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NACo HEALTH COMMITTEE
REPORT

MACo News
Montana Association of Counties
2715 Skyway Drive
Helena, MT 59602
Phone (406) 457-7207
Fax (406) 442-5238
Website: <http://maco.cog.mt.us>

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LAW ENFORCEMENT RISK MANAGEMENT USING HOLISTIC APPROACH

By Michael Brave, President, LAAW International

Law enforcement risk management (LERM) includes assessing and responsibly managing foreseeable risks, providing risk transfer mechanisms, providing training and resources to all agency levels, carefully managing the aftermath of potentially liable events, and managing any liability exposures flowing from an incident. LERM should manage risks associated with the three most identifiable areas of law enforcement losses: third party liability, workers' compensation (injured officers), and employment practices claims. The program should also address the risks and issues associated with officer safety, criminal prosecution, complaint avoidance, officer morale, political cooperation, community perception, media cooperation, and special-interest group teamwork.

In other words, a holistic approach to LERM must incorporate the entire law enforcement agency, with consideration for any outside entity that interacts with the agency. For each foreseeable action, LERM takes a proactive and preventive approach to the incident in several stages: 1) before the incident; 2) during the incident; 3) after the incident; 4) after a litigation has commenced; 5) after an officer has been injured.

Example One

Illegal Search

Risk can be managed during the brief detention of a person for a frisk or entry into a home or vehicle for purpose of a search.

Ask any law enforcement officer the ten (yes, there are 10) legal ways to enter a vehicle to search it, and when each applies and when it does not. Most officers, if not all, will fail to be 80% correct in answering.

Example Two

Physical Use of Force

Officers may be confronted by persons who are resisting arrest, suicidal, in mental distress, creating civil disturbance, barricaded, or in domestic violence situations. Officers must be able to control these situations without causing or incurring injury.

Technological innovations have provided additional techniques in place of physical force. Laser aimed, electro-muscular disruption devices (EMD) are over 90% effective, do not cause severe injury, are not dependent on psychological intimidation, and do not contaminate an area or cause continuing pain.

These two examples need training and must be have guidance from the law enforcement agency policies and procedures. A holistic

Continued on next page

approach will focus not only on avoiding the potential negatives of an incident, but also on the effectiveness of the officers. If officers do not fully understand their authority, then they may be reluctant to take enforcement actions. The agency policy and procedure statements can improve officer effectiveness by including:

1. Mission statement which is fair to all and not restrictive of officer actions
2. Policy which clarifies procedures and actions, with over-riding compliance with federal, state and local laws
3. Training, including self study
4. Checklists and memory aids
5. Accountability—written justification for actions which are not lengthy reports
6. Supervisor Oversight
7. Corrective Action, if needed

Far too many agency resources are wasted by attempting to control the aftermath of incidents rather than by proactively stating the approved methods.

USE OF FORCE TECHNIQUES				
Orange County, CA Sheriff's Office				
<i>Type of Force</i>	<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>
Chemicals	300	263	221	64
Physical Force	78	75	52	29
Firearms	5	13	4	0
Canine	62	60	48	29
Impact Weapons	27	21	13	5
EMD	0	3	228	201
Reduction in Deputy Injuries				
Number of Injuries	—	120	42	24

Text and Chart summarized from
Public Risk, Vol. 16, No. 2; February 2003

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

June 5	MACo Board of Directors; MACo; 10:00 am
June 6	JPA/JPIA Defense Counsels; MACo; 9:00 am
June 9	MACo Economic Development Committee MACo Conference Room; 10:00
June 10-13	Sheriffs/Peace Officers Convention; Bozeman
June 12	Clerks of Court-Court Funding; MACo; 10:00
June	GASB Training--Reports; Legislative Update
June 10	Great Falls; Ponderosa Inn; 9:00 am
June 11	Missoula; Ruby's Inn; 9:00 am
June 12	Butte; Holiday Inn Express; 9:00 am
June 17	Glasgow; Cottonwood Inn; 9:00 am
June 18	Glendive; Medical Center Conf. Room; 9:00 am
June 19	Billings; Sheraton Whitetail Room; 9:00 am
June 17-19	Governor's Forest Health Summit, Missoula
June 25	MACo Oil, Gas & Coal Counties; Lewistown

UPCOMING EVENTS

July 4	Independence Day Holiday
July 10-16	NACo Annual Conference; Milwaukee
July 16-18	County Attorneys Association; Fairmont
August 10-14	Clerks of District Court Association; Forsyth
August 15	Urban Counties meet with Dept. Transportation
September 1	Labor Day Holiday
September 14-19	Clerk and Records Association; Forsyth
September 21-24	MACo Annual Conference; Lewistown
September 22-26	Treasurers Association; Dillon
Sept. 29-Oct. 3	Magistrates Association; Helena
October 13	Columbus Day Holiday
November 6-9	NACo Human Service Conference; Miami
November 11	Veterans Day Holiday
November 18-20	JPA / JPIA Trustee Retreat
November 27	Thanksgiving Day Holiday
December 25	Christmas Day Holiday
January 12-15	MACo Risk Management Conf.; Lewistown
January 14-15	Weed Association; Billings
February 9-13	MACo Midwinter Meeting; Billings

DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE RENTAL RATES

During the recent Legislative session, there was an attempt to freeze the rent rate that Department of Revenue (DOR) pays counties for office space. (HB 219) Representatives John Witt and Carol Lambert were instrumental in the action to table the bill in Committee, resulting in the bill not passing.

The rent rate will be adjusted to the same rate that State agencies pay the Department of Administration (DOA) for office space. The rate per square foot, as determined by DOA, will be:

FY 2004	\$5.99
FY 2005	\$6.23.

This is an increase from the current \$4.88.

Counties that rent space to DOR should be receiving renewal leases soon. The document contains language indicating the document form has been approved by DOR, DOA and MACo.

TRAINING UNIT PRESENTED TO MACoRM



Left to Right
 Dave Anderson, President-elect,
 Montana Automobile Dealers Association
 Ray Barnicoat, Risk Manager, Montana
 Association of Counties Risk Management
 Steve Turkiewicz, Executive Director,
 Montana Automobile Dealers Association

The Montana Automobile Dealers Association (MTADA) President-elect Dave Anderson presented a Resusci Anne training unit to Montana Association of Counties Risk Management (MACoRM) at a recent ceremony in the MACo Offices.

During the next year, MACoRM hopes to train at least 100 county employees across Montana in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). The training takes from 3 to 5 hours of intensive practice and lectures.

Resusci Anne gives signals telling when the trainee is applying the right pressure in the right spot or breathing correctly into the victim's mouth. The students get the "feel" of giving life-saving emergency treatment.

MTADA includes over 125 franchised new car and truck dealers in Montana and coordinated with the National Automobile Dealers Charitable Foundation to make this presentation.

TUMBLEWEED TECHNOLOGY

State inmates tunnel into county jail to do a little networking

County officials are a resourceful bunch. In rural Texas, they think their Internet connections ought to be every bit as fast as what they've got in those big city areas. They have to pay the same bills, file the same reports and follow the same laws. The trouble is, there's not a lot of money in those rural counties for speedy servers and broadband access. But lack of funds has a way of stirring innovation.

In one county, estimated costs to install a server and network the courthouse and adjacent county buildings with wireless Internet connections were at \$15,000. They didn't have the funds, so they considered their options. They figured they could buy their own server at a lesser price, but the labor cost for all the cable and wiring was another problem. Where would the county find the money to install the infrastructure?

It occurred to them that the State Department of Justice has men who specialize in tunneling through concrete and working their way through air-conditioning ducts and elevator shafts. State inmates from the prison were recruited to work on infrastructure. With a little technical direction, the inmates pulled cable all over the courthouse, using aforementioned ducts and elevator shafts, as well as other features of the building. On occasion it was necessary to bore through the courthouse's 12" concrete floors.

Inmates also dug a narrow trench across the alley to the jail to link the sheriff's office to the courthouse-based network. It was perhaps the first time convicts dug their way into a jail, but it gave the county a high-speed computer network.

Synopsis of an article by Graham Baker
 COUNTY Volume 14, No. 3
 Texas Association of Counties

IMPLEMENTATION GRANTS FOR 9-1-1

The Public Safety Foundation of America (PSFA) distributes funds to assist public safety communication agencies. Grants for wireless 9-1-1 projects are released in a four-round series. Two Montana agencies received grants in the initial round of funding.

The application process involves a pre-application questionnaire to verify that the applicant's project is within PSFA funding priorities. The Pre-application Questionnaire and the grant guidelines are available online at

www.PSFA.US

If the pre-application is accepted, the agency is assigned a grant number and a full month will be allowed to complete the application.

PSFA is encouraging electronic submissions of grant pre-applications. In addition, the pre-application can be requested by email (PSFA@APCO911.org) or by phone 386-322-2500 or by FAX 386-944-2730.

Round Two

Pre-application due	June 6
Application due	July 3

Round Three

Pre-application due	Sept. 5
Application due	October 3

Round Four

Pre-application due	Dec. 5
Application due	Jan. 2

2002 MACo PERFORMANCE EVALUATION COUNTY COMMISSIONER RESPONSES (43% return)

1. In the past year, how often have you had contact with the Association staff members?
- | | | | |
|------------|-------|--------------------|------|
| VERY OFTEN | OFTEN | OCCASIONALLY / FEW | NONE |
| 6 | 28 | 38 | 0 |

2. How responsive / helpful were your contacts with any member of the MACo staff?
- | | | | |
|--------------|----------|------------------|-------------|
| VERY HELPFUL | ADEQUATE | SOMEWHAT HELPFUL | NOT HELPFUL |
| 54 | 15 | 3 | 0 |

COMMENTS

ALL the staff is very helpful.
Always very pleasant and friendly
Jack H. & Harold B. have been very helpful.
The staff does an excellent job of assisting us
when we need answers to questions.
Always returned calls promptly, very helpful attitude
Jack Holstrom and Greg Jackson are very helpful
& prompt on service.
The staff is always very accommodating.
We usually talk to Jack Holstrom or Ray Barnicoat.
Great to work with
Office staff pleasant on phone & helpful

COMMENTS

MACo has always been very helpful.
We contact Jack Holstrom often for advice
- also our Co. Attorney checks with him.
Very good at finding answers and returning call
if they don't know
I always get help from MACo staff. They are willing,
informative, cheerful and very knowledgeable.
It's always a pleasure to work with MACo staff.
Usually talk to Jack H., and to Gordon & Harold during
legislative session
It's nice to know that the MACo staff is there
when we need them.

3. MACo currently provides an array of "administrative services" such as answering questions on budget, personnel, procedures, and other general governmental issues to assist member counties in dealing with the day-to-day operations of county government.

VERY VALUABLE	SOMEWHAT VALUABLE	NOT VALUABLE	NO OPINION
54	10	6	2

COMMENTS

This is very, very valuable. The info. is the best
although not what we always WANT to hear.
Especially valuable to small counties as many of
these services are cost prohibitive.
Our county is fortunate that we don't need much
of this support.
...helped with employee union formation and
commissioner's role
We appreciate your efforts on the education block
grant SNAFU and the bill to correct this.

COMMENTS

Looked forward to "Budgeting 101" at Midwinter meeting
Depends on the question
Thanks, you have been very helpful.
We need to inquire more.
I admit that some of our elected officials and department
heads have the MACo number on "quick dial"--
especially Jack Holstrom and Safety Ray!
It's nice to know that the MACo staff is there when
we need them.
Seldom use these services

4. MACo currently provides legislative services for counties, such as lobbying, legislative updates, legislative impact analysis and interim committee monitoring and reporting for MACo and local government program purposes.

VERY VALUABLE	SOMEWHAT VALUABLE	NOT VALUABLE	NO OPINION
47	22	3	0

COMMENTS

...our local legislators set up a weekly phone
conference call
Updates are very valuable.
Much better than when I became a commissioner
4 years ago
I just wish the amending of legislation could involve
more commissioners' views.
...appreciate updates and alerts - we immediately
contact our senator and representative
We appreciate what MACo does at legislative time
and keeping counties informed.
Was there to testify on mental health issues and
saw other MACo members there

COMMENTS

Fast growing counties also need help.
I question the value of lobbying efforts for the good
of all counties.
It is good to have our voice heard and opinions considered.
Couldn't keep up without updates
You need to ask our help early on to identify legislators
who can be of help.
At times I feel MACo personnel have expressed
opinions without adequately polling its members.
The counties would be unable to be successful without
MACo's presence.
At times, appears Ex. Dir. & MACo wishes aren't same on
legislation.

MACo EVALUATION Continued

5. MACo endeavors to provide continuing county liaison with the Executive Branch and various State agencies.
- | | | | |
|---------------|-------------------|--------------|------------|
| VERY VALUABLE | SOMEWHAT VALUABLE | NOT VALUABLE | NO OPINION |
| 32 | 33 | 5 | 2 |

COMMENTS

Commissioners need to take advantage of this. I have not been involved with any. Look at all the bills to pass down to the counties! Gordon has access to most department heads.

COMMENTS

...not sure how this applies
Sometimes too close to the state agency directors
It's nice to know that the MACo staff is there when we need them.

6. The MACo newsletter (MACo News), which is published monthly, is
- | | | | |
|---------------|-------------------|--------------|------------|
| VERY VALUABLE | SOMEWHAT VALUABLE | NOT VALUABLE | NO OPINION |
| 39 | 29 | 4 | 0 |

COMMENTS

Especially what other counties are up to - maybe have MACo info. in NACo newsletter
More information needed on what different committees are doing and what individual commissioners are doing for the organization.
Excellent publication
I read it and enjoy; pictures nice.

COMMENTS

Mainly keeps us informed on other county activities.
Good to see what fellow boards of county commissioners are doing
Very useable format
Material is of utmost importance.
Nice to see what other counties are doing
Keeps us informed as to what is going on
Good information - valuable at times

7. The MACo website (<http://maco.cog.mt.us>) is
- | | | | |
|--------|-----------------|------------|------------|
| USEFUL | SOMEWHAT USEFUL | NOT USEFUL | NO OPINION |
| 25 | 24 | 5 | 18 |

COMMENTS

Especially during leg. session
I haven't used it personally. I will check it out!
Tried other day - wasn't able to find what I needed - training at Midwinter might be helpful!
I look at it often.
I'm not into websites but the county offices are.
Good option for information services

COMMENTS

I often refer to this site for info.
Thanks for keeping it updated.
Not used by me
Only tried a couple times
Have not used the website a great deal
Don't use it enough. My fault

8. **WORKERS' COMPENSATION SELF INSURANCE**
- | | | | |
|---------------|-------------------|--------------|------------|
| VERY VALUABLE | SOMEWHAT VALUABLE | NOT VALUABLE | NO OPINION |
| 47 | 10 | 1 | 14 |
- PROPERTY AND CASUALTY INSURANCE COVERAGE
- | | | | |
|---------------|-------------------|--------------|------------|
| VERY VALUABLE | SOMEWHAT VALUABLE | NOT VALUABLE | NO OPINION |
| 52 | 6 | 1 | 13 |
- RISK MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS AND TRAINING
- | | | | |
|---------------|-------------------|--------------|------------|
| VERY VALUABLE | SOMEWHAT VALUABLE | NOT VALUABLE | NO OPINION |
| 43 | 17 | 1 | 11 |
- NATIONWIDE EMPLOYEE RETIREMENT BENEFIT PROGRAM
- | | | | |
|---------------|-------------------|--------------|------------|
| VERY VALUABLE | SOMEWHAT VALUABLE | NOT VALUABLE | NO OPINION |
| 6 | 30 | 5 | 31 |
- PERSONNEL SERVICES TO COUNTIES
- | | | | |
|---------------|-------------------|--------------|------------|
| VERY VALUABLE | SOMEWHAT VALUABLE | NOT VALUABLE | NO OPINION |
| 39 | 17 | 2 | 14 |

COMMENTS

My Nationwide funds are not as valuable now. Miss the personal contact from Nationwide; need somebody in-state!
The recent loss control conference presented more useful information than in past.

COMMENTS

We appreciate the personal visits to our office.
We don't use these services.
Poor representation on the part of Nationwide
Good people w/ good help
Good source for departments to retrieve information

MACo EVALUATION Continued

9.	<u>DISTRICT MEETINGS</u>	VERY VALUABLE 42	SOMEWHAT VALUABLE 23	NOT VALUABLE 1	NO OPINION 6
	<u>ANNUAL CONFERENCE</u>	VERY VALUABLE 45	SOMEWHAT VALUABLE 22	NOT VALUABLE 1	NO OPINION 4
	<u>NEWLY ELECTED OFFICIALS ORIENTATION</u>	VERY VALUABLE 57	SOMEWHAT VALUABLE 8	NOT VALUABLE 1	NO OPINION 6
	<u>MIDWINTER MEETING</u>	VERY VALUABLE 36	SOMEWHAT VALUABLE 27	NOT VALUABLE 2	NO OPINION 7
	<u>DES GOVERNOR'S CONFERENCE</u> (currently held at Midwinter)	VERY VALUABLE 18	SOMEWHAT VALUABLE 35	NOT VALUABLE 8	NO OPINION 11
	<u>LOSS CONTROL / RISK MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE</u>	VERY VALUABLE 27	SOMEWHAT VALUABLE 31	NOT VALUABLE 1	NO OPINION 13

COMMENTS

Separation of loss control a plus
 The Loss Control Conference brought to light many points, especially regarding juveniles & their incarceration.
 I don't like Loss Control separated from Midwinter --would rather make one trip than 2!
 The annual conference I attended this September was very organized, friendly & informative. The first evening's entertainment wasn't my kind of entertainment.
 Newly elected officials training is a very helpful service provided.
 Many good programs
 Annual conference needs workshops that are valuable for counties. Sometimes picked for convenience sake

COMMENTS

DES and Loss Control have been too repetitious. Midwinter workshops haven't been of interest to me. New Commissioner / new official orientation was pretty good.
 A+ on Newly Elected Officials Orientation
 Other commissioners attend DES and Risk Management meetings.
 For the Newly Elected Officials Orientation, everything is so new and overwhelming!
 Too many meetings for part-time commissioners
 You try to keep us educated and out of trouble. Thanks.
 Annual conference too long; workshops not relevant
 Midwinter meeting better than annual; good timing with Legislature
 Our DES enjoys the DES conference

GENERAL COMMENTS

MACo is only as good as the members and staff. Great job one and all.
 Overall, I feel our MACo services are valuable, supportive of counties, large & small. I have noted improved service and communication in last two years.
 Do not believe the interests of the counties is heard
 I believe the job the MACo office does for the counties has improved greatly over the past 4 years.
 Sometimes I get the feeling that MACo is working for the State on some issues. Otherwise I feel MACo is good for the counties.
 MACo has made me feel very welcome. I came away from the annual conference and the new elected officials meetings feeling very enthused and glad to be part of such a classy group.
 So far, I can't complain too much.
 MACo needs a media person and better communications with county commissioners.
 Annual & Midwinter conferences should showcase new concepts in local government.
 MACo has a very competent & dedicated leader & staff.

GENERAL COMMENTS

We feel that urban counties and rural counties have equal opportunity for representation, help and services.
 Good job. Keep it up.
 MACo does a very good job—a well-run organization!
 Keep up the good work!
 Would it be possible to split some of the meetings so don't have to be out of County a full week?
 Improve committee effectiveness;
 improve small counties' concerns
 Training sessions were excellent;
 nice to have organization to turn to.
 Good job!! (written on three different evaluations)
 Possible to have NACo attend to demonstrate WEB pages that work across country on credit card purchases?
 A training seminar on "mills" --a comprehensive session explaining all aspects of mills
 Take into consideration that a number of spouses are now men and may not enjoy making crafts.
 MACo Director needs to communicate with more county commissioners other than just a few. He is not as active with counties.

COUNTY NEWS

NEW OFFICIALS

DAWSON COUNTY announced appointment of two new county officials: Judy Galle, who had been serving as deputy clerk, is the new Clerk of District Court. Craig Anderson, who has been in criminal justice for over 27 years, is the new Sheriff. Both will serve until they must run for the offices in 2004.

ONLINE INFORMATION

LAKE COUNTY's new online system allows a taxpayer to log on, pull up the amount of tax on any parcel the person owns and make the tax payment online with a credit card. An \$8 convenience is proposed. The County generates daily reports on tax payments, balanced with the total amount of credit card payments (less convenience fees).

Lake County will be demonstrating "Web Pay" and "Web Tax" for county officials June 19th at 10:00 a.m. at the Lake County Courthouse. Anyone interested in attending should call Pat Cook, Lake County Treasurer at 883-7221.

YELLOWSTONE COUNTY will continue to provide real estate documents online but will require a \$50 / year access fee. The record of fees will allow the county to track who is accessing the records.

BROADWATER COUNTY offers a new online avenue for copies of birth certificates and death certificates. Requests can be made with the county rather than only with the State. Proof of identity and \$5 for each copy is required. The State hopes the program will be expanded to all counties.

FORM OF GOVERNMENT

RAVALLI COUNTY residents are gathering signatures on a petition for a general election vote to increase the county commission from three to five members.

WATER

ANACONDA-DEER LODGE, BEAVERHEAD, BUTTE-SILVER BOW, AND MADISON COUNTIES are forming the Big Hole Watershed Committee for long-range planning. Each county will have two representatives from their planning boards.

BIG HORN COUNTY is proposing a 300' set back for construction along the Big Horn River. An interim ban to prevent construction before the policy is implemented is being challenged in court.

MADISON COUNTY has the most stringent setback of 500'. **CHOUTEAU COUNTY** has had a 400' setback since 1985.

JAILS

RAVALLI COUNTY plans to refinance county bonds for its detention center at a rate of less than 2%.

BROADWATER COUNTY received six bids for construction of its new jail. The current jail was constructed in early 1900 from the recycled brig of a scrapped US naval vessel. The project is to be financed mainly with PILT.

TETON COUNTY, after rebidding its law enforcement building because original bids came in above the planned amount, accepted the lower of two bids on a scaled down version of the original plan.

GALLATIN COUNTY is to hire a consultant to help solve chronic jail problems, after last summer's contentious levy proposal failed.

MADISON COUNTY passed a resolution for people convicted of crimes to reduce the sentences by working for the Sheriff's office. The resolution was loosely based on a similar policy in **PARK COUNTY**.

TEN NORTH-CENTRAL COUNTIES are concerned with drastic cuts to the regional juvenile detention center.

COURT EXPENSES

DAWSON COUNTY, for the third year in a row, has an emergency levy to cover costs of a major trial.

GALLATIN COUNTY created a joint public defender office to serve the county and two municipalities.

ROADS

POWELL COUNTY Commission received a petition signed by 300 people expressing concern for condition of county roads and listing road maintenance suggestions.

SHERIDAN AND LINCOLN COUNTIES are responding to complaints of junk vehicles accumulating in areas of the counties.

PARKS; RECREATION

FLATHEAD COUNTY residents have asked the County to donate four acres of county property to build an aquatic / health center.

STILLWATER COUNTY has been asked to void the recent mail election forming the Beartooth Park and Recreation District, citing errors in the ballot language and lack of clarity for use of the levy funds.

RURAL DISTRICTS

MISSOULA COUNTY finally negotiated an agreement for a public sewer for four subdistricts. The low bid came in about 20% less and agreement was forged in time to accept the bid.

RAVALLI COUNTY created a major special improvement district for road paving, planned since 1999.

HUMAN SERVICES

LINCOLN COUNTY will end the county indigent services program because of lack of funds.

YELLOWSTONE COUNTY indicates that most of the indigent health care funds will be used for prescriptions the coming year.

LATEST IN BIOFUELS AT CONFERENCE JUNE 11-13

Learn more about ethanol, biodiesel and biolubricants at Under the Big Sky Greening Conference at Big Sky, Montana, June 11-13. Nationally recognized biofuel developers will explain the production, performance and marketing.

"Not only will folks learn more about ethanol and biodiesel, but they'll actually be able to see, sit in and, in some cases, ride in all types of alternative fuel-powered vehicles," said Shirley Ball, Executive Director of Ethanol Producers and Consumers (EPAC).

State and national experts on biodiesel will share their perspectives on growth in markets and production of biodiesel. They'll also share information on the incentives and barriers to making and marketing biodiesel and biolubricants.

The conference also has extensive sessions on recycling, composting and pollution prevention. The third biannual gathering of Headwaters Cooperative Recycling Project (HCRP) is part of the Conference..

The conference starts at 6:00 pm on June 10th with a reception, and the event wraps up on June 13th, with biodiesel bus tours to Yellowstone Park.

Registration for the conference is \$175, which includes meals. Contacts are Shirley Ball at EPAC at 406-785-3722 or Kathy Jackson with HCRP at 406-225-3194, or the conference website <http://peakstoprairies.org/greening>.

WGA HOSTS FOREST HEALTH SUMMIT

The Western Governors' Association (WGA) will host a Forest Health Summit June 17-19 in Missoula to accelerate locally driven projects that will prevent catastrophic wildfires by reducing fuel loads and restoring land.

Idaho Governor Dirk Kempthorne helped spearhead development of a ten-year strategy and implementation plan agreed to by western governors and the Bush Administration. As a result, WGA was presented an award by Secretaries of Interior and Agriculture for the exemplary leadership in coordinating and successfully engaging a diverse group to develop the plan.

The Summit is a key component in engaging local action. Discussions at the Summit will focus on the latest scientific efforts to assist forest health projects, implementation of the plan, budgetary and legislative issues and the status of the 2003 fire season.

Agenda and registration form are available at www.westgov.org/wga/meetings/forest_health_summit.htm

The Western Governors' Association is an independent, nonprofit organization representing the governors of 18 states and three Pacific islands. The Western governors address policy and governance issues in natural resources, environment, human services, economic development, international relations and public

WETLANDS MANAGEMENT and STEWARDSHIP

This first in a series of free seminars by Natural Resource Information System will be June 20 at 3:00 pm at the State Library, 515 East Sixth, Helena. Registration is not required; however, attendees are encouraged to contact Anastasia Burton at (406) 444-5357 or aburton@state.mt.us

ANNUAL CONFERENCE MAKE MOTEL ROOM RESERVATIONS NOW

MACo Annual Conference will be September 21-24 in Lewistown. Motels are willing to set aside only a limited number of rooms for MACo guests. However, if we make reservations early and the motels realize we need more rooms, they will open more to accommodate MACo. Be sure to ask for rooms set aside for MACo.

Yogo Inn (conference center)
NO MORE ROOMS AVAILABLE

Mountain View

538-3457 (Ilene)
Single \$32.25 Double \$42.65

Super 8

538-2581 (Annette)
State summer rate \$55 + tax

B & B Motel

538-5496
Single \$45 Double \$50

Sunset Motel

538-8741 (Candy)
Single \$34.32 Double \$43.68

Trails End Motel

538-5468 (Julie)
Single \$38 Double \$43

Symmes/Wicks House Bed/Brkfst
538-9068 Single \$45 to \$75

NACo
AGRICULTURE AND RURAL AFFAIRS
Steering Committee
Synopsis of Report
by Kathy Bessette, Hill County

Agriculture Subcommittee

Paul Jones, PE, Marketing Manager of Cabe Associates and Hans Medlarz, Director of Public Works, Kent County, Delaware, spoke about the process of implementing the Total Maximum Daily Limit program. The purpose of TMDL is to establish the maximum quantity of specific pollutants that a water body can assimilate without violating the water quality standards and, thereby, improve water quality.

Resolutions

County Judge Mike McArthur, Sherman County, Oregon, introduced a resolution urging Congress and the President to immediately develop a national rural policy recognizing the uniqueness and value of rural America.

Supervisor Keith Langenhahn, Marathon County, Wisconsin, brought forth a resolution urging the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Department of Justice to convene a special investigation into the unfair trade practices and the economic affect on the agricultural industry. In 1980, farmers received 31 cents out of every dollar that was spent on food. Today that figure has been reduced to 19 cents. The remaining 81 cents goes to off-farm costs, such as processing, wholesaling, distributing and retailing.

Rural Development Subcommittee

Matt Chase, Deputy Executive Director of the National Association of Development Organizations, gave an analysis of the Bush Administration's FY 2004 budget plan. According to the budget, "EDA will seek to direct more funding to the nation's most distressed communities..." Interesting to note, however, is that water and sewer grants are cut in half. The cuts from the grant programs will be replaced by loans, thus making it exceedingly difficult for rural areas to replace aging infrastructure.

Resolutions

Supervisor Langenhahn proposed a resolution supporting the New Homestead Economic Opportunity Act. Like the historic original Homestead Act of 1862, the new legislation

would entice individuals to live and work in high out-migration counties for five years by providing incentives. While the original legislation provided tracts of land, the new bill provides tax incentives, student loan forgiveness and access to private capital.

Agriculture and Rural Affairs
Steering Committee

Rob Larew, Legislative Director from the office of Minnesota Congressman Collin Peterson, talked about the Farm Bill and the heavy emphasis on conservation programs. He urged everyone to participate in the NACo Rural Action Caucus which has a reputation of being a very powerful rural / agriculture group.

Smith Covey, USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service and RC&D liaison, noted that the FY2003 omnibus appropriation bill contains \$397.4 billion in funding, an increase of \$76,847,000 over FY 2002. The EQIP program was cut \$5 million.

Dick Wotton, Director of Extension and Outreach, stated that some areas have created Local Extension Boards / Advisory Committees. He feels these are important to maintain a good relationship in local communities. He stressed the need for a strong link to the Land Grant University resources and that the new e-Extension will complement traditional delivery of information.

Fred Burrell, a NACo Extension Fellow, spoke briefly about educating the public. He feels there needs to be more education in the schools, not only to students, but also to staff.

Resolutions

The three resolutions from the subcommittee meetings passed.

Additional Information

I attended a workshop on implementing the Farm Bill. Gilbert Gonzales, Under Secretary of Rural Development, mentioned some funds could possibly be used to develop value-added ag. products or renewable energy systems or energy efficient systems.

I find it very disconcerting that minimal time was spent talking about the problems all producers are facing. I feel this Committee needs to place additional emphasis on production and keeping the family farm/ranch a way of life.

NACo INFORMATION

FINANCE & INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS Steering Committee Synopsis of Report by Allan Underdal, Toole County

This was my first time attending a NACo Conference. I attended a joint subcommittee meeting of the Finance and Intergovernmental Affairs Steering Committee. Although I was not on either subcommittee, I listened to the discussion on topics that would be discussed the next day at the full Committee meeting.

In the full Committee, Resolutions were approved to urge Congress to immediately provide significant economic assistance to states and local governments; to authorize states to require retailers in other states to collect and remit sales and use taxes on remote sales; and to provide \$3.5 billion in assistance to first responders to help cover the costs to states and local governments for homeland security. This was in response to the increasing magnitude of state and local government budget shortfalls across the nation. Estimates indicate that states are currently facing budget shortfalls of an additional \$30 billion above projected levels in 2003 and that 2004 will have budget shortfalls at approximately \$80 billion.

A resolution was passed that supports full funding of election reform in the Help America Vote Act of 2002. This Act requires states and counties to meet a number of standards by 2004 and 2006 including the replacement and upgrade of voting equipment. States and counties will not be able to implement the reforms unless there is adequate federal funding.

One seminar, "How to influence Congress without leaving home", was very informative. I had the privilege of hearing Mrs. Laura Bush, Secretary Tom Ridge, and Congresswoman Katherine Harris. The Montana group also discussed issues with Senators Baucus and Burns and with Representative Rehberg's staff.

It was, all in all, a very informative and worthwhile trip. It reinforced to me the importance of NACo to county government at the national level, just as MACo is here at the state level.

HEALTH Steering Committee Synopsis of Report by Bill Kennedy, Yellowstone County

The opportunity to chair NACo's Health Steering Committee is an honor and also a lot of work. The subcommittees centered attention on funding for rural hospitals as well as Medicare/Medicaid reimbursements, mental health, prescription drugs and the growing aging population. We passed several resolutions to the NACo board:

1. SCHIP: SCHIP provides health care to more than 3.3 million children nationwide. Unfortunately, it is projected that 900,000 children will lose their health coverage between fiscal years 2003 and 2006 if a "dip" in SCHIP funding is not corrected.
2. Medicaid and Uncompensated Care: Medicaid ensures that counties receive reimbursement to provide health care to the indigent.
3. Prescription Drug Issues for Counties:
4. Aging Issues: Aging is one of the top priorities because of its impact on county budgets.
5. Federal Assistance for Emergency Room and Trauma Care
6. Medicaid: A reduction in the FMAP (Federal Medicaid Match) will result in a loss of about \$565 million. An FMAP amendment was adopted as part of the Senate Generic Drug bill.

I had the privilege to listen to the Senate Finance Committee Hearing with Secretary Tommy Thompson on Medicaid reform. The senators, especially Senator Baucus, asked many questions how front loading (adding more dollars in the first years) and decreasing funding over the last few years of the program will actually help rural hospitals. Chairman/Senator Grassley from Iowa stated that he and Senator Baucus wanted a prescription drug program to this Committee by late spring or summer.

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