Jeff Richardson, MNT, suggested a possible profiling or 'New Economy Mug Shots' of business in the Yampa Valley utilizing broadband capabilities. This would demonstrate the features and benefits of telecommunications infrastructure in Yampa Valley.

- It is imperative that we promote available telecommunications access;
- Invite 'New Economy' businesses into Chamber activities;
- Co-market with tourism 'stay and live';
- Develop business incubators and work centers
- Work with local colleges;
- Network with other communities for form a strong rural voice and go beyond infrastructure issues;
- Develop the public sector as 'applications anchor' by setting a good example for use of telecom;
- Don't wait for perfect infrastructure ... begin working on how to use it now!

7:30 pm Presentations from economic development representatives Audrey Danner
Objectives of local economic development
Present strategies for regional opportunities

Local Economic Development organizations and community representatives reporting:

South Routt EDC (Ken DePaul)

- South Routt EDC is developing a strong economic development organization following a 'community assessment' with the State Office of Economic Development.
- We are a region and will benefit by acting as a region and interfacing with all the various organizations that community members belong to.
- Entrepreneurs are important as a 'niche business' and they report a developing coffee bean business in South Routt.

Steamboat Springs EDC (Stephanie Reineke)

- Regionalization is imperative for the 'common good'.
- Sharing information is key and also, supporting local business.
- Amenities attract and keep business drawn to our 'quality of life'. How we nurture this quality of life is important.
- SpringSips was a start up company designed to meet telecom demand for Yampa Valley. Initially the company was formed by entrepreneur accustomed to higher speed connections in Denver and metro areas.
- The Steamboat Springs Economic Summit 2004 will be May 26 and 27 in Steamboat Springs.
- Theme: 'Finding Diversification in a Regional Resort Economy – Trends and Choices that Shape the Next Decade'
Contact Steamboat Chamber at www.steamboat-chamber.com for registration. The themes of regional retail and diversifying tourism are intended to 'generate income and sustainability'.
- Noreen Moore, Business Resource Development – Routt County, is the 'economic gardener' fostering new business growth and development.
- Location Neutral Businesses (can live and work where they choose) have been identified as an emerging industry. These 'LNB's' are being identified and will be measured for economic impact. A first step is to identify and assist these businesses to talk with each other.
- The 'part time residents' have also been identified as a group making an economic impact.

Town of Hayden EDC (Russ Martin and Don Johnson)

- The newly formed Hayden EDC is organized as an 'arm of the town council.'
- This EDC group is intending to 'make existing business profitable first' before addressing any new ideas for commerce and business.
- New housing projects are under advisement at Planning Commission. Planning Commission is designing a smooth application process for housing and building projects proposed for Hayden.
- The Hayden airport (Yampa Valley Regional Airport) is key infrastructure and ways to develop year round service would be beneficial to 'ship products out and bring dollars in'.

Craig Moffat ED Partnership (Tom Flavin)

- Craig Moffat EDP has been working with Moffat County and CSU Ag Economics Dept. to quantify land use decisions in economic terms.
- Craig Moffat EDP will be hiring a consultant to map broadband infrastructure and identify and quantify the telecommunications needs of business community to encourage private sector network build-out. By 12/31/04, this project will map existing fixed and wireless capacity, research 'new economy' and current market demand applications, match existing network with market demand to identify network "gaps", and survey other rural communities developing broadband applications for economic development.

Town of Dinosaur (Benjamin Graham, businessman)

- Dinosaur has a new charter school beginning next year.
- A 'world library' at your fingertips is crucial for all types of learning and education.
- Public access television channels might share programming, advertising and service offerings and utilize local cable companies.
- Dinosaur needs connection to fiber available in region, but not opened up for use.

Rio Blanco County: Meeker and Rangely (Kim Cook, Lance Stewart)

- Meeker reports the 'pre paid services' from NC Telecom are key to longevity of current Beanpole entities at the end of Beanpole grant.
- Meeker Business in Action has met and encouraged Rio Blanco county communication on regional topics.
- The previous fiber ring installed with help of White River Electric Assn., connecting schools, town, county and hospital has grown and is Meeker Area Network (MAN). Technical assistance is provided by local 'techies' and any costs are shared.
- Video arraignment of public safety facilities will begin soon.
- Fairfield Community Center has a small, wireless internet center available.
- First Natl. Bank of Rockies, CNCC and Meeker Schools utilize Voice Over Internet Protocol – VoIP.
- 9th Judicial District had MNT services ordered 'out of Denver office' and unable to participate in Meeker Area Network.
- Internet conferences for learning opportunities could be offset by video conferencing for Social Services. Costs now include travel, time, and expenses.

- Rangely has a 'joint community wireless project' in the works. Last year all road construction for 'water trunk lines' included conduit installed for future fiber installation.
- Telecom is an amenity for economic development, for achieving multiple objectives. Rangely is working on a vision and planning projects to discuss the 'old economy' and the 'new economy' as they seek sustainable business and projects for western Rio Blanco County.

Comments, concerns and questions:

- The small business owner is important to our economy and typically requires business to business connections along with higher education and research capabilities.
- The Visiting Nurse Assn. is requiring video conference capabilities for bioterrorism training and has aspirations to build a 'virtual health department'.
- Moffat and Rio Blanco County have 'pre paid services' available from NC Telecom, Inc. Marianna Raftopoulos, Moffat County Commissioner, made the suggestion to discuss using these dollars as matching for future grant opportunities.
- Dan Ellison, Routt County Commissioner, offered examples of the Assessor and GIS data base in Routt County where realtors can access without making a courthouse trip and staff if not impacted. Routt County Information Services Dept. has grown from 1-7 staff, but other departments have not due in part to I.S. support and capabilities.
- Steamboat Springs EDC has a SCORE chapter offering business assistance ('basic entrepreneurial ball skills') at no charge to new and emerging businesses. This is in coordination with CMC-Small Business Development Center and Business Resource Development, Noreen Moore.
- Western Colorado Economic Alliance web site: www.westerncoloradobusiness.org or call 1.866.240.9232

8:30 pm Thank you for participating! Tom Gilchrist
YVEDC will continue to sponsor this dinner and discussion relating to regional topics of interest.

Participants:

Tom Gilchrist, YVEDC – City of Craig
Noreen Moore, Business Resource Director
Tim Frentress, Hayden Trustee
Don Johnson, Hayden EDC
Sue Birch, NW Colo. Visiting Nurse
Ken DePaul, South Routt EDC
Mindi Crabb, SS EDC and SCORE
January DiTriani, SSEDC, Yampa Construction Trade Assn, StructureTek
Kirk Ferguson, CNCC
Debbie Wright, CNCC
Sharon Stoddard, USDA Rural Development
Scott Cook, Craig Moffat EDP, Cook Chevrolet
Stephanie Reineke, SS EDC and SpringSips
Don Jones, City of Craig
Terry Carwile, Trapper Mining
Jim Ross, Intermountain Real Estate
Russell Martin, Town of Hayden
Mike Hagan, Moffat County Morning News
Ben Graham, The Dinosaur Network
Donna Hellyer, Hayden Town Planning
Jamie Allen, Dinosaur Seniors
Jeff Richardson, CO Division of Information Technology
Scott Ford, CMC Small Business Development Center
Margaret DeLany, CO Division of Information Technology
Nadja Rider, Riderweb
Pres Askew, Boys and Girls Club
Marilyn Bouldin, CNCC
Tom Flavin, Craig Moffat EDP
Saed Tayyara, Businessman
Kim Cook – YVEDC – Rio Blanco County
Les Hampton, Moffat County
Chris Currie, Craig Daily Press
Lance Stewart, Town of Rangely
Don Roth
Nancy Nagler, Consultant
Marianna Raftopoulos, YVEDC – Moffat County
Nancy Kramer, YVEDC – City of Steamboat Spgs.
Audrey Danner, Yampa Valley Partners