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## Northern Rockies eco act to be heard

By Harold Blattie, MACo Executive Director

U.S. HR 980, the Northern Rockies Ecosystem Protection Act, introduced by U.S. Rep. Carolyn Maloney (D-NY), will be heard in the Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests and Public Lands of the House Natural Resources Committee on May 5, according to NACo Associate Legislative Director Ryan Yates.

You are encouraged to review the information below and to submit written testimony to the subcommittee about how the passage of this bill would impact your county. Information about where to submit your comments is at the end of this article.

The proposed legislation would sweep more than 20 million acres into wilderness designation, including designated roadless areas, as well as significantly expand areas designated as wild and scenic river corridors, wildlife recovery areas and biological connecting corridors. The bill has 71 co-sponsors, only two of whom are from states that would be affected. States having affected lands are Montana, Wyoming, Idaho, Oregon and Washington.

The 30 Montana counties with lands included for wilderness designation are

Beaverhead, Broadwater, Carbon, Cascade, Chouteau, Deer Lodge, Fergus, Flathead, Gallatin, Glacier, Golden Valley, Granite, Jefferson, Judith Basin, Lake, Lincoln, Madison, Meagher, Mineral, Missoula, Park, Pondera, Powell, Ravalli, Sanders, Silver Bow, Stillwater, Sweet Grass, Teton and Wheatland.

The text of the bill can be reviewed at: [http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=111\\_cong\\_bills&docid=f:h980ih.txt.pdf](http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=111_cong_bills&docid=f:h980ih.txt.pdf).

The text really does not tell the story with the impact that a visualization on maps does. The Alliance for the Wild Rockies has maps of the areas posted on its Web site at: <http://www.wildrockiesalliance.org/issues/nrepa/mapIndex.shtml>. These are not "official" maps but are believed to be accurate.

When reviewing the maps, note the green highlighted areas are proposed new wilderness areas, however, the greater impact may well be the areas designated with shaded dots as biological corridors.

*Please see "Rockies eco act..." on page 4*

## MACo spring district meetings to start in June

(Maureen Davey, 322-1010)

• June 11: Districts 10 & 11, Quinn's Hot Springs, 190 Quinn's Canyon Road, Paradise (Carol Brooker, 827-6942)

District chairs are responsible for agenda setting and distribution to the district membership. Additionally, the district chair is responsible for the minutes and for lunch arrangements. If the lunch is nohost, please let the members know the cost so they can plan accordingly.

If any agencies, organizations, or individuals would like to make a presentation at any or all of the district meetings, please contact the district chairs noted above to make your request.

Winter is releasing Montana from its grip, which means it's time for MACo's district meetings. The 2009 schedule is:

• June 3: Districts 4 & 5, Chester Fire Hall, corner of 6th St. W. and W. Monroe, Chester (Arnie Gettel, 466-2151)

• June 5: Districts 8, 9, & 12, Beaverhead Co. Search & Rescue Bldg., 1116 Mont. Hwy. 41, Dillon (Tom Rice, 683-3750)

• June 9: Districts 1, 2, & 3, Miles City Town & Country Club, corner of S. 4th and Eagle, Miles City (Mark Rehbein, 433-1706)

• June 10: Districts 6 & 7, Carnegie Public Library, 314 McLeod, Big Timber



# MACo News

## Spring brings end of snow, beginning of health plan renewals

By Owen Voigt, MACo Health Care Trust Administrator

Ah, spring. Snow is melting, corrals are drying out. There are all those cute calves and lambs running and playing in the pasture. Spring is truly the time of new life, a new chance for life and a reawakening of nature; flowers blooming, geese, ducks and other migratory birds returning. There is the simple joy of watching deer feed back up in the coulees and canyons rather than on the shoulder of the highway.

My wife Becky and I made a quick trip to the Motherland (North Dakota) to visit family and deal with some family business. Many areas of Montana and North Dakota had an unusually harsh winter, with record or near record snowfall with prolonged periods of really cold weather. I know of quite a few people are looking for Al Gore to pay their heating fuel bills, what with global warming and all. Broadus and Ekalaka had an amazing amount of snow, as did my old stomping grounds of Mandan, N.D.

Seeing the damage done by rivers and creeks that had flooded well over their banks was chilling. As the flood waters have mostly receded, it was sad to see the damage. On my mom's place, they lost acres of an irrigated hay bottom that caved into the river. There are piles of trees, brush and dead animals all over. Many homes and buildings were flooded by an unusual amount of snow and a record melt. Her house sits way up a coulee and she had about three feet of water just from run-off.

Still, it is spring and even with the sadness of the loss and damage there is the chance for rebirth. Thankfully, the snow is nearly gone, as is the 20 degrees-below-zero weather. It is also time for most counties and special districts to renew their health plans. Different entities use varying methods to determine renewal rates.

Calculating those rates for next year's premiums/contributions have a combination of the average age of a group, the losses or claims of that group and the losses of

the entity providing the coverage. The average age of participants in the Health Care Trust is between 49 and 50 years of age. Loss ratios or dollars paid for claims versus dollars collected for groups varies from 20 percent to more than 200 percent.

Knowing how your renewals are calculated and how your group compares with the entity providing your benefits is crucial to knowing and understanding your renewal rates. Have their representative meet with all of the interested county employees, retirees and COBRA people. Carriers regularly schedule renewal meetings and go over these things. If you are just getting a letter telling you what your rates are, we suggest you call your rep and go over them. Medical inflation is generally about nine percent this year and prescription drug inflation if running about 12 percent. These numbers vary a bit from carrier to carrier but should be pretty close.

Just know if your claims are bad and your group has gotten older, your increase can be higher and vice versa. Another important issue is if your carrier is making any plan changes. The HCT board of trustees recently voted to begin covering bariatric surgery and expanding the morbid obesity coverage effective July 1. While there is an upfront charge for the cost of surgery, the medical information indicates the long-term costs to the plan and benefits to the individual outweigh the charges.

If you have any questions about your renewal, whether you are with the HCT or not, give Marketing/Member Services Representative Pam Walling or me a call and we can help you. I hope you take time out to smell the crocus flowers this spring.

### New standards to hit health boards

By Jean Curtiss, Missoula County Commissioner

By now, you've probably heard the term "public health national voluntary accreditation." It was briefly discussed during the on-site county health board meetings with state health department staff in 2008 as well as MACo's Midwinter Conference in February.

In 2007, the Public Health Accreditation Board was established to develop and oversee a national program for the voluntary accreditation of state, local, territorial and tribal health departments. The goal is to improve and protect public health by advancing the quality and performance of health departments. As commissioners, you oversee county health department budgets and often sit on your respective health boards. You should become familiar with these proposed standards and measurements; visit <http://www.phaboard.org/standards/default.asp> or [www.phaboard.org](http://www.phaboard.org). The Montana Public Health Training Institute is hosting a free course in June about accreditation; learn more at [www.mphti.mt.gov](http://www.mphti.mt.gov).

#### Health Care Trust Calendar of Events

May 1-June 15 July open enrollment period  
May 15 Signed renewal rates due



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# MACo News

## Rockies eco act to be heard

*Continued from front page*

Meagher County would see about 25 percent of it being designated as wilderness or biological corridors. The Beaverhead National Forest map shows more than 50 percent of Butte-Silver Bow County being designated as wilderness areas or biological corridors, including thousands of acres of privately held land.

Also worth noting is within the proposed wilderness areas are hundreds of miles of county and forest roads. An map showing both gas tax roads and the proposed wilderness areas is not available, but gas tax maps can be downloaded at [www.mdt.mt.gov/travinfo/scripts/countymaps.pl](http://www.mdt.mt.gov/travinfo/scripts/countymaps.pl). The maps include all roads open to public travel and are the basis for county gas tax allocations.

Both MACo and NACo have long opposed massive wilderness designations such as what is being proposed; however, we recognize there are areas suitable for wilderness designation only with significant local input and public involvement. A cornerstone of any wilderness designation is local involvement with broad stakeholder participation and agreement. Any wilderness designation also needs to consider release from wilderness study area designation any areas not designated because they are being managed as de facto wilderness areas, making them virtually inaccessible for multiple-use. Consideration also should be given to affording the same level of protection for multiple use as is for wilderness.

When learning of this hearing, I set up a conference call with MACo President Mike McGinley, Western Interstate Region 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Mike Murray, Ryan Yates and myself. We discussed the bill in detail and in particular areas in and near Beaverhead and Lewis and Clark counties because both have been working for several years on locally-determined wilderness area designations. We had hoped we might be able to have a commissioner from Montana appear before the committee, however, despite Ryan's best efforts, we weren't able get that done.

Written testimony can be submitted to the subcommittee chair and ranking member via fax at (202) 226-2301 or e-mail ([jason.knox@mail.house.gov](mailto:jason.knox@mail.house.gov) or [domenick.carroll@mail.house.gov](mailto:domenick.carroll@mail.house.gov)).

## Avoid injury, follow these steps

**By Emelia McEwen, JPIA/JPA Senior Loss Control Specialist**

The weather is getting warmer and maintenance employees are preparing their buildings and grounds for spring. While yard work, cleaning and painting may seem like routine tasks, statistics show thousands of orthopedic injuries occur each year as a result of these activities.

"Many spring-cleaning injuries occur when people rush or do not follow the proper safety precautions," said Danton Dungy, spokesperson for the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons.

To prevent injuries, I recommend counties conduct the following to help ensure the workplace safety of your employees:

### **Teach proper lifting techniques**

Back injuries are a common result of spring-cleaning tasks. To avoid these injuries, make sure the county hosts a training session to review the proper ergonomic principles for performing a safe lift.

Employees should separate their feet, shoulder-width apart, keep their backs straight, and bend at the knees while tightening the stomach muscles. Remind them to lift with their leg muscles, and don't try to lift any object if it is too heavy or an awkward shape. Urge them to consider a team lifts approach for bulky items

### **Review ladder safety**

Ladders used for chores such as washing windows, painting, cleaning gutters, and trimming trees should be placed on a firm level surface. Remind employees never to place a ladder on ground or flooring that is uneven, soft or wet.

### **Stress importance of ergonomics for lawn tasks**

Employees should avoid prolonged repetitive motions during activities such as digging, planting, trimming and pruning.

### **Encourage frequent breaks**

Remind employees to take frequent breaks and replenish fluids to prevent dehydration.

For more information, contact McEwen at 444-4375 or [emcewen@mtcounties.org](mailto:emcewen@mtcounties.org).



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# NACo News



## NACo committee report: Telecommunications & Technology

By Sandy Broesder, Pondera County Commissioner and NACo Telecommunications & Technology Committee member

Before I begin this report from the 2009 NACo Legislative Conference, I'd like to thank the Montana Department of Administration, Information Technology Services Division (ITSD), for it's sponsorship. ITSD's commitment allowed me to participate in the conference. Thank you, Director Dick Clark and ITSD.

A great deal of attention was fixed on the funding provided for broadband access in the stimulus package. There is \$7.2 billion available for local broadband stimulus; \$4.7 billion of that is coming through the U.S. Department of Commerce and its National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) and Technologies Opportunities Program (TOP).

The remaining \$2.5 billion will come through the USDA and its Rural Utility Service (RUS). The situation was very fluid with developments taking place while we listened. There is a lot of information at [www.recovery.gov](http://www.recovery.gov). The general consensus was the money will be granted in three rounds with 30 percent of the funding available each round and a 20-percent local match. At this time, there had been no ruling if in-kind matches would be eligible but the advice for counties was to partner up with some organization or company at the state level and have them champion cooperative efforts.


I attended the pre-conference Technology Summit, "Leveraging Technology to Address Economic Challenges." The presenters were representatives from the Office of Management and Budget and the GSA's Office of Citizen Services and Communications. They discussed the stringent standards of accountability funding recipients will be held to, along with what was referred to as "Government 2.0," which deals with using technology to engage the public and enabling an interactive relationship with constituents.

Another speaker was Alan Jones, the chief executive for Somerset County, England, who created a public/private organization that provides shared technology platforms for front line public services with a single back of operation involving three separate agencies. It was an inspirational story of a 10-year journey that started with

the "can't do that, never done that, shouldn't (won't) do that" model and culminating in an ever-expanding shared services program that is emulated worldwide.

At the committee meeting, there was only one resolution, which was presented by Todd Devlin and myself.

Finally, I have been asked by NACo 1st Vice President Teresa Altemus to serve on her 2010-2011 Presidential Initiative Planning Committee as the representative for small, rural counties. Her vision is to incorporate technology discussions across all the NACo committees to help translate how technology can help the citizens we all represent. It should be interesting; I'll keep you posted.



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# Gallagher

## Public Entity & Scholastic Division

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## ***Cell Phones and Distracted Driving***

Research shows that driver inattention is the leading factor in most crashes and near-crashes. According to a 2006 NHTSA and Virginia Tech Transportation Institute study, nearly 80 percent of crashes and 65 percent of near-crashes involve some form of driver inattention within three seconds before the crash. Cell phone use is one of the most common driver distractions.

The Governors Highway Safety Association (GHSA) discourages the use of cell phones while driving. In a recent media alert, GHSA Chairman Chris Murphy has stated “all drivers, but particularly teens, need to focus solely on driving — and that means the cell phone needs to be off.”

Concern over the increasing use of cell phones while driving has prompted many state legislatures to restrict the practice, including:

- Banning handheld cell phone use by all drivers
- Restricting cell phone use only for a specific demographic, such as teens or school bus drivers
- Implementing text messaging bans

An increasing number of states are listing cell phone use as a data element on crash forms. There are numerous studies on cell phone use that indicate any type of cell phone use can distract the driver. One such study is from Carnegie Mellon University: according to researcher Marcel Just, drivers need not dial, hold or even talk into a cell phone to be distracted. Simply listening intently is enough to impair driving.

What is less clear is the impact of cell phone bans. To date, there has been little research on the various handheld bans that have been enacted in numerous jurisdictions.

These types of laws are difficult to enforce and may give drivers a false sense of safety. For these reasons, GHSA continues to oppose handheld cell phone bans.

*CONTENT DISCLAIMER: The information provided above is provided from a general insurance/risk management perspective and is NOT legal advice. Arthur J. Gallagher & Co. (AJG) does not provide legal advice as it is not qualified to do so. AJG recommends that you seek the advice of legal counsel in order to become fully apprised of the legal implications related to the information provided above as such implications are highly dependent on the unique facts and circumstances applicable to an individual situation.*

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## NACo committee report: Agriculture & Rural Affairs

By Kathy Besette, Hill County Commissioner and NACo Agriculture & Rural Affairs Committee member

The first speaker for the 2009 NACo Legislative Conference was Chelsea Henderson Maxwell of the Clark Group, LLC, who is a member of the Agricultural Carbon Market Working Group (ACMWG). The group consists of national farm leaders and other agricultural stakeholders. ACMWG works cooperatively with entities such as businesses, nongovernmental organizations, and universities. Members of the group have been called to testify before Congress and serve as a resource for policy development. Maxwell said U.S. farms can mitigate at least 20 percent of the nation's total climate impact with practices such as soil carbon sequestration or methane capture.

For carbon markets to succeed for agriculture, the right policies must be developed. If Congress adopted a policy that caps greenhouse gas emissions and allows agricultural offsets to be traded, farmers could generate revenue by selling "credits" to sectors that need to buy reductions in order to meet the requirements. Carbon markets offer potential for the agriculture/forestry sector, especially under a cap-and-trade system. Carbon offsets provide an economic buffer by reducing the overall cost of compliance for the capped sector. It will be difficult in the short term for capped entities to incrementally reduce their emissions and offsets provide the bridge to lower carbon emissions.

Maxwell encouraged all those involved in agriculture to become active in the process because she feels Congress will set policy principles within the next two to three years. It's very important agriculture is well represented when forming a policy that will have a huge impact on the business.

The committee later met and heard Craig J. Regel-

brugge, vice president for government relations and research for the American Nursery & Landscape Association, speak about the labor problems agricultural producers are experiencing. According to the USDA's research, the total U.S. agricultural labor force has declined over the past century and an estimated half of hired farm workers lack the legal status to work in the U.S. Considering a total of 1.6 million farm workers in the U.S., 99 percent of them aren't authorized and lack the proper immigration status. The nation's only legally sanctioned guest worker program, the H-2A visa program, does not have the capacity to handle the demand for hired farm workers. In 2006, about 64,000 employed during the year participated in the visa program.

Carol Angel, counsel for the Senate Committee on the Judiciary, who works for U.S. Sen. Dianne Feinstein, discussed the migrant worker problems in California. She noted there are 12 million undocumented workers now in the U.S. There is a two-part solution to those hiring migrant workers, she said; employers must deal with and hire the people who are here, legal is better than illegal, plus, the government must cut out the abundance of paperwork that overwhelms employees and employers alike.

Matt Chase, executive director of the National Association of Development Organizations, spoke about the

*Please see "NACo committee..." on page 8*

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## NACo committee report: Agriculture & Rural Affairs

*Continued from page 7*

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. There will be a number of general provisions and requirements governing spending and oversight of funds included in the measure. Some of those requirements are:

- 50 percent of funding for infrastructure will go to projects that can be initiated within 120 days of the bill's enactment
- Funds may not be used for casino or gambling establishments, aquarium, zoo, golf courses or swimming pools
- The Davis-Bacon Act must be followed and all laborers shall not be paid less than the local prevailing wage
- American-made steel, iron and manufactured goods must be used, except if the use of American goods would increase the project by more than 25 percent

Chase said there is no staff to assist funding recipients yet, but it is imperative to get your papers in order and be ready for "mass confusion" in D.C. President Obama is adamant recipients are held accountable and everything is completely transparent. Chase advised everyone not to get caught in the race for the stimulus money, but be prepared for the responsibilities required. Be aware some stimulus money requires a local match. Chase mentioned the need to fix Medicare but also noted

that the U.S. spends more money on interest of our debt than is spent on Medicare.

Valerie Brown, NACo 1<sup>st</sup> vice president, told the committee there is \$2.5 billion contained in the bill, available in the form of grants, loans and loan guarantees with 75 percent required to go to rural areas that lack sufficient broadband speed for economic development. Also, the bill provides \$4.7 billion for competitive grants to accelerate broadband deployment in un/underserved areas.

The committee discussed the following resolutions:

- Banning the importation of livestock from countries with confirmed case of BSE and/or foot and mouth disease (passed)
- Opposing a livestock tax and support for Federal incentives to encourage agriculture to reduce greenhouse gases (passed)
- Support for a sensible and orderly guestworker program for farmworkers (passed)
- Support for the Rural Revitalization Act of 2009 (passed)
- After much discussion and revision, a resolution that urged NACo to create a report card on existing and new Free Trade agreements which have severely affected U.S. manufacturing industries, agriculture and workers (passed)



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# NACo/Federal News



## Webinars to help counties cope

The final two episodes NACo's Leading in Tough Times Webinars, which will focus on county budget strategies during the recession and responding to social service needs, will air May 7 and June 11. The first two episodes, focusing on conservation block grants and stimulus funding, also are available for viewing.

For more information or to register, contact Carrie Clingan at 202/942-4246 or [cclingan@naco.org](mailto:cclingan@naco.org), or visit [www.naco.org/toughtimes](http://www.naco.org/toughtimes).

## Rehberg calls for road project submissions

Montana Congressman Denny Rehberg announced last month his office soliciting applications for federal funding to be included in a transportation funding bill. The applications are due by May 6.

"Our national highways are the arteries of our economy — without this vital investment in our infrastructure, Montanans lose more than a few hours on the road. We lose jobs," Rehberg said.

The Surface Transportation Reauthorization Bill funds various improvements for highway, railroad, bicycle and pedestrian transportation. Rehberg said interested parties may complete the application on his Web site at [www.house.gov/rehberg/HPP.doc](http://www.house.gov/rehberg/HPP.doc).

## National County Gov't Week nears

National County Government Week (NCGW), held the first full week in May, is an annual celebration of county government. First held in 1991, NCGW raises public awareness and understanding about the roles and responsibilities of the nation's counties.

There are activities at the national, state and local levels during the week. More than 1,000 counties annually participate by holding a variety of programs and events. These include tours of county facilities, presentations in schools, meetings with business and community leaders, recognition programs for volunteers, briefings on environmental projects and adoption of proclamations.

For more information, visit [www.naco.org](http://www.naco.org).



## Meth prevention Webinar to air

NACo is offering a free methamphetamine prevention Webinar in May entitled "Addressing Methamphetamine in our Nation's Counties" on May 14 at noon.

The program will explore the unique ways in which methamphetamine affects counties, including social and economic costs. Attendees will receive information regarding national and local meth prevention programs.

To register for the Webinar, visit [naco.org](http://naco.org); for more information, contact Kati Guerra at [kguerra@naco.org](mailto:kguerra@naco.org) or (202) 942-4279.

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# Around Our Counties

## Law Enforcement

**FLATHEAD COUNTY** commissioners in April awarded a \$3.3-million contract for the county's new consolidated 911 center to a Kalispell contractor. That means the project, which will merge the county's four emergency dispatch centers into a single facility in northwest Kalispell, is \$1.2 million under its original estimated budget. The 11,800-square-foot facility will handle 911 needs, act as the county's emergency operations headquarters, and bring all emergency personnel and equipment under one roof.

**YELLOWSTONE COUNTY's** newest crime-fighting tool is hard to miss: it's a 13-foot-tall, 38,000-pound B.E.A.R., or Ballistic Engineered Armored Response. The vehicle, which will allow sheriff's deputies to better respond to situations such as a barricaded shooter, was bought from Lenco Armored Vehicles with a federal grant for \$385,000 and arrived in April. Other B.E.A.R.'s are already in Montana, including Missoula.

## Personnel

**DAWSON COUNTY** commissioners appointed

Shirley Kreiman as the new clerk and recorder in late March. Kreiman, who has been serving as the interim clerk and recorder since January, was previously hired to the county's payroll administrator position in late 1998. She is the county's third clerk and recorder in three years.

**POWELL COUNTY** has a new weed coordinator, Karen Laitala, who replaced former coordinator Jason Smith in March. Laitala, who relocated from Idaho, holds a master's degree in plant science from the University of Idaho-Moscow. The post was previously a contract position, but became a county post when Laitala was hired.

**MEAGHER COUNTY** commissioners in April appointed two people to county offices: Dayna Ogle is the new clerk and recorder, while Sue Phalen is the new treasurer. In addition, some new staffers also were hired.

## Land Use

**GALLATIN COUNTY's** planning board has temporarily ceased efforts to zone rural areas of the county. The late March decision was based on the

declining economy, which has effectively slowed urban sprawl to a crawl. Commissioners and the planning board have been working on a zoning plan for the last five years.

**MISSOULA COUNTY** commissioners approved a 34-acre subdivision in April that's geared to modular houses. The 68-lot Gallatin Estates, near the I-90-U.S. 93 split, continues a trend of recently approved subdivisions being built west of Missoula. The project was first approved by commissioners in 2004, but later changes led to a revision that needed re-approval.

**RAVALLI COUNTY** is getting a \$167,400 grant to improve energy efficiency in its buildings, courtesy of the U.S. Department of Energy. It's the third-largest amount given to a Montana county, behind Flathead and Gallatin counties. Commissioners are considering spending the funds on overhauling the county's museum.

**JEFFERSON COUNTY's** Elkhorn Cemetery may now legally be used to bury the deceased, thanks to a late March bill signed into law by President Barack Obama. A provision in the public lands bill returned

ownership of the property to the county; it was previously claimed by the U.S. Forest Service due to a lack of consistency in historical survey documents. Laws prohibit burials on federal land, so the county has been trying to regain ownership of the cemetery since the 1990s.

**A N A C O N D A - D E E R LODGE COUNTY** is being sued by a resident whose request for a private, 220-foot-long, cable-stayed bridge across the Big Hole River. The reason: in late February, commissioners denied K.L. Spear's petition for a variance to build the bridge. The board found Spears and his engineers had failed to consider several issues, including public need criteria.

**CASCADE COUNTY** and Great Falls commissioners agreed in April to a land swap so the city can build a street in the West Bank urban renewal area. The construction of 3rd Avenue Northwest will allow access to a new federal courthouse nearing completion. The city could owe the county more than \$200,000 for the property if 4th Street North is kept open; Great Falls officials would not guarantee to close it.

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## Personnel Services

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# Announcements & Reminders

## MACo scholarship winners named

Carter Marsh, a senior at Beaverhead High School, won the \$1,000 President's Scholarship for 2009. Bryce Carver, a fellow Beaverhead High senior, won the \$500 scholarship. MACo President Mike McGinley, a Beaverhead County commissioner, made the announcement last month. Both men will go to Montana tertiary schools.

## Tips for county budget process

Here are a few things county officials should keep in mind when setting new budgets for the new fiscal year.

The 2009 CPI is 3.8 percent (visit our Web site for a detailed spreadsheet). Employer contributions for FY 09: PERS is 7.17 percent (7.07 percent for local government and 0.1 percent for the state); SRS is 10.115 percent (a 0.29-percent increase). Lastly, the postage rate for First Class will increase to 44 cents effective May 11.

To advertise in *MACo News*, please contact  
Communications Officer Mike Harbour at  
mharbour@mtcounties.org or (406) 444-4380

## Mark Your Calendars

### May

May 11-19 JPIA/JPA 2009-2010 Agent Renewal Meetings, various  
May 19-22 NACo WIR Meeting, Pendleton, Ore.  
May 25 Memorial Day (state/co. offices and MACo closed)

### June

June 3 Districts 4 & 5 Spring Meeting, Chester  
June 5 Districts 8, 9, & 12 Spring Meeting, Dillon  
June 8-11 MT Assoc. of Clerks of Dist. Court Convention, Baker  
June 9 Districts 1, 2, & 3 Spring Meeting, Miles City  
June 10 Districts 6 & 7 Spring Meeting, Big Timber  
June 11 Districts 10 & 11 Spring Meeting, Paradise  
June 18 JPIA/JPA Budget Meeting\*  
June 29-July 1 MACo Joint Trustee Meeting\*

### Upcoming Events

Sept. 20-24 MACo's 100th Annual Conference\*  
Oct. 18-20 AGRIP Governance & Leadership Conf., Seattle, Wash.  
Nov. 17-19 MACo Joint Insurance Pools Trustee Retreat\*

\*All meetings are held in Helena unless noted.

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