

Reformers win Beartooth co-op seats

After years of questioning the decisions made by the Beartooth Electric Board of Directors, reform-minded candidates now hold a majority of seats on the co-op's governing body.

Since Beartooth joined Southern Montana Generating and Transmission co-op in 2004, members have seen rates double and the

Related story on Page 4

co-op's debt burden skyrocket because of Southern's construction of the ill-fated Highwood natural gas plant.

At Beartooth's annual meeting on September 24, a record turnout of members elected reform candidates Dan Dutton, Dave Peterson, and Northern Plains member Pat Hoffman. The three ran

on a platform of increased financial due diligence and member involvement in the co-op. The new board elected Hoffman, a member of Carbon County Resource Council, Secretary/Treasurer.

"Today we saw real democracy in action. The people spoke loud and clear; that's how real governance should happen" said Hoffman after the election.



"Today we saw real democracy in action. The people spoke loud and clear; that's how real governance should happen.

– Pat Hoffman, Northern Plains member and newly elected Beartooth board Secretary/Treasurer

The new board members plan to hit the ground running and learn as much as possible about the day-to-day operations of the co-op as

well as how to make decisions about the co-op's energy supply future. Dutton is a former Chair of CCRC.

– Caleb Lande

'Tar sands pipeline NOT in U.S. interest'



Northern Plains members and supporters gather at Dawson Community College in Glendive on September 27 before a State Department national hearing on whether the proposed Keystone XL pipeline is in the national interest.

Landowners testify at Keystone XL hearing

TransCanada's proposed Keystone XL pipeline is not in the national interest.

That's the message about 50 members of Northern Plains Resource Council, including landowners affected by the proposed tar sands pipeline, delivered at a national hearing September 27 at Dawson Community College in Glendive.

Complete story on Page 5



"The pipeline is for the purpose of generating profit for a private company – it's for a private use. It will generate few, if any, local jobs, and the oil is likely to be destined for export markets. This is not in the national interest.

– Terry Blevins, Wolf Point-area landowner crossed by the proposed pipeline and member of the Northern Plains Pipeline Landowners Group

40th annual shindig in Billings Nov. 11-12

Can you believe it? Northern Plains is now in our 40th year, and this year's Annual Meeting is November 11-12. We hope you can come!

You are invited to join the fun and show your support for Northern Plains at our 40th Annual Meeting at the Billings Crowne Plaza Hotel.

The Annual Meeting is a great time to meet with one another, learn together, conduct the organization's business, and socialize. This is when our members have the best opportunity to take a hands-on role in guiding Northern Plains through the year ahead, by electing our officers, at-large board delegates, and by adopting resolutions on important policies. The Annual Meeting auction is our single biggest fundraising event of the year.

The Billings Crowne Plaza Hotel has set aside a number of rooms at a substantially discounted price (\$81). This is a flat rate, so it applies

Inside:

- Ted Nace is keynote speaker **Page 8**
- Tentative meeting schedule **P. 9**
- Auctions rely on you **P. 9**
- Registration form **P. 12**

Deadlines:

- Oct. 21:** Nominations for Bob Tully Spirit Award and Mary Donohoe "Tell It Like It Is" Award;
- Oct. 27:** Make reduced-rate room reservations (\$81) at Billings Crowne Plaza 406-252-7400;
- Nov. 4:** Early-bird registration ends. Sign up early and save money;
- Nov. 10:** Election ballots must be returned to Northern Plains office.

whether one person or four people occupy the room. To get this reduced price, you'll need to register at the hotel by October 27. Be sure to say you're attending the Northern Plains Annual Meeting for the reduced rate.

– Steve Paulson

TO THE MEMBERS

Great work makes for great people

Singer/songwriter Harry Chapin passed on something folk singer Pete Seeger had said about his own activist work that has stuck with me. Seeger said that, while the work on various social issues played an important part of his life, the end result of the work was not the best part.

Of even greater importance to him was his connection to other like-minded people.

“Involvement with issues means that you’re involved with the good people with the live minds, the live hearts,” Chapin related.

These are the people and relationships that make for a meaningful and deeply satisfying life.

“In the final analysis, commitment in of itself, irrespective of whether you win or not, is something that truly makes your life more worthwhile,” Seeger told him.

Clearly, we put our passion into the work of Northern Plains to ensure



Northern Plains Chair Ed Gulick fires up the crowd at the *For the Love of Montana* rally in February on the Capitol lawn during the 2011 legislature. About 600 showed up to urge elected officials to protect Montana’s water, land, air, and wildlife.

that our land, water, air, livelihoods, and quality of life are protected and our society makes the transition to a more sustainable long-term footing. We’re here to make a difference, and we’re here to win campaigns that protect what we hold dear.

However, we can’t accomplish this as individuals, so, along the way, we’re

organized by Northern Plains, and we get to know fellow members. I mention this because the 40th Annual Meeting of Northern Plains is just around the corner.

Come prepared to contribute to our organization’s position on issues in the resolutions section of the business meeting, be inspired by our speakers,

learn a thing or two (or 17!) in the panel sessions, and perhaps find some holiday gifts at one of the auctions.

Even more importantly, come share some quality time with your fellow Northern Plains members, among the greatest citizens to be found in this great state of Montana. We love this place we call home, and we love the people who are committed to protecting and enhancing it.

At the Annual Meeting, we’ll also be electing some new officers. It’s been a great pleasure serving you as Chair during the past two years, and I look forward to continuing to serve Northern Plains on the Board as Past Chair and on various task forces. I’m particularly looking forward to helping assemble our next five-year strategic plan.

In the meantime, I look forward to seeing you all at the 2011 Annual Meeting. Take care, and I’ll see you in November!

– Ed Gulick
Northern Plains Board Chair



Northern Plains Resource Council is a grassroots conservation and family agriculture group. Northern Plains organizes Montana citizens to protect our water quality, family farms, and unique quality of life.

NORTHERN PLAINS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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THE PLAINS TRUTH

The Plains Truth is published by Northern Plains Resource Council. Northern Plains members receive the Plains Truth as one of the benefits of membership.

Membership Dues

\$500+ Rider of the Big Sky	\$50+ Range Rider
\$200+ Bottom Line Rider	\$40 General Member
\$100+ Rough Rider	\$15-\$39 Living Lightly

Endowment

The Northern Plains Endowment is a permanent fund established to help sustain Northern Plains’ work into the future. If you want to make a donation, a memorial gift, or a bequest to this fund, please contact the Northern Plains office.

Northern Plains Staff

Staff Director: Teresa Erickson
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Director of Organizing and Campaigns: Olivia Stockman
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Program Support Coordinator: Clementine Lindley
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Western Organization of Resource Councils

Northern Plains is a founding member of the Western Organization of Resource Councils. WORC is a regional network of seven grassroots community organizations that include 9,000 members in seven Western states. WORC helps its member groups succeed by providing training and coordinating regional issue campaigns. Visit WORC at www.worc.org.

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Stockton a national leader in ag issues

Rancher Gilles Stockton has spent most of his life on the Grass Range ranch his family settled in 1935 after his grandmother homesteaded in Winnett in 1909. He also, though, has quite the international streak. Born in France after World War II, Gilles (pronounced zheel) has spent a great deal of time as an adult in Africa.

From 2005 through 2008, Gilles worked as an advisor for the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) on East African Livestock and Pastoral Development, with a particular emphasis on economic development policy and trade. Working heavily in Djibouti, where he also served as Acting USAID Representative for a while, Gilles' primary job was to resolve veterinary and cattle marketing issues in the sale and transportation of livestock from the Horn of Africa to the Middle East.

USDA advisor

Gilles is a leading voice on animal trade, identification, and veterinary issues domestically as well. Appointed last year, Gilles is one of 20 individuals from around the country serving on USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack's Advisory Committee on Animal Health. The committee was created to advise the Secretary on actions related to prevention, surveillance and control of animal diseases of national importance. Amongst other things, it gives Gilles a unique vantage point to voice concerns about USDA's proposed new traceability rule (see the article on the rule below).

Gilles has a long history working on livestock issues with Northern Plains and its umbrella organization, the



Gilles Stockton, right, talks to then-CNBC reporter Rob Reynolds, who visited Gilles in 2004 for a story about meatpacker monopoly of the cattle market. Gilles' latest battle for federal change now has been introduced in Congress as the Livestock Marketing Fairness Act.

'We set the agenda'

When asked about his favorite memories working on livestock issues, Gilles recounts a national hearing held in Denver in 1999 on WORC's proposed rule for livestock market fairness.

"We really had everybody's attention," Gilles said. "It was fun to start out as a little group of 5 or 6 thinking 'what can we do?' in the fall of 1987 and, just over 10 years later, have national attention on what we deemed a solution. We raised the profile of the issue and made influential people in politics and academia pay attention to us. We set the agenda."

Western Organization of Resource Councils (WORC). Recruited by Jeanne Charter in 1986, Gilles was quickly involved in the formation of what was then Northern Plains'

Livestock Task Force.

Spurred by the rising trend of agricultural monopolization, farmers and ranchers on the task force set out to educate themselves on how livestock markets worked, economic trends, anti-trust law, and more.

The WORC Rule

After years of painstaking preparation, members hit upon what would nationally become known as the WORC Rule, endorsed by a wide swath of state and national organizations. Though not adopted by USDA, the proposed rule was the foundation for the Livestock Marketing Fairness Act, recently introduced by a bipartisan coalition of Western representatives and senators including Montana's Jon Tester.

The bill would help restore fairness and competition to livestock markets, ensuring ranchers a fair shake at the marketplace and restoring upwards of \$5.7 billion a year to rural economies.

A previous version of the bill, the Captive Supply Reform Act, was narrowly excluded from the 2008 Farm Bill.

Some of the principals of the WORC Rule are also incorporated in USDA's proposed Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA) rule, which sprang out of the livestock fairness fight that Northern Plains, WORC, and allies have waged for years. Among other things, it would prevent multinational meatpackers, who hold a virtual monopoly on the livestock industry from unfairly or deceptively acting to drive small, family producers out of business.

No stranger to D.C.

Northern Plains members have fought for the release and implementation of the GIPSA rule. Gilles has gone above and beyond, recently traveling to Washington, D.C., with WORC and meeting with Montana's entire federal delegation, as well as members of Congress from North Dakota and South Dakota, lobbying to keep Congress from undercutting the rules at the request of multinational meatpacking corporations.

When asked what has kept him going through the years, Gilles responds "because it's fun. I get to do interesting things and meet and collaborate with great people."

"Over the years, it's been a great opportunity for personal growth, expanding my speaking and writing skills," said Gilles. "I'm grateful for the resources I've been given through Northern Plains and WORC: the staff time, research, assistance in traveling... For me, it's been a very effective partnership."

— Svein Newman 

Animal traceability rule needs work

Livestock health is a value Montanans share, but "one size fits all" livestock traceability regulations should be approached with caution.

Though its intent is understandable, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's new proposed rule for the interstate shipment of livestock has serious flaws that must be addressed. Most notably, the proposal includes feeder cattle (80% of the market) in its ear tagging requirement without giving justification. This is an unnecessary and counterproductive burden on ranchers and rural

communities. More than just burdensome, the inclusion of feeder cattle will likely inundate information storage and retrieval systems. Instead of being all-encompassing, regulations should focus on problem areas.

Also, though USDA promises that the rules will not be unfunded, it fails to mention funding for states to modernize or expand their record-keeping programs to meet new requirements.

— Svein Newman 

Comments due by November 9

Tell USDA that Montana's livestock community doesn't need unjustified burdens or unfunded mandates. Ask it to exclude feeder cattle from the rules and to include funding for state record-keeping.

Comments are due November 9 and can be submitted online at <http://www.regulations.gov/#submitComment;D=APHIS-2009-0091-0001> or sent via postal mail to: Docket No. APHIS-2009-0091, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, Station 3A-03.8, 4700 River Road, Unit 118, Riverdale, MD 20737-1238.



Beartooth co-op members pass bylaw revisions

Besides electing reform-minded candidates to the Beartooth Electric Board of Directors, Northern Plains members led another significant victory for Beartooth members.

A comprehensive slate of bylaws revisions were accepted by Beartooth members by a 3-1 ratio.

Fed up with the co-op's general lack of transparency and member involvement, Burt Williams, Charles Sangmeister, and Phil Hoffman lobbied for and sought nomination to

a member-driven bylaws revision committee that convened in mid-2010.

While serving on the committee, Williams and Sangmeister, both members of

Northern Plains and affiliate Stillwater Protective Association (SPA), were strong advocates for increased member access to information about and involvement in the co-op's

decision-making.

During an up and down 18-month period the committee was able to hash out a series of progressive changes to the co-op's bylaws, including a system for mail-in ballots and increased access to co-op information through Beartooth's website at www.beartoothelectric.com.

Recalling the past few years at Beartooth, SPA member John Beers said, "Until now only a small fraction of the membership could participate

in elections. Many thanks are due the bylaws committee for two years of effort under conditions that were often hostile. This is a victory for democracy."

Stillwater

Protective Association members have strived to increase member involvement in their co-op since early 2009. After holding several public meetings, including a presentation

by Dan McClendon from Delta Montrose Electric in Colorado, SPA members attended board meetings, information sessions, and lobbied for the creation of the bylaws committee.

There were some bumps in the road during the effort including differences in opinion among Beartooth members upset with the co-op's actions and a petition effort started by SPA in order to revive the stalled bylaws revision process.

In the end, despite the recent successes, there are still many questions about the future of Beartooth. However, SPA members are confident the new makeup of the board will help

Democratic member control

Cooperatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting their policies and making decisions. Men and women serving as elected representatives are accountable to the membership. In primary cooperatives members have equal voting rights (one member, one vote) and cooperatives at other levels are also organized in a democratic manner.

— Second Principle of Cooperatives

clear the air surrounding Beartooth's involvement with Southern Montana Generating and Transmission Cooperative, a group of six Montana rural electric co-ops.

"It will be illuminating to hear about the financial condition of our generation 'cooperative,' Southern. Perhaps with new representation on Southern's board we will find out. Let us hope the era of secrecy and obfuscation is over," said Beers.

— Caleb Lande

What's next?

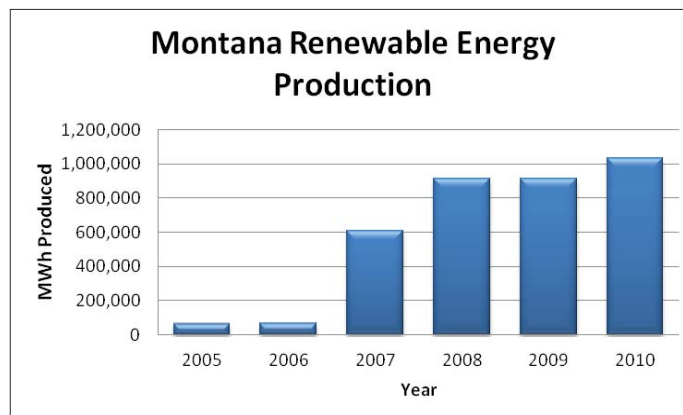
The first meeting of the new Beartooth Electric Co-op Board of Directors will be Oct. 28. Call the co-op at 406-446-2310 for information.

NorthWestern Energy seeks RES community waiver

This summer, NorthWestern Energy filed papers with the Public Service Commission (PSC) seeking a short-term waiver from a key provision of Montana's renewable energy standard (RES).

The RES currently requires the state's investor-owned utilities to procure a minimum of 10% of their retail electricity from new renewable energy sources such as wind and solar by 2010. By 2015, they are required to meet the 15% benchmark. The law also requires utilities to purchase a minimum number of megawatts (MW) from small, locally owned community projects.

The community provision of RES is an essential tool to diversify Montana's renewable energy investment across the state, ensuring that no one county reaps all of the benefits from expanded development. Wind energy projects create numerous short- and long-term jobs and deliver millions of dollars in county revenues that build new roads, bridges, and support schools. The community provision is an essential



Montana investor-owned utilities are buying more power mainly from wind sources since the legislature passed the state's renewable energy standard in 2005.

tool to building new prosperity in rural Montana. Additionally, distributed energy production normalizes disparity in wind speed and intensity and stabilizes the base wind load in the state.

NorthWestern Energy is seeking a short-term waiver from requirements to purchase a minimum of 50 MW from community projects by January 1, 2012. The waiver would relieve the company from any potential

penalties from failing to meet the requirement. NorthWestern argues it has "undertaken all reasonable steps to procure renewable energy credits ... [but] for reasons beyond their control ..." will be unable to meet the requirements by January 1.

To date, NorthWestern has successfully brought 13 MW of community scale energy on to the grid with the completion of the Turnbull hydroelectric project this spring

What's next?

The Public Service Commission will now hear from NorthWestern Energy and interveners in the case before making a decision this fall on whether to grant the community waiver in the renewable energy standard. If you are interested in learning more or getting involved in the PSC process, email Clayton at clayton@northernplains.org.

in Teton County. Unfortunately, NorthWestern has failed to pursue two exciting wind projects in Cascade County, or other smaller projects, that would have pushed them toward compliance, instead choosing to seek a waiver from the requirements.

Northern Plains and allies were able to kill a NorthWestern bill in the recent legislative session to repeal the community provision outright.

— Clayton Elliott



Landowners stand firm to make point on pipeline

Hundreds of people attended the Sept. 27 national public hearing in Glendive intended to advise President Obama and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton on the National Interest Determination for the Keystone XL pipeline.

More than 50 Northern Plains members and supporters attended the hearing. However, pipeline proponents, many of whom were bused in from out of state, outnumbered opponents.

Landowners and concerned citizens held their own in testifying that the pipeline is not in the national interest.

Northern Plains and other opposition members pointed out that TransCanada's Keystone I pipeline has had 14 spills in just one year.

Chuck Nerud, a Circle-area landowner and member of the Northern Plains Pipeline Landowners Group (NPPLG), spoke to reporters about the pipeline cutting through his land along its proposed 284-mile route through Montana. He said he's concerned about the potential destruction of the land and the possibility of an oil leak.



Northern Plains member Irene Moffett of Glendive speaks to reporters during the Keystone XL hearing September 27 at Dawson Community College in Glendive.

"I don't like to be a pessimist, but there are a lot of things that can go wrong and I'd rather not see them," Nerud said.

Many landowners along the proposed route of the pipeline and other speakers expressed concerns about TransCanada's pipeline spill record, the lack of an Emergency Response Plan for the pipeline, thinner pipe slated to be used in rural areas, and the recent Washington Post article (September 22, 2011) which revealed TransCanada's close

Help Wanted:

Barb Skelton of the Montana Energy Forum is looking for individuals interested in earning a few \$\$ on Tuesday, Sept 27. The main need is to have people stand in line for them. If interested, contact Barb @ 406-698-9121 or skelgatz@earthlink.net.

A Dawson Community College employee found this posted in one of the classroom wings. Those who wanted to speak had to line up beforehand and were given a number to indicate their turn to speak. The Montana Energy Forum is the name used by pipeline proponents to organize a large turnout at the hearing.

relationship with the State Department through personnel who formerly worked for Hillary Clinton and other relationships.

"The Keystone I pipeline, the precursor to the Keystone XL pipeline, has had 14 spills since operations began in June 2010 including a 21,000 gallon spill in North Dakota, and the Enbridge pipeline carrying tar sands in Michigan spilled 843,000 gallons of oil into the Kalamazoo River. An expert safety review by the US Department of Transportation Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration is needed," said Terry Blevins, a Wolf Point-area landowner on the pipeline route and a member of NPPLG.

"This pipeline is not in the national interest until its risks are much better addressed," added Northern Plains member Julia Page of Gardiner.

The Northern Plains Pipeline Landowners Group, a committee of Northern Plains Resource Council, is a group of landowners who have organized to negotiate with the company an equitable agreement which protects landowners and public safety.

— Rose Bender

Conservation community demands actions after oil spill



During a media conference on August 1 along the Yellowstone River, Northern Plains Past Chair Mary Fitzpatrick outlines actions the Billings conservation community wants the state and federal government to take so that oil spills like the one in the Yellowstone don't happen with the other pipelines in the state, including the Keystone XL.

The requested actions can be viewed on the Northern Plains website under The Issues>Tar Sands Pipeline

In the wake of the July 1 oil spill, where ExxonMobil's Silvertip pipeline leaked for 56 minutes, pouring 54,000 gallons of crude oil into the longest undammed river in the lower 48 states, Northern Plains worked to bring the conservation community together to share information and unite around common goals.

Along with sharing information with local and national groups, Northern Plains:

- Joined WORC in organizing a series of meetings with the State of Montana and the Environmental Protection Agency for conservation groups to become informed, ask tough questions, and push to hold the oil clean-up to high standards.
- After reflection and research, brought eight of the participating groups together to make a series of recommendations about transparency, wildlife, agriculture landowner rights,

and more. Northern Plains delivered the recommendations to Exxon, the EPA, and Montana Department of Environmental Quality.

- Worked to track down independent scientists to review Exxon's oil spill clean-up plan and generated television and print media stories and opinions to keep public focus on ensuring stricter clean-up of our national treasure.
- Helped connect national reporters to impacted landowners to help them draw attention to their needs, and continues to help in similar capacities.
- Provided information to a national group of Catholic nuns who maintain just enough stock in Exxon to have access to its annual shareholders meeting, helping equip them to keep up the pressure to make clean-up as high a priority as possible.
- Co-sponsored a river clean-up day with Audubon and others on September 17. Though citizens

should not attempt to clean up oil themselves, they have an important role in monitoring conditions, tracking wildlife, and freeing the river of other debris; and that is what members did.

- Realizing that this spill provided a potent lesson on pipeline safety, worked to elevate the issues surrounding TransCanada's proposed Keystone XL tar sands pipeline. Northern Plains highlighted the need for a safer pipeline and a publicly reviewable emergency response plan. This generated dozens of news stories including coverage in the New York Times and Time magazine.
- Lobbied Senator Jon Tester, as well as Tester's and Senator Max Baucus' staff regarding working with EPA to craft a Yellowstone River Sub-area Contingency Plan for emergency response, so that the hard-learned lessons of the recent spill are not forgotten and can be applied to any future incidents.

— Svein Newman



Asian market lures new Montana coal mines

What happened to idea of energy independence?

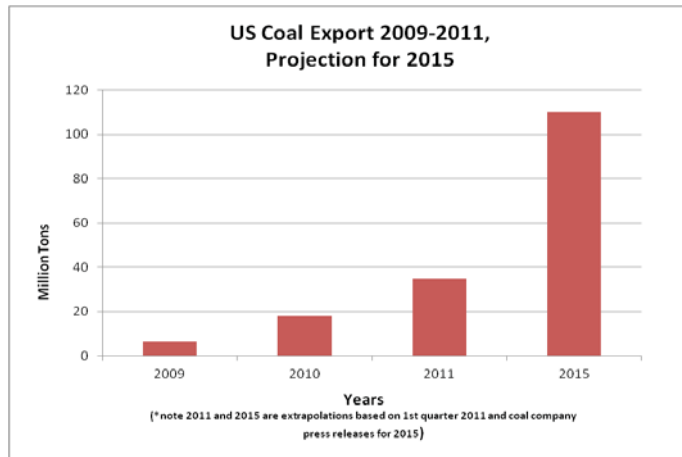
Coal export proposals are popping up around Montana with potential mines both inside and outside of the Powder River Basin in southeast Montana.

On August 23, American Power Corp., a Denver based company, announced the “PACE” project – a proposal to develop 288 million tons of possible coal resources near Lehigh, in central Montana. On its website – www.americanpowerco.com – the company openly states its intentions to export the coal to Asia.

For the first time in years, power demand in the United States is expected to decline. Subsequently, it is no surprise that big coal companies are worried about their next market.

According to The Associated Press, “from 1980 to 2000, residential power demand grew by about 2.5 percent a year. From 2000 to 2010, the growth rate slowed to 2 percent. Over the next 10 years, demand is expected to decline by about 0.5 percent a year, according to the Electric Power Research Institute, a nonprofit group funded by the utility industry.” This decline is why coal companies are moving away from the call for energy independence and openly touting Asian markets.

Indeed, a proposal in Carbon County highlights another attempt to garner a piece of the Asian market. Coal Mountain Mining has submitted to the Montana Department of Environmental Quality applications for prospecting permits. The Coal Mountain Mining website (<http://coalmountainmine.com/>) has promotional videos that tout coal exports. One of its selling points



for developing this mine near Bridger is access to rail lines that can take the coal to Asian markets.

Of course, the big player leasing coal in Montana is Arch Coal, the lease holder to the potential Otter Creek coal tracts. Arch has publicly stated it intends to export Otter Creek coal, has invested in the proposed Tongue River Railroad, and has financial stakes in one of the proposed coal ports on the West Coast. Arch also has purchased capacity to export coal from one of Canada’s British Columbia terminals.

Through a wider lens, it is interesting that this export phenomenon is not just occurring in coal markets. There have been proposals for much of our



The pin shows where American Power Corp. wants to develop a possible 288 million tons of coal in central Montana.

natural gas to be exported. In May 2011 the United States approved the first export of large quantities of natural gas through a port on the Gulf of Mexico. Also, the proposed Keystone XL pipeline is slated to carry some of its tar sands to a Texas port that is in a tax-free international zone, where the tar sands would be refined and then exported overseas.

The United States is poised to become a major export hub in the next decade. Just as we wouldn’t send all of our money overseas and call it financial independence, we shouldn’t label any of these energy development proposals as energy independence.

Unfortunately, it will be Montanans who will bear the impacts to our clean air, water, and land for these resources to be mined or drilled and shipped overseas. With so much potential back home to harness the sun, wind, and energy efficiency, it seems illogical to be extending the life of dirty energies just to ship them overseas.

It will be up to consumers and groups like Northern Plains to ensure that we move toward becoming more self-sustaining and move toward true energy independence.

– Becca Fischer

RPA pushes state to fix leaking coal ash ponds

Rosebud Protective Association (RPA) is working hard to prevent further water contamination from the leaking coal ash ponds at the Colstrip power plant. Coal ash is the byproduct of burning coal and contains potentially hazardous levels of heavy metals and other chemicals.

RPA met with the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) in August to discuss possible remedies to the leaking coal ash ponds. The ponds have been leaking since soon after they were built in the 1980s.

In 2003, 57 area landowners sued PPL Montana for damages resulting from the leaking ponds. The lawsuit was settled in 2008 but a real remedy has yet to be found to stop the actual leaking. Currently the contaminated water is captured and pumped back into the ponds.

RPA’s work is shadowed by work on the federal front on coal ash. A bad bill sponsored by Rep. McKinley (R-W Va.) will force the federal government to ignore the 400,000 public comments received on a proposed coal ash rule and implement rules that will keep business as usual. Currently coal has fewer regulations than household waste.

McKinley’s bill (H.R. 2273) has been considered and passed out of the House Subcommittee on the Environment and the Economy but has a long way to go to fully become law.

– Becca Fischer

Signature collection falls short on eminent domain referendum

Supporters of a proposed referendum to repeal Montana’s new eminent domain law fell short of the signature totals required to qualify the measure for the 2012 general election ballot.

Initiative Referendum 125 (IR-125) would have required signatures from

at least 5% of the state’s registered voters to qualify for the ballot. Supporters had until September 30 to meet those requirements and submit signatures to county election administrators.

As of October 3, the Secretary of State had only tabulated 3,028 signatures

– well below the 24,337 needed to qualify for the ballot. A number of signatures still have not been verified by local election administrators, but supporters of the measure acknowledged on October 3 that they were well short of the needed totals.

– Clayton Elliott



LAND AND WATER

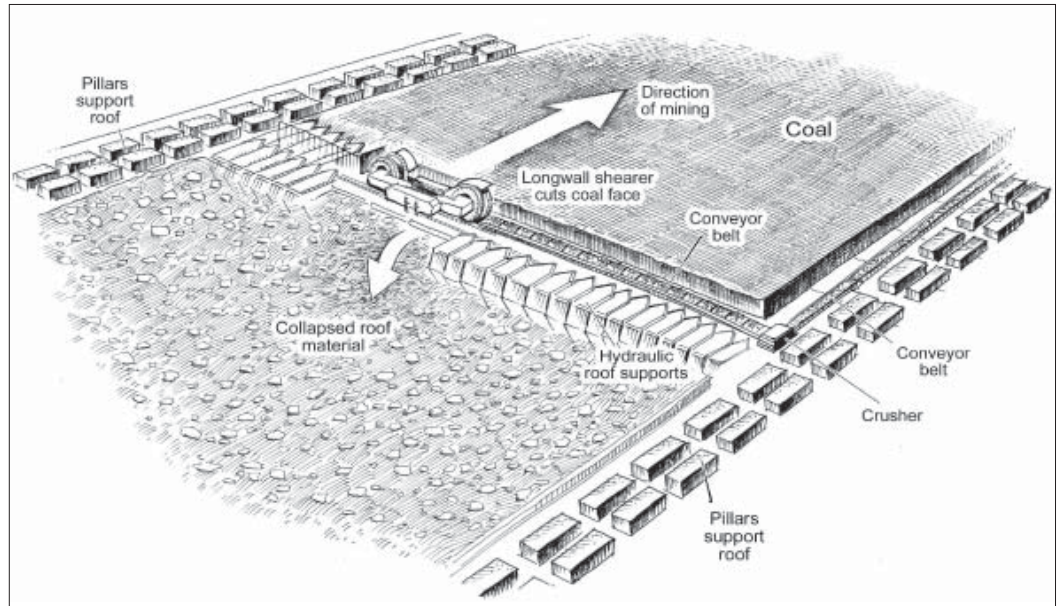
BMLA seeks protections as coal mine expands

Northern Plains affiliate Bull Mountain Land Alliance (BMLA) continues its efforts to secure conditions to protect surface owners' land and water before Signal Peak Energy expands its underground coal mine north of Billings.

Signal Peak Energy, which operates the existing mine in Yellowstone and Musselshell Counties, has applied to expand its mine into almost 2,700 acres of federal coal, mining under even more Northern Plains members' land in the process.

Concerned about the effects of expanded mining, BMLA members met with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), which will lease the coal, in late spring of this year, asking for provisions to replace the precious Bull Mountain water resources that ranchers depend on if they become damaged, adequate bonding to ensure that property damage gets fixed, and various stipulations regarding subsidence, as the land sinks into the earth as underground coal is removed.

One of the requested subsidence provisions is an analysis of the risk of catastrophic slope failure so that ranchers can know when they are safe on their property. Even though BLM's standard operating procedure is to take a hard look at potential impacts of coal mining for any expansion over 640 acres (this expansion is more than four times that size) and even though internal documents show that



Source: U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission report 1-13105 by Arch Coal

Signal Peak uses longwall mining 300-800 feet beneath the north end of the Bull Mountains. A cutting shear moves back and forth across a panel of coal up to 1,000 feet wide and several miles long. Cut coal falls onto a conveyor and is carried to the mouth of the mine. Longwall mining is done under hydraulic roof supports (shields). As the shields advance, the seam is cut leaving the roof in the mined-out areas to collapse behind them.

Read the factsheet

For a list of BMLA's desired landowner protections, see its factsheet online at northernplains.org>Our Local Groups>Bull Mountain Land Alliance.

BLM believed environmental analysis to be old and "stale," the federal agency punted on critically evaluating mine expansion and by preparing an Environmental Impact Statement in favor of the coal company. As a result, BMLA appealed the BLM's

environmental assessment and continues to refute company arguments in that process. BMLA also continues to try to negotiate with BLM, from the local level with the Billings Field Office to the national level with BLM Director Bob Abbey.



Bob Abbey

The Bull Mountain Land Alliance is also working to get landowner protections issued by the State of Montana. On August 24, members of

BMLA met with staff from Montana's Department of Environmental Quality and coal company staff to express their needs and lobby for their stipulations. They also took DEQ staff out to the ranch of BMLA leader Ellen Pfister to show them the cracks that are appearing on her ranch now that she is being undermined.

BMLA also continues to work with the offices of Senators Max Baucus and Jon Tester to possibly include their stipulations in federal legislation.

– Svein Newman 

Members make good use of time with Baucus, Tester

Northern Plains members and staff had face-to-face meetings in Billings on August 8 with both Senators Jon Tester and Max Baucus.

Never ones to miss an opportunity, members presented them with updates and requests regarding coal and coal ash, renewable energy, pipeline safety and the Keystone XL pipeline, and federal rules to help restore fairness and competition to livestock markets.

Members told impassioned personal stories about how these issues affected their livelihoods, and both senators

were receptive, making commitments to stand up for rural Montana. For instance, Tester passionately committed to pushing TransCanada to use thicker pipe for its proposed Keystone XL tar sands pipeline and to call Secretary Tom Vilsack regarding the release of USDA's proposed fair market, anti-monopoly Grain

Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA) rule. Along with Tester, Baucus committed to opposing federal legislation to shortcut review and rush construction of the Keystone XL pipeline.

Congressional staff were also present at both meetings, and a New York

Times reporter came to the meeting with Tester. Though a meeting was requested, Representative Dennis Rehberg did not schedule time during the August congressional recess with Northern Plains.

– Svein Newman 

MONTANA DELEGATION INFORMATION

Senator Max Baucus
511 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510
Office: (202) 224-2651
Fax: (202) 224-0515
Web mail: <http://baucus.senate.gov/Contact>

Senator Jon Tester
204 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510
Office: (202) 224-2644
Fax: (202) 224-8594
Web mail: <http://tester.senate.gov/Contact>

Representative Denny Rehberg
516 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
Office: (202) 225-3211
Fax: (202) 225-5687
<http://www.house.gov/rehberg/contact.shtml>



ANNUAL MEETING

Coal activist keynoter for 40th gathering

Ted Nace began career as N. Dakota organizer

This year's keynote speaker is Ted Nace. Nace grew up in Dickinson, North Dakota, and first encountered strip mining during high school while working for the U.S. Forest Service.

He began working with the Dakota Resource Council (DRC) in North Dakota while earning a graduate degree at University of California-Berkeley, then served as an organizer and as staff director for DRC.

Nace's book *Gangs of America: The Rise of Corporate Power and the Disabling of Democracy* was described by the *New York Times* as "a surprising and welcome



Ted Nace is the author of *Climate Hope: On the Front Lines of the Fight Against Coal* and the founder of the CoalSwarm website.

achievement ... provocative and entertaining." His most recent book is *Climate Hope: On the Front Lines of the Fight Against Coal*, a chronicle of American

citizen groups working to free the United States from its dependence on coal. In describing the book, Dr. James Hansen said, "With coal so pivotal to climate change, I hope this book will bring more attention to this growing grassroots movement, which is playing a vital role in defending our home planet and our grandchildren's future."

Nace is also the founder and director of CoalSwarm, an informational website (www.coalswarm.org) that provides nearly 5,000 inter-linked factsheets and articles on coal and receives 60,000 page views each week. Lester Brown of the Earth Policy Institute said, "CoalSwarm is the central nervous system that this movement needed. It is invaluable."

— Steve Paulson 

Bank approached on energy-efficient consumer loans

The Energy Efficiency Committee of the Northern Plains Clean Energy Task Force has been busy with its campaign to make money accessible to homeowners and small businesses for energy efficiency improvements. Deep cuts in energy use by buildings across the country could play a significant role in solving the energy problems we face today.

The stated goal of the Energy Efficiency Committee is to "Remove barriers to and promote the implementation of widespread deep energy efficiency improvements in Montana. We seek to create multiple funding pathways to support energy efficiency upgrades for homeowners, renters, and small businesses."

In late August, Clean Energy Task Force members Sandra Abraham, Ed Gulick, Connie Keogh, and Julia Page met with representatives from First Interstate Bank to discuss how the bank might play a role in the creation of an innovative financing program. The meeting was a successful beginning to an effort that could bring together diverse interests toward the common goal of expanded energy efficiency.

Next steps for the campaign include further outreach with utilities and financial institutions as well as small businesses specializing in energy efficiency.

— Caleb Lande 



With the beautiful Tongue River Valley as a backdrop, Irv Alderson reflects on life in the tight-knit community of ranchers and farmers who continue to fight the proposed Tongue River Railroad. The occasion was the Birney Potluck atop Poker Jim Butte.

Birney Potluck a gathering of friends

Northern Plains families and friends gathered to raise money to protect the Tongue River Valley from being cut apart by the Tongue River Railroad at the Birney Potluck at Poker Jim Butte on August 6. The evening in the Custer National Forest had a variety of potluck food, music, and breathtaking views.

Martha Scanlan played her guitar with songs from her new album *Tongue River Stories*, while a beautiful red-orange sunset fell to darkness. Irv Alderson spoke to the crowd about the "thankfulness of a good year of rain and putting up hay." He described the proposed Tongue River Railroad as being "a big, long ugly serpent." Forrest Mars, by buying interest in the coal-hauling railroad,

"has cut the serpent in half... but the serpent's fangs and poison are still on the other end."

The entire valley, including grateful landowners on the upper (southern) part of the river who seemingly no longer are threatened, is working to help their neighbors downstream to continue to fight the railroad.

Some attendees climbed the fire lookout tower near the picnic area for a breathtaking 360-degree view of the area. The evening was full of warm air, conversations of the long fight and what the future holds.

Alderson put it best, "The evening was magical, in a magic place."

— Karen Olson 

Miles City Harvest Fest draws members to fight Tongue River Railroad

More than 50 Northern Plains supporters met at the Tongue River Vineyard and Winery in Miles City to celebrate the 30-plus-year fight to protect the Tongue River Valley by preventing it from being industrialized by a coal-hauling railroad.

The September 11 celebration, replacing the formerly held Birney Barbecue, was timely this year following the announcement of Forrest Mars' purchase of one-third of the Tongue River Railroad. In his letter to Northern Plains, Mars announced that the Tongue River Railroad would no longer be built from a few miles north of Birney to Decker. However, papers with the Surface Transportation Board have yet to be filed to officially change the route. While Mars hoped Northern Plains would be happy about the shorter route, he was wrong. The showing of support at this event clearly shows that Northern Plains will work to protect the entire valley.

Local foods were donated by members and enjoyed by all, including beef raised throughout the valley. A live auction featuring an original Clyde Aspevig oil on canvas of the Crazy Mountains got the crowd going. Martha Scanlan performed music inspired by the Tongue River Valley.

The Tongue River Vineyard and Winery is owned by Northern Plains members Bob and Marilyn Thaden.

— Rose Bender 



ANNUAL MEETING

40th get-together a chance to celebrate

Your business meeting

Being a member means you have the right to vote for Northern Plains Resource Council officers and at-large board delegates. It also means you have the right to vote on policy resolutions that help steer Northern Plains' work in the year ahead.

Because policy resolutions undergo many changes during the course of debate, you must be present at the business meeting in order to vote on resolutions.

Early-bird registration

To pre-register for the Annual Meeting itself, your early-bird deadline is Friday, November 4. Save \$15 off the two-day meeting fee or save a little on individual panels and events, if you choose to participate that way.

Great deal on hotel rooms

The Crowne Plaza is a fine hotel, and members who reserve a room by October 27 will receive a special room rate of \$81 per night. It is a flat rate, so the more people who share a room, the more money you will save. Call 406-252-7400 to reserve your room.

Call for award nominations

Bob Tully Spirit Award

Named after one of Northern Plains' founding members, the Bob Tully Spirit Award recognizes an exemplary leader who has displayed courage and a sense of humor in longtime service to Northern Plains. Nominations must be received in the Northern Plains office by October 21. Email nominations to clementine@northernplains.org or call (406) 248-1154.

Mary Donohoe 'Tell It Like It Is' Award

Mary Donohoe was a longtime member who was well-known for her spirited determination and her willingness to speak up for Northern Plains. This award recognizes a member who, in the past year, wasn't afraid to tell it like it is. Nominations must be received in the Northern Plains office by October 21. Email nominations to clementine@northernplains.org or call

(406) 248-1154.

Brochure and election ballot

The slate of candidates put forward by the Nominations Committee will appear on a ballot mailed to each current member. (The ballot will be enclosed in your Annual Meeting brochure.) There is also space for write-ins. The seats you can vote on include officers and at-large delegates. **BALLOTS WILL NOT BE AVAILABLE AT THE ANNUAL MEETING.** The Board has determined that ballots must be received in the Northern Plains office by the close of business on Thursday, November 10.

Auctions' success depends on you

Your donations and your participation make our biggest fundraising event of the year a whole lot of fun!

The Northern Plains auction is notable for its individuality. Whether you contribute an item or service through your business, or a product of your personal talent, it is your contributions that make this such a great auction. Some great items passed through our auction last year – float trips, autographed books, wool blankets, homemade foodstuffs, beautiful art pieces, and more! With your help, this year's auction can be just as special.

Even if you're not able to contribute an item for the auction, you can help Northern Plains by joining in on the bidding. Some members like to do a lot of their Christmas shopping at the Northern Plains auction. Even if you're not registered for the Annual Meeting, you are always welcome to stop by on Saturday evening, November 12, and take part in the bidding.

If you can donate an item, it helps us a great deal if we know the particulars ahead of time.

The whole point of our auction is to strengthen Northern Plains' work in the year ahead. Please lend a hand with the auction if you can! We all appreciate it.

If you can contribute to the auction, please contact Steve at the Northern Plains office, (406) 248-1154, or email steve@northernplains.org.

– Steve Paulson 

Tentative meeting schedule

NOTE: This schedule is tentative. We will have more details on speakers when we mail you a brochure later this month.

Friday, November 11

- 10:30 a.m.** **Workshop:** Farm Heritage Project: *Saving the Stories of Rural People.*
- 12:00 p.m.** **Registration opens**
- 1:00** **Chair Ed Gulick convenes the meeting**
- 1:15** **Business meeting**
This is when we debate and adopt policy resolutions to guide our work. The deadline to submit resolutions to the Resolutions Committee has passed. If a member now wants to submit a resolution, it needs a vote of the membership before being considered. Results of elections for officers and at-large Board delegates will be announced.
- 5:00** **Montana League of Rural Voters 5th Annual Meeting and Happy Hour.** We'll break to allow those who wish to attend MLRV's business meeting and cocktail reception.
- 6:00** **YVCC Cowboy Supper**
At nearby First Congregational United Church of Christ. Yellowstone Valley Citizen Council annually hosts this autumn feast, featuring locally produced foods and stew prepared by members.
- 8:00** **Northern Plains Jeopardy**
On this 40th Annual Meeting, we are giving Theater of the West a year off. Instead, we will hold a game of *Northern Plains Jeopardy*, with answers, questions, and fun. This is a great time to learn more about our organization and have fun doing it!

Saturday, November 12

- 8:00 a.m.** **Registration opens**
- 8:00-8:30** **Morning coffee**
- 8:30-10:00** **Session:** *Montana's Renewable Energy Future: Opportunities, Challenges, and Constraints*
- 10:00** **Break**
- 10:30-11:45** **Workshop:** *Renewable Energy, Transmission Lines, and Private Property*
- 10:30** **Workshop:** *Grassroots Political Action: Citizens Making a Difference*
or
25 x 25: Citizens Leading the Way to Renewable Energy Use in Montana
- 12:00-12:45** **Luncheon**
Member awards will be presented during our luncheon break, and new officers and Board members introduced.
- 12:45-1:45** **Keynote address:** Ted Nace, *Corporate Power vs. Democracy*
- 2:00-2:45** **Session:** *Exporting Our Communities: Coal Export and How It Affects Montana*
- 2:45** **Break**
- 3:30-5:15** **Speaker:** Geoff Keith of Synapse Energy Economics: *The Rich Potential of Renewable Energy*
- 4:00-5:30** **Session:** *Places Worth Fighting For: The Bull Mountains*
- 5:30** **Break**
- 6:00- ?** **Northern Plains Rendezvous begins**
Dinner
Auctions
Our silent auction will be joined by a live auction.
- 9:30** **Annual Meeting adjourns, but not the fun.**



GAINING GROUND

WORC asks you to help clear the air

The Western Organization of Resource Councils is urging members of its seven state groups to weigh in on new federal rules that would reduce air pollution from oil and gas facilities, including hydraulically fractured wells.

Proposed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in July, the rules would ensure use of cost-effective clean air technologies throughout the oil and gas industry and protect public health.

Air quality would improve by decreasing pollution as much as 95% from some oil and gas facilities,

according to EPA. Oil and gas companies would benefit by capturing and selling natural gas that now vents into the air.

In particular, EPA estimates the rules would reduce three kinds of pollution from oil and gas development by 25% or more:

- 25% cut industry-wide of smog-forming Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC's). VOC's are a large group of carbon-based chemicals, some of which have short- and long-term harmful health effects;
- About a 26% cut in methane, a

potent greenhouse gas;

- Nearly 30% cut in air toxics known to, or suspected of, causing cancer and other serious health effects.

The rules would set the first federal air standards for wells undergoing hydraulic fracturing (fracking) and cover other sources of pollution in the oil and gas industry that are unregulated by the federal government today. Oil and gas companies frack, or re-frack, 25,000 oil and gas wells annually, spewing millions of tons of toxic pollution into the air.

– Kevin Dowling, WORC

Send your comments by Oct. 24



The oil and gas industry is vigorously opposing new clean air rules. EPA is taking public comments until October 24.

Your comments today can make a difference. Visit WORC's Action Page, <http://bit.ly/oHxQ9X>, to send in your comments. Or, you can mail comments to:

Environmental Protection Agency
Attention Docket ID Number EPA-
HQ-OAR-2010-0505
1200 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20460

Montana films highlight third festival

About 240 people attended the Wild & Scenic Film Festival in Billings on September 16. This was the third year Northern Plains Resource Council was host for the event.

A committee of Northern Plains members and staff selected 15 films. A draw for the public were three films by Montana filmmakers, including *The Fishman*, produced by a husband and wife team in Livingston. They were featured in an article in the Billings Gazette. Mike Kasic likes to body surf the Yellowstone River, and Kathy Kasic's film captures the beauty of this "underwater wilderness" and importance of the river to Montanans and cutthroat trout. Jeremy Roberts of Missoula produced the other Montana films – *Crossroads*, about declining sage grouse populations, and *Open Spaces*, something we treasure in the West.

New this year was a free showing in the afternoon of *Living Downstream*, a 56-minute film about Dr. Sandra Steingraber's investigation into cancer in her family and the realization that cancer-causing chemicals are pervasive. Dr. Steingraber was the keynote speaker at the Northern Plains 2010 Annual Meeting.

Inspired by the films to take action to make our community greener, filmgoers signed printed postcards to the Billings library director urging him to seek LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Gold certification for a new library design.

– Larry Winslow



A filmgoer signs a postcard urging the city of Billings to build a LEED Gold-certified new library. More than 120 people took part in the action conducted by Northern Plains affiliate Yellowstone Valley Citizens Council at the Wild & Scenic Film Festival on September 16.

YVCC elects officers, goes for the 'gold'

Yellowstone Valley Citizens Council (YVCC) continues to advocate for a high-performance "green" library for Billings. After securing a budgeted, baseline commitment for a LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Silver-certified building, YVCC is working to make the library even better.

Recently, YVCC's team of architect members went through the library architect's sustainability plan point-by-point, searching for low- to no-cost additions to get the library to LEED Gold, making it an even better investment in lowering utility costs and conserving natural resources.

YVCC member Anya Fiechtl was even brought in to guide a session with the library's architects, staff, and members of the city's library design committee. YVCC also secured well over 100 signed postcards thanking the library for its commitment to green building and encouraging it to go even further.

YVCC has been approached by the Boys and Girls Club at Lockwood School regarding help with a garden there, providing an opportunity to continue developing school gardens, a continuing campaign of this affiliate.

At its Annual Meeting on September 18, new officers elected were Co-chairs David Strong and Amaya Garcia, Vice Chair Jodi Makela, Treasurer Sharli Kiner, and Board Representative Paul Miller. Barbara Gulick will continue as Secretary.

– Svein Newman

Citizens monitor water quality thanks to GNA

Several Northern Plains members have taken part in Good Neighbor Agreement water quality events this fall.

Through the agreement, Northern Plains, Stillwater Protective Association (SPA), and Cottonwood Resource Council (CRC) have unprecedented access to water-monitoring opportunities and oversight of new Stillwater Mining Company operations.

SPA members John Beers and Charles Sangmeister took part in an aerial and ground tour of the Benbow area near Dean in search of water sources potentially impacted by new Stillwater Mining Company developments.

In September, Northern Plains members, staff, and technical consultants also participated in biological monitoring to help assess the health of aquatic life in the

Stillwater and East Boulder Rivers. These events were in addition to regular surface and ground water monitoring opportunities conducted by Northern Plains members.

If you would like to learn more about Good Neighbor Agreement water monitoring, call Caleb at 240-1154 or email caleb@northernplains.org.

– Caleb Lande



COUNCIL ROUNDUP

BA celebrates area's unique environment

Nearly 70 area residents joined Beartooth Alliance in Silver Gate for the affiliate's annual Beartooth Environmental Awareness Day (BEAD) on August 6. The event celebrates the unique landscape and environment of the area.

BA members hosted an outdoor barbecue on the lawn of the Ranger Rider Inn, followed by the traditional pie auction fundraiser and a presentation by Dan Hartman on the ecology of owls in the northern forest. Hartman is a Silver Gate naturalist and photographer whose work has been featured in a number of national magazines.

– Clayton Elliott 🌿

CRC members speak truth to fracking

Cottonwood Resource Council members wrapped up their work on the State rule-making process for hydraulic fracturing disclosure with testimony at the August 10 Board of Oil and Gas Conservation (BOGC) hearing.

Chair Cindy Webber stated in her testimony that, "unless the Board has substantially revised the rules, we believe that they fall short of protecting water quality, public health, and landowner rights. The rules do not require full, public disclosure. The industry is still allowed a trade secret exemption."

Members of CRC will be directly affected by proposed deep gas development in Sweet Grass County and hope these rules will provide more information for baseline water testing. Of the approximately 212 comments received during the public comment period, 192 were in favor of stronger rules that protected the public and our water supplies.

In addition to working on gas development, CRC members and friends attended the annual Summer Picnic on July 31 at Holly Hatch and Kirk Skinner's house north of Big Timber. There was good food, a silent auction, and updates on CRC's campaigns.

– Becca Fischer 🌿



Dave Anderson conducts his part of the Red Lodge energy tour in front of a bank of photovoltaic solar panels that provide energy to the Moran Mansion, which he owns kitty-corner from the Red Lodge grocery store parking lot.

Energy tour illuminates Red Lodge

Two dozen people from around Montana went on an energy tour of Red Lodge on September 8 co-coordinated by Carbon County Resource Council and the Helena-based Alternative Energy Resources Organization (AERO).

Urban and rural residents checked out a variety of renewable and energy efficiency improvements.

Transported on a biodiesel-fueled bus, they stopped at a mix of residential, commercial, and public properties including two gorgeous residential properties owned by Dave Anderson, Café Regis, Sam's Tap Room, and the city's wastewater treatment facility. Attendees learned about solar panels, geothermal systems,

modern cooling technology, biodiesel, and much more.

Kathi Montgomery from the Montana Department of Environmental Quality was on hand to provide information about state and federal grants, loans, tax credits, and more to help attendees find ways to make these improvements a reality for themselves.

"From a business perspective, those solar panels are one of the best decisions I ever made," said Martha Young, owner of Café Regis. Tour participants were glad to hear such enthusiastic success stories.

– Svein Newman 🌿

SPA elects officers, ponders small-hydro

Stillwater Protective Association selected officers at its Annual Meeting on August 21 at the Big Yellow House in Absarokee.

New officers include President Charles Sangmeister, Vice President Burt Williams, Treasurer Laurie Beers, and Secretary Gretchen Marlin.

SPA issue updates followed the election. The hydroelectric committee reported on its recent tour of a facility near Red Lodge owned by Roger Kirk, principal of Hydrodynamics Inc. Kirk showed about a dozen SPA members the details of his facility and answered questions regarding his preliminary

permit efforts on East Rosebud Creek and West Rosebud Creek.

While the facility represented a shining example of a well-designed and implemented small hydroelectric plant, many concerns still remain about the impacts of hydro development on the East and West Rosebud. The committee plans to further engage Kirk in the coming months regarding those concerns.

Members also provided updates about the Good Neighbor Agreement and Beartooth Electric efforts. Following the business meeting, the 40-plus attendees enjoyed a gourmet barbecue dinner and an overall great time among friends.

– Caleb Lande 🌿

Trail dust-up stymies Bear Creek members

Dedicated members of Bear Creek Council are keeping the affiliate's stretch of adopted highway near Gardiner free of litter.

Meanwhile, a committee of members are working on a solution to the closure of the Yellowstone River Trail, which directly connects Gardiner to Yellowstone National Park.

A local landowner made the decision to close a stretch of trail crossing private property because of concerns with heavy traffic and illegal activities taking place on the landowner's property.

After repeated attempts to negotiate with the landowner, BCC is exploring further options for keeping the beloved trail open.

– Caleb Lande 🌿

Sleeping Giant girds for coal campaign

With growing attention on plans for exporting coal from the Powder River Basin to markets on the Pacific Rim, Sleeping Giant Citizens Council has launched a new campaign about the impacts of increased coal train traffic in Helena.

The proposed rail route cuts Helena in half, and a potential for an additional 50 plus trains per day would greatly impact the community and its health. Sleeping Giant members have drafted a campaign plan and are beginning outreach to potential allies around the issue in the community this fall.

Sleeping Giant will also hold its Annual Meeting at 6 p.m. November 1 at the Hub Coffee Shop. The public can attend a film on the impact of coal development on our communities. Light local food hors d'oeuvres will be served before the film.

– Clayton Elliott 🌿

30 at Lindsay event

About 30 members of Dawson Resource Council and McCone Agricultural Protective Organization enjoyed a roast beef and barbecue pork dinner September 17 at the Lindsay Hall, as well as a spirited live auction. The annual event raises money for DRC and MAPO, both affiliates of Northern Plains. Thanks to all who attended.

– Rose Moore 🌿



**2011 ANNUAL MEETING
INFORMATION ENCLOSED**

Check the date on the upper right of your address label to see when your membership is due for renewal. Remember, we rely on your support!



THE PLAINS TRUTH

VOICE OF THE NORTHERN PLAINS RESOURCE COUNCIL

Annual Meeting registration

Northern Plains Resource Council – 40th Annual Meeting
November 11-12, 2011 – Billings, Montana

Members get chance to thank legislator allies

In July and August Northern Plains members joined state legislators to thank them for their tireless fight to protect Montana's environment and family farms and ranches during the recent legislative session.

Northern Plains hosted legislative thank you parties in Billings, Missoula, and Helena. The Billings party was held at Home on the Range, Missoula at Ten Spoon Vineyard and Helena members Mary Boyle and Dave Amman opened their home in Helena. The parties were well attended by members and legislators.

Thank you to members who contributed food, time, and money to make these events a success, and thank you again to legislators who stood up for our shared vision of Montana's future during this especially rough legislative session.

– Clayton Elliott 

REGISTRATION FORM

STEP 1: Contact Information

Name _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Prices still lower than in 2006!

	By 11/4	After 11/4	Kids <10
<input type="checkbox"/> General Registration <i>(all panels, meals, and entertainment)</i>	\$70	\$85	free

If you've checked General Registration, SKIP TO STEP 4

STEP 3: Itemized Registration

	No Charge	\$10	\$15	free
<input type="checkbox"/> Friday Afternoon Business Meeting				
<input type="checkbox"/> Friday Cowboy Supper	\$10	\$15		free
<input type="checkbox"/> Saturday Morning Workshops/Sessions	\$10	\$12		free
<input type="checkbox"/> Saturday Luncheon/Keynote Speaker	\$20	\$25		free
<input type="checkbox"/> Saturday Keynote Speaker Only	\$5	\$10		free
<input type="checkbox"/> Saturday Afternoon Sessions	\$10	\$12		free
<input type="checkbox"/> Saturday Evening	\$30	\$40		free

Rendezvous Celebration
(Join us for an evening banquet, auctions and fun)

Itemized Subtotal \$ _____

STEP 4: Membership and Other Add-ons

- Membership payment \$ _____
- Home on the Range donation \$ _____
- Endowment donation \$ _____
- Additional donation \$ _____

ADD-ONS SUBTOTAL (step 4) \$ _____

REGISTRATION SUBTOTAL (step 2 or 3) \$ _____

TOTAL PAYMENT \$ _____

STEP 5: Payment Method

- Credit Card ____ Visa ____ Mastercard ____ Amex

Card # _____ Exp. Date _____

Signature _____

- Check (enclose and mail to address below)

STEP 6: Submit Registration

Detach this form and mail with payment, or fax this form to:

Northern Plains Resource Council
220 South 27th St., Suite A
Billings, Montana 59101
FAX: 406-248-2110

Early Registration Deadline: November 4, 2011

