

# NEWSLETTER

"WEDA's mission is to provide leadership, support and foster economic development in Wyoming."



**WYOMING** ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT  
ASSOCIATION

December 2006

**W E D A**

## President's notes

As we approach the next year, we should assess our past successes, failures and identify the challenges ahead of us. The Wyoming Business Council (WBC), especially the Business Ready Community (BRC) Program, has assisted every county develop new infrastructure. The WBC should no longer be viewed as an experiment or a pilot program. It works. The WBC sunset provision should be removed, and accountability enforced by the Governor and through normal legislative review, just like any other state agency.

The attempt to strengthen the regional offices of the WBC has helped the southwest region, but the other five regions really need to add a deputy director. Regional Directors are stretched too thin, and the whole state would benefit if there were more WBC field staff.

Challenges include workforce development, housing and continuing funds for infrastructure development (such as the BRC). Yet, it is important that we not abandon the productivity and opportunity generated by the BRC in so many communities, as we turn our attention to workers and housing. Finally, we need to get real about funding our communities. Local governments should not be forced to beg for funding on a crisis-by-crisis basis. We need to find real solutions for stable, long-term funding for Wyoming's towns, cities and counties.

*Joe Coyne*  
WEDA President

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## The Great Michigan Labor Migration

"Live and Work in Wyoming" is splashed across a billboard near Flint, Michigan. To the workers of Michigan, facing layoffs at closing automotive plants and a slowing statewide economy, the billboard offers an option. The billboard referred



enced a website for jobseekers, which in turn offered a link to the Wyoming Department of Workforce Services site, [www.wyomingworkforce.org](http://www.wyomingworkforce.org). Hits on the state's website more than doubled between July and October, registering 409,492 hits in July and 876,382 hits in October. As of November 26 the site had received over one million unique hits for the month.

The billboard was a joint effort by the Wyoming Department of Workforce Services and the economic development agencies of Natrona (CAEDA), Campbell (CCEDC) and Sweetwater (SWEDA) counties.

As successful as it is, the billboard is just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to the marketing effort being made to attract the skilled workers Wyoming needs. In addition to the billboard and regional radio ads touting jobs in Wyoming, the local economic development agencies, along with representatives from many of the State's larger employers, have made several recruiting trips to job fairs in Michigan. Since the recruitment effort began in January, over 2,704 job seekers from Michigan have registered on the State's Online Job Matching System – *Wyoming At Work* ([www.wyomingatwork.com](http://www.wyomingatwork.com)).

"The Campbell County Economic Development Corporation has made workforce recruitment the number one goal for our investors – even above and beyond business recruitment – we're doing business retention," explained Ruth Benson, CCEDC director.

Although the high pay of minerals industry jobs initially gen-

erates the most excitement, such jobs aren't for everyone. "A lot of people are drawn by oilfield jobs, but they have no concept of what those entail: working in all kinds of weather, the physical requirements. It's kind of a bubble-burster to talk to them about

these kinds of situations," Christina Pelton, program coordinator for the Casper Area Economic Development Alliance (CAEDA) said.

Luckily, minerals industry jobs are not the only openings available. Over 3,800 people attended job fairs held on October 12 and 14 in Flint and Grand Rapids, Michigan, submitting resumes and applying for jobs as welders, machinists, CDL drivers, heavy equipment operators, and health care workers. "From Campbell County's perspective, we're recruiting critical skill needs," Benson added. "They are diesel mechanics, industrial electricians, industrial welders (not spot welders), machinists, heavy equipment operators, CDL drivers, construction workers, any health care workers, and engineers."

Many of the Michigan workers, especially those who have worked in the auto industry, have similar, highly-technical skill sets that are needed by industries in Wyoming. "One thing that is interesting," Pelton said, "is that Michigan is one of the states that has a license or certificate for everything. Unlike Wyoming, where you learn on the job, in Michigan they go to school or your company sends you to school – so everybody's had formal training and documented skills."

Interest in the job fairs has increased since the first trip in January, notes Pelton. "We had been in Flint six months ago – but what happened during those six months is that Ford had started to announce plant closures. We had a lot more people

*See Michigan on page 2*

## Local Economic Development Fueled by Sales Tax

Using sales tax to fuel economic development efforts used to be a controversial idea. The idea was so radical that it required an amendment to the state constitution to make it an acceptable practice. In 2004 Amendment B to the Wyoming Constitution was spearheaded by Representative Edward Buchanan, supported by WEDA, passed by the voters, and during the 2005 legislative session the amendment was implemented. The only step left to take was for

some county to put the tax on the ballot for voters to either approve or disapprove. This past November, Goshen County became the first to try the new law out.

Goshen County asked its voters whether they wanted to fund economic development with the smallest tax possible: 1/4 of a cent. The voters of this economically challenged area voted a resounding 'Yes.' "We went for it," explained Goshen County Economic Development

Corporation Director Brad Sutherland. "We got 53 percent of the vote. As far as I know, we are the first and only county to do a tax solely for economic development." The tiny tax will generate approximately \$200,000 a year for two years. The funds will be deposited in a special account and be used exclusively for projects like applying for state Business Ready Community Grants.

The BRC program requires communities to ante up a match require-

ment of 5-10% of the grant total. The last time Goshen County landed a BRC grant, it had to get a bank loan for more than \$400,000 in match funds. The payoff, a \$1.5 million grant, was used to build the Heartland BioComposites plant. "It was a wonderful project - but to do that one, we used up most of our cash reserve and went into debt to get it done," Sutherland said. "With the new tax monies, we should have our match

*See Sales Tax on page 2*

*Mark  
Your  
Calendar*

### 2007

February 5:

February 6:

February 7:

May 9-11:

2007 WCCE program & Leadership Dinner, Hitching Post Inn

Business Day at the Legislature, WEDA/WCCE Legislative Reception, and BRAVO!

Awards, Hitching Post Inn

WEDA winter training/conference, Hitching Post Inn

WEDA/MEDA/EDA conference, Cody Holiday Inn

## Workforce Development Training Fund to Debut On-Line Applications for Business Training Grants

Approximately February 1, 2007, the Workforce Development Training Fund (WDTF) will field an **On-Line Application for Business Training Grants**. This will be a positive step forward in customer convenience, ease of use, and response time. The Department of Workforce Services (DWS) will still accept paper applications through June 2008.

### How will it work?

Businesses who wish to use the On-line application must first register with the WDTF as an on-line user. The registration process is simple, and will consist of a request form containing data about the business, and a Wyoming On-Line Finance System (WOLFS) Form 109 electing Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) for payments.

After the business is successfully registered with the WDTF, they will be given login information and notified that they may apply on-line. The application will closely resemble the current hard-copy form. One of many improvements to the application process will provide the applicant with pull-down (Lookup) capability for completing certain areas of the application, as well as the ability to complete the application in several sessions without losing information.

### What is the advantage?

The primary benefit to the applicant is turnaround time of an application. Currently, using a hard copy paper application, it takes 3-5 weeks between the application date and the date a contract is fully signed. Using an on-line application format will cut down this time significantly. The other main advantage is that most information uploaded to the application server is retrievable, and can be used again on subsequent applications- a huge time saver for businesses who apply more than once.

### Can I try it before it's public?

Yes! DWS is currently seeking businesses and individuals to test a pre-release (Beta) version of the application and provide feedback to us on how to improve it before we publicly release it. The Beta version will be available in December 2006 for testing. If you're interested in being a tester, please email Mark Hawkins, WDTF Program Manager at [mhawki@state.wy.us](mailto:mhawki@state.wy.us). Full information and applications for the WDTF Grant Program, as well as our other Economic Development programs, are available at [www.wyomingworkforce.org/wdtf](http://www.wyomingworkforce.org/wdtf).

### Michigan from page 1

coming from Detroit – we attracted an entirely different group of people even though we were in the same area twice.”

In Grand Rapids, the coalition bought into a larger job fair which drew about 3,000 job seekers. The Wyoming group was given an exclusive aisle, which was plainly marked, so that local visitors would know that they were recruiting from out-of-state. During the job fair, CAEDA and CCEDC put on a short seminar about living and working in Wyoming. Companies from the Casper area that participated included Polypipe, J.W. Williams, Black Hills Bentonite, Western Environmental Services, Community Health Center of Central Wyoming, Toromont Energy Services, Hanover Company, Stewart & Stevenson, Schlumberger, Greiner Ford, WOTCO/Westech, and Wyoming Machinery. Gillette companies that attended were Rio Tinto Energy America, Powder River Coal Company, Powder River Energy, and Gillette College. Representatives from the local Department of Workforce Services offices attended as a workforce resource.

Attendees filled out a sign-in sheet with contact information and job skills. That information, plus resumes, is available through the local economic development offices and on the DWS Wyoming at Work website.

“The applications that were filled out have all been returned to the respective employers,” Pelton explained. “Those

employers were happy and surprised to see the large numbers of applications. Overall, the job fairs were very successful in that we had the opportunity to market many jobs to a large number of interested applicants. Also, the businesses that sent representatives felt that it was a good investment of their time and money.”

The job fairs attracted many major media players including CBS evening news, Flint's ABC news, *Flint Journal*, *Denver Post*, *Christian Science Monitor*, Fox News, the *New York Times* and *Detroit Free Press*. Many of the news crews made a follow-up visit to Wyoming to see for themselves what was fueling the need for new employees and why Wyoming is searching outside their borders to fill the positions. (Links to the newscasts and articles are listed on the CCEDC website, [www.gillet-tewyoming.com](http://www.gillet-tewyoming.com). Click under the headings, “In the News” and under “Workforce Development.”)

According to DWS, “The Department of Workforce Services is focused on continuing its workforce recruitment efforts in the coming years. Funding is set aside for the Department to conduct research and development, production, media placements and job fairs. The Department will maintain its commitment to recruit workers statewide, across all industries and in high-demand occupations.” WEDA will continue to lobby for support for workforce development funding and programs that are important to our members.

### Sales Tax from page 1

for two projects easily. It's a relatively small investment by the community, but with the wonderful BRC program you can leverage that and start up two manufacturers that you never had before. That's huge in these small towns.”

New sales taxes require a quarter of a year before being collected, so that retailers have time to gear up for the change. This new tax in Goshen County will begin being collected on April 1. The state will gather it, send the county a check and the county will forward it on to the Goshen County Economic Development Corporation, which will deposit it into a separate account until it's needed for match-

ing funds. “Because it's tax money, we want to have very clear record keeping, so members of the public can see exactly what came in and how we spent it,” Sutherland explained.

When the tax expires in two years, it will automatically come up on the ballot again. But that doesn't mean that it will automatically pass. “We're experiencing growth now,” Sutherland said. “We've got one manufacturer, we hope to get two more, and there's the prison coming in. I think the municipalities will have significant needs for [sales taxes to pay for] infrastructure development. We will not compete with the municipalities. We can't pull ours off the ballot, but we'll explain the situation to people.”

## Making Community Facilities Grants Work for Your Community

### Common questions about the Community Facilities Grant and Loan Program and how communities made the program work for them

The Wyoming State Legislature created the Community Facilities Grant and Loan program in 2005. Since its inception, the State Land and Investment Board has awarded nine grants to communities throughout Wyoming. Like most new programs, many questions arose during the application stage for each of these projects. The purpose of this article is to show answers to a few of the questions previous applicants had about the new Community Facilities Program (CFP).

#### Q: Can a non-profit organization apply for the grant?

**A:** Non-profits and building owners who will benefit from grant funds cannot apply for a CFP grant. Applicants that can apply for funds include municipalities, counties, joint powers boards and other local governmental entities.

#### Q: How can a non-profit participate in a CFP project?

**A:** Participation by a non-profit can come in various ways. For one of the current CFP projects, the applicant formed a non-profit organization to be the fundraising arm and provide operational assistance for the community center. In this case, the local government entity still owns the building and a working agreement between the local government and the non-profit define the expectations of each. Another way for non-profits to be involved in a project is to lease office space in the community center. This can be beneficial to the non-profit when other appropriate space in the area is unavailable. The community center also benefits because the leased space provides a revenue stream, which can then offset operational and maintenance costs.

#### Q: Why do CFP operations and maintenance funding have to be identified for four years?

**A:** The simple answer is long-term viability. When state funds are invested in a community facility, it is important to ensure that the investment will pay returns for years to come. For a com-

munity facility those returns come in the citizens' ability to continue to use the facility. If salaries, heating, insurance and other maintenance or operational issues are not understood, then the likelihood that money is available to pay for those costs is slim. That could put the facility at jeopardy. Rather than take a “wait and see” approach, CFP requires that applicants look to the future and plan to the best of their abilities for what costs may be and chart the specific funding sources that will cover those costs. This is also required by Wyoming State Statute 9-12-802 (a)(vii).

#### Q: How do communities come up with operations and maintenance (O&M) funding in the first place?

**A:** In Wyoming, communities use a variety of methods to come up with funding. Before applying for a grant, a community will need to look carefully at its own resources and abilities to determine an appropriate way to come up with the O&M money. This is not an exhaustive list, but some methods that communities currently use include:

- Commitment through a municipality's general fund
- Leasing office space to community organizations and non-profits
- Setting usage fees for recreation space or rental fees for gathering space
- Establishing an endowment
- Using monies from established fundraisers
- Combination of the above

#### Q: Our municipality doesn't want to own or operate a community center. What other options do we have?

**A:** Two communities that have received CFP funds had a similar question. In the cases of these communities, the municipality joined with another local entity (i.e., county or another municipality) to form a joint powers board. These boards are separate from the entities that create them and must be legally registered by the Wyoming Secretary of State. The joint powers boards are established according to the provision of the “Wyoming Joint Powers Act” Section 16-1-101 through 16-1-

Wyoming Economic Development Association

# WEDA Winter Conference

February 7, 2007, Hitching Post Inn, Cheyenne, WY

**Registration:**To register, please use the online registration form at [www.wyomingeda.org/training.htm](http://www.wyomingeda.org/training.htm) or call WEDA at 307-332-5546.

The 2007 WEDA Winter Conference on February 7 will have a slightly different format. WEDA and WCCE will hold separate trainings. (All WEDA & WCCE members are welcome to attend each other's programs as well.) Note that the WEDA/WCCE Legislative Reception will be held February 6.

**February 5-6 Agenda, at the Hitching Post Inn, Cheyenne:**

February 5: WCCE Chamber Training &amp; Leadership Dinner

February 6: WCCE Business Day at the Legislature (morning/afternoon)

For more information contact:

Candy Wright, The Wyoming Chamber of Commerce Executives  
307-322-3977, [wcce@wyomingwireless.com](mailto:wcce@wyomingwireless.com)February 6: **WEDA/WCCE Legislative Reception (5:30-7:00 p.m.)**

Wyoming Business Report BRAVO! Awards (7:00 p.m.-10:00 p.m.)

**February 7: WEDA Winter Conference, 8:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.****Training: The Nuts & Bolts: How to Do the Workforce Housing Deal**

Trainers: Chuck Depew, Director, National Development Council, and panelists

**Program highlights:**

The National Development Council (NDC) will convene a panel consisting of housing finance and development specialists to explore issues related to workforce housing development. The session will be interactive with participants in responding to issues unique to Wyoming. NDC will also bring its traditional case-study approach to the session with participants walking through some financial analyses.



## Nexaer Works with Laramie EDC and Technology Business Center

Neither snow, nor sleet or dark of night could keep Nexaer group from showing off their new LS-1 aircraft at the October grand opening of the Wyoming Technology Business Center (WBTC.) Paul Klahn, President of Nexaer, reported the LS-1 had its first flight on October 16th in Colorado Springs. The officials at Nexaer selected the grand opening in Laramie as the place for their first public display of the aircraft.

This new entry into the Sports Aircraft market was displayed at the Wyoming Technology Business Center without its wings, due to concerns of high winds and transportation difficulties. Nexaer is looking at relocating from Colorado to Laramie. Dr. Jonathan Benson, CEO of the Technology Center reported that Nexaer will go through the application process of becoming an outside client of the WBTC once they begin their operations in Laramie.

This new airplane is being built within the new guidelines for light sport aircraft rules, which allows it to be produced at a lesser cost. This type of pricing should make it a significant entry into the recreational industry. To be licensed to fly this new aircraft one will only need 20 hours of flight instruction. The plane will cost between \$85,000 and \$120,000, making it significantly less than traditional aircraft.

Within five years Nexaer expects to manufacture two planes a day and employ 150 to 300 people. Nexaer officials hope to be in Laramie before 2007. A pair of young entrepreneurs, both former Air Force officers, heads this company. For information: [www.nexaer.com](http://www.nexaer.com).

## Wyoming Gains 1500 Manufacturing Jobs

Wyoming Industrial employment is up nearly 5% from last year. That means an additional 1500+ manufacturing jobs were actually added during the last year allowing Wyoming to boast one of the largest industrial employment gains in the United States this year. Wyoming is home to nearly 1400 manufacturers and approximately 400 other technology-related companies employing close to 36,000 workers; with 32,300 employed directly to manufacturing. These include traditional and long-term employers who have survived in Wyoming for decades, as well as many new arrivals, supporting primarily the energy industry, or moving to where the quality of life matched their expectations. By comparison the states surrounding Wyoming posted gains of about 1% in the manufacturing sector, with the exception of Utah, which compiled an approximate 4% gain.

If you are familiar with the demographics and the overall growth in the state, it is no surprise that the major contributions to this growth came from

the cities with the most manufacturing to begin with, or the most related energy development. Casper remains the chief concentration for manufacturers, with significant concentrations in Gillette and Cheyenne. Currently these three towns and the three counties they represent account for over one-third of the manufacturers and nearly 40% of the industrial employment. Support for or involvement with the energy industry accounts for 21% of the industrial company numbers in manufacturing in Wyoming. And it is no surprise that Manufacturing-Works, the Wyoming MEP, spends the majority of its time working with employers in these three counties, although we have either full-time professionals or affiliates in several other counties as well.

Manufacturing-Works has been a major player in much of that growth and success by helping employers find more efficient ways of utilizing their existing workforce and finding attractive jobs for those new employees they need to bring on board. They have reached out in new areas beyond engi-

neering and point solutions, to develop strategies and transformation plans for many of these great companies so they will thrive in Wyoming for a long time to come. These new areas include environment, energy and safety assessments and recommendations in addition to acquisition advice and leverage opportunities for these companies.

With the sustainable increase in growth for the last three years and the total manufacturing job growth in the last 5 years, Wyoming is one of the few states in the nation to completely recover from the downturn of 2001. We believe that this is only the beginning of a bright future with a manufacturing edge. For more information about the current status of manufacturing in the state or your community please call Manufacturing-Works - Larry Stewart, 307-760-0636 or toll free nationwide, 800-343-1423. Manufacturing-Works is a partnership of the National Institute of Standards, the Wyoming Business Council, and the University of Wyoming.

## Pre-Obligation Funds Available for Workforce Training

The 2006 Wyoming legislature appropriated \$2,040,000 for direct training funding for new and expanding businesses in Wyoming. This program, called Pre-Obligation of Workforce Development Training Fund (WDTF), allows economic developers the flexibility to request advance allocation of WDTF funding in support of a new or

expanding business. Pre-Obligated funds may only be requested by Economic Development entities, and any funding allocated through Pre-Obligation must be disbursed through an approved Pre-Hire Economic Development Grant and/or a Business Training Grant for New Positions. Please note that applications for Pre-Obligation of

WDTF funding are typically not required for a grant application or project with a total cost of less than \$50,000.

See our website at [www.wyomingworkforce.org/wdtf](http://www.wyomingworkforce.org/wdtf) for full program descriptions, rules, and applications, or contact the WDTF Program Manager, Mark Hawkins, at (307) 777-8616 or [mhawki@state.wy.us](mailto:mhawki@state.wy.us)

**Grants from page 2**

1902. These boards can assume ownership of the facilities and take responsibility for operations and maintenance.

**Q: Can CFP grant funds help with the new construction of a community center?**

**A:** One of the intentions of the CFP is to reuse existing structural resources as effectively as possible. The program allows an applicant to take a building which they own and apply funds toward its renovation or expansion for community use. However, new construction where no surplus building is utilized is not allowable under this program.

Applications for this program will be accepted on June 15, 2007 and December 14, 2007. For program basics such as match requirements and applications for the Community Facility Program, visit [www.wyomingbusiness.org](http://www.wyomingbusiness.org) and click on Community Development. For more information, contact your Wyoming Business Council Regional Director or Shannon Stanfill, Community Facilities Program Manager, at 307.777.2841 or e-mail [shannon.stanfill@wybusiness.org](mailto:shannon.stanfill@wybusiness.org).

# WEDA Member News:

## Back Haul Study in the Big Horn Basin

Isolation presents many challenges to doing business. Without a four lane highway into The Big Horn Basin, creativity in transportation of goods is a must. By studying and recording the backhaul opportunities into, out of and across the Big Horn Basin, the Economic Developers in the Northwest Region of Wyoming believe they'll uncover new possibilities, making businesses more efficient and able to transport more products.

In turn, more products transported could directly create jobs in the trucking industry and in other businesses as they expand and diversify. Backhauls may help discover an economical way to introduce new products to the Big Horn Basin with a chance of creating or attracting new industry. If transportation issues were no longer part of the equation, multiple opportunities could result providing jobs from entry level to management.

Pedersen Planning Consultants of Encampment Wyoming was selected to do a regional transportation study. The Washakie Development Association partnered with the Washakie County Commissioners to apply for a Community Development Planning Only Grant through the Wyoming Business Council to fund the study.

The purpose of this project is to identify backhaul opportunities for the communities of Big Horn, Hot Springs, Park and Washakie counties in the Big Horn Basin. The study will also determine if there is a need or potential for more cooperative backhaul agreements, identify those needs and unique possibilities, determine what limitations potential back haulers might have and determine if a consolidated central pick-up location is necessary.

The study will provide a list of companies that currently transport volumes of goods out of the basin, the location they transport to and if they are returning empty to the area. It will also provide details on companies using backhaul agreements at this time. Finally, the study will identify trucking firms not originating in, but passing through, the area empty that could transport goods back to their home location.

The information will be compiled by June 30, 2007. Trucking companies or businesses interested in exploring back haul opportunities should contact Le Ann Baker, Executive Director, Washakie Development Association, 107 South 7th in Worland, e-mail [wda@rtconnect.net](mailto:wda@rtconnect.net).

## New State Online Job Matching System Launched

CHEYENNE - The Department of Workforce Services launched its new job matching system, Wyoming at Work in mid-November. Wyoming at Work will replace the State's current online system, Wyoming Job Network. Wyoming at Work is an online job matching service that assists job seekers in locating jobs, and aids Wyoming businesses in finding a qualified workforce. One unique characteristic of Wyoming at Work that sets it apart from its competitors is that Wyoming at Work has a team of 120-plus employees behind it that are available to help users meet their needs. Job seekers and

Wyoming employers have a choice to either self-serve, receive live assistance or a combination of both.

"Not only do we have our professional staff behind these vacancies and talent, we also have a brand new Labor Market Information (LMI) resource with strong data - a new feature for our economic development partners," says Jacques Robertson, PhD., Assistant Administrator, Employment Services Division.

The Wyoming at Work system will provide workforce tools such as: career services where job seekers can research specific occupations, choose a new career or analyze their skills to find an occupation that best suits them; education services where job seekers can find a suitable training or educational program, as well as information on training providers and schools; and job services that will assist job seekers in looking for or being placed in a new job and learning how to develop effective resumes and cover letters.

Wyoming at Work services for employers include: recruitment services that allow employers to post job openings, find qualified candidates and access a wide variety of information designed to help a business succeed; training grants so that employers can find out if they qualify for local, state or federal training grants, like the Workforce Development Training Fund; and education services for employers to find a suitable training or educational program, as well as information on training providers and schools.

For more information or to register, visit [www.wyomingatwork.com](http://www.wyomingatwork.com), or call the DWS at (307) 777-8650.

## Campbell County has Innovative Approaches to Workforce Recruitment!

Campbell County Economic Development Corporation (CCEDC) is forging new partnerships and reinforcing existing alliances as they work to bring needed workforce to Northeast Wyoming.

### Rapid Response Team

CCEDC is working with the Gillette office of Department of Workforce Services (DWS) to implement a "Rapid Response" approach to impending company layoffs. A core group has been created to identify plant closures and company layoffs in regional and national areas as soon as they are announced. The skill sets in the targeted companies will be assessed, and the group will meet to form a plan of immediate response. The responses will be designed to meet the needs of impacted employees at each individual company and may include the following marketing strategies to provide information on jobs and quality of life in Campbell County:

- Personal visits to company sites to provide information to employees
  - Job recruitment fairs involving Campbell County employers
  - Advertising in company newsletters
  - Placing classified newspaper ads and radio and cable TV advertising in target markets
  - Copies of DWS job postings available to target employees
- CCEDC will invite Campbell County

employers to assist in implementing these strategies by providing information and/or accompanying the group if the skill sets match what the company is seeking.

### Take Your "Recreation Vocation" in Campbell County, Wyoming!

Another workforce recruitment project that CCEDC is undertaking is the "Recreation Vocation" program targeting the population of year-round and seasonal RVers who enjoy traveling and working in temporary environments. Modeled after national for-profit programs, CCEDC is working with CAM-PLEX Multi-Event Facilities, DWS, Adecco Staffing and Campbell County employers. The program will promote full hook-up RV spaces conditioned on temporary service industry employment to potential target employees. A large marketing campaign by CCEDC will begin in January to promote the project.

## Thermopolis - Hot Springs County EDC Update

### BUSINESS PARK UPDATE

The Thermopolis - Hot Springs County Economic Development Company (EDC) submitted an application for a Business Ready Community Grant for funding on the development of the business park. They had previously purchased a 22-acre parcel of land south of Thermopolis to develop into the community's first business park.

### AIRPORT

Hot Springs County has held several public meetings on the subject of relocating our current, non-FAA approved airport. Hot Springs County is the only county in the State of Wyoming that does not have a FAA-approved airport.

The first study and master plan occurred in 1980-1982, however, it was decided not to pursue a new airport at that time. Since then, there have been many meetings regarding the airport relocation issue, and in 2001 it was decided that there would be an approximate 10-year time frame to obtain a new airport at another location.

Armstrong and Associates, a site selection firm, was retained in 2004 to perform analysis of possible sites. To fund this, 94% of their fee was paid through the FAA, 2% by Hot Springs County and the balance by other state and federal agencies.

In September, Armstrong and Associates stated that the Owl Creek site, located 10 miles NW of Thermopolis was the preferred site. In October, the County Commissioners approved the Owl Creek site as the preferred site and Armstrong and Assoc. are now creating an airport layout plan.

For information, contact Lorraine Quarberg, Executive Director, [www.thermopedc.com](http://www.thermopedc.com).

## Government Procurement Conference in Casper for Small Businesses

More than 50 federal and state agencies and contracting officials have been invited to present information and meet with small businesses as part of the 5th Government Procurement Opportunities for Small Businesses Conference. The

Conference will be held at the Best Western Ramkota Hotel in Casper February 21-22, 2007. The conference is co-sponsored by Senator Mike Enzi and the GRO-Biz program, a partnership among the DLA, University of Wyoming and Wyoming Business Council. Registration, exhibit and past conference information can be found on the GRO-Biz website at [www.gro-biz.com](http://www.gro-biz.com) or call Pat, 307-362-2110 or Shannon, 307-637-5029.

## On the job

### New Director in S. Lincoln County

The South Lincoln County Economic Development organization in Kemmerer/Diamondville has hired a new director. Elaina Zempel comes to Lincoln County from Conrad, Montana, where she served as Director of Pondera County economic development. She has been involved with economic development for nine years, first with the Chamber of Commerce in Conrad, Montana and eventually with the Pondera Port Authority. Zempel is a native of Montana and a graduate of Western Montana College. She is also a Certified Economic Developer and a Cooperative Technical Assistant. She can be contacted at 307-877-9781.

### Thermopolis Welcomes New Staff

Holly Holthaus has joined the Thermopolis - Hot Springs County Economic Development Company as a part-time administrative assistant. Holly and her family recently relocated from Iowa. She has a strong interest in helping Hot Springs County build a solid economic base so that her children don't have to leave the area to find employment when they are grown. Holly has a background in real estate and owns an online retail business, Wyoming Saddlery.

### Campbell County EDC announces two new staff.

Jennifer Points was hired as the Administrative Assistant in early October. Originally from Lincoln, Nebraska, Jennifer moved to Gillette with her children in July 2006. She previously was employed as a Customer Service Representative at a mail order catalog company. Jennifer plans to continue her education in Business Administration.

P.J. Burns, Project Director, started with CCEDC in late September. P.J. is a Wyoming native and a graduate of Campbell County High School. She earned her Bachelors of Science degree in Sociology from the University of Wyoming and is a graduate of the US Chamber of Commerce Institute for Organizational Management. Her non-profit experience began at the Laramie Area Chamber of Commerce where she worked for eight years and served as the Executive Director for five.