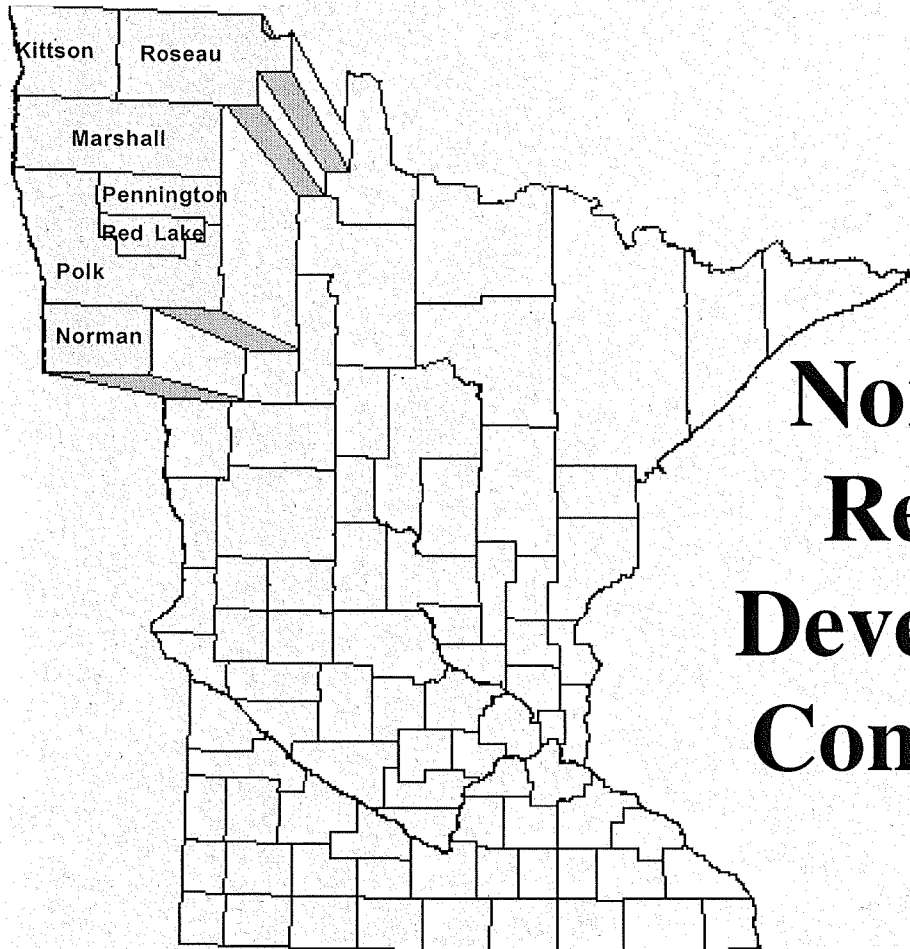


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Northwest Regional Development Commission

Annual Report Calendar Year 2008

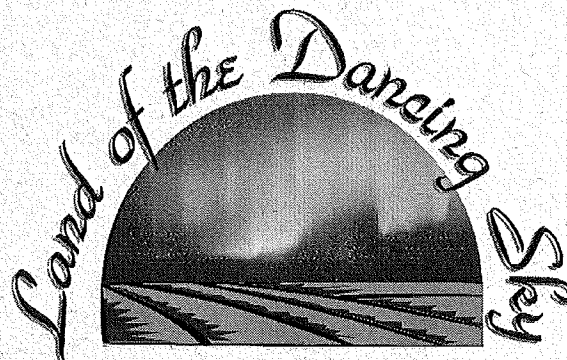


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Working for Local Units of Government in Kittson, Marshall, Norman,
Pennington, Polk, Red Lake and Roseau Counties

NWRDC • 115 South Main, Suite 1 •

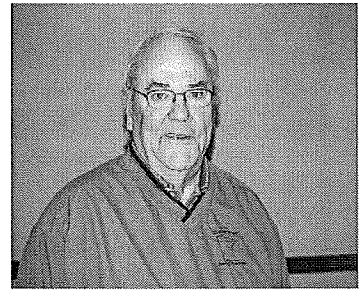
Warren, MN 56762 • 218-745-6733

Agency Web Site Address: www.nwrdc.org

Land of the Dancing Sky Web Site: www.VisitNWMinnesota.com

Letter from the Chairman

Dr. Joe Bouvette



Our Personnel Committee recently completed the resume and interview process to hire a new staff person for the Aging Program. This provided an opportunity to talk about the role of Commission officers and members, and to also look at how staff work with Commission members, Advisory Committees, Elected Officials, and funding sources. One of the candidates asked about the role of the Chairman and how the direction gets set in each program. It is clear to me that the Chairman is responsible for running a good meeting, keeping on task, and making sure we get the business done on time. Staff have to run the day-to-day activities, understand all the rules, provide the services, and sort through the complications of all the various governmental programs. We depend on the Advisory Committees to make good decisions on program priorities, and to provide staff guidance on local preferences and ways of doing business. They have all done an excellent job.

This all involves quite a number of people, and I feel the Commission has been successful in building

relationships and systems which serve the needs out in our counties, communities, and townships. I also hear from the state and federal agencies who provide funding for the Commission; that we have been responsive to their concerns and those of our legislators.

Our staff also provided some comments about working with Commission and Committee members that I would like to pass along. Many of the staff comments focused on an appreciation for the support our members and elected officials provide, and how difficult the business of a Regional Development Commission would be without that support. We talked about some specific situations where staff received help understanding the strong feelings communities have about local issues, and how important it is to understand the history and perspectives involved. It was very clear, staff see the importance of a strong Commission and Committee structure.

I would like to thank all those involved in the accomplishment described in our 2008 Annual Report and invite you to look at how we can work together in 2009.

Elden Johnson, Hallock, MN Resident

Honored in Washington, D.C. for Extraordinary Volunteer Work

MetLife Foundation "Older Volunteers Enrich America Awards" were presented on May 9, 2008 at the Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center in Washington, D.C. Met Life, in partnership with the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging, honored older volunteers who have made exemplary contributions and provided outstanding service to their communities.

Land of the Dancing Sky Area Agency on Aging was proud to have our volunteer, Elden Johnson, Hallock, MN selected as a recipient of the Award. Elden began volunteering as a Senior Surf presenter and continues in this capacity, holding sessions at area libraries and senior centers, teaching seniors the basics of computer and internet use. His knowledge of computers and his patient, gentle style of teaching make him well-qualified for this position, and he gets rave reviews from his students and library personnel.

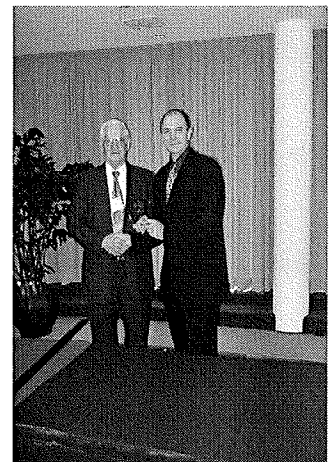
Elden is also a state-certified Health Insurance Counselor. One of his biggest areas of contribution has been with the Medicare Part D prescription drug program. His computer expertise made him a natural to complete on-line comparisons of drug plans, review the comparisons with beneficiaries, and enroll them into their

selected plan. He was a "one stop shop".

Elden has also been instrumental in organizing medication management sessions at the Hallock Senior Center. These sessions allow individuals to have a one to one counseling session with a licensed, specially trained pharmacist to review their medications and insure their current drug therapy is both safe and effective.

This award was presented to Elden for his volunteer work at Land of the Dancing Sky Area Agency on Aging. In addition, he serves and volunteers in many other ways in his community.

Congratulations on this national award, Elden, and thank you for your service and impact on others and your community.





What The NWRDC is All About . . .

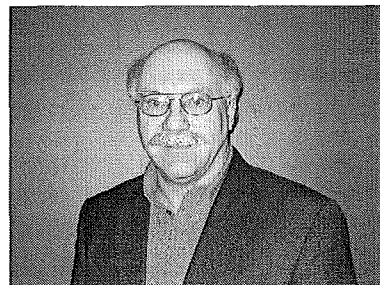
Regional Development Commissions were created by the State Legislature through the Regional Development Act of 1969. The intent of the Act was to create an option for rural units of government to supplement existing public services and coordinate specific activities of mutual concern. Although created by the State, Regional Development Commissions were left in the hands of local representatives to insure that the final design would reflect area needs and preferences.

The Northwest Regional Development Commission was created on February 2, 1973 by the joint actions of local units of government. Programs were set up to reflect priority work items of the time; and relationships were established with the state and federal agencies that could provide assistance with local projects. Programs and work priorities have changed in response to

economic and social trends; but the central mission of supporting efforts by cities, counties, townships, businesses and individuals to improve living, working and natural resource conditions in Northwest Minnesota has remained the same.

The Commission has worked to establish a manner of operation which reflects and compliments the independent, progressive style of Northwest Minnesota. Technical assistance, specialized program delivery, public participation, direct funding, access to information and formalized planning services are the basic materials which we can contribute to the construction of your project.

Please look over our Annual Report and stop by or call if you have any questions, comments or suggestions.



Above: Leon Heath, Executive Director/Economic Development

*Right: Carol Sorensen,
Financial Officer*



*Left: Brenda Solberg,
Front Office Manager/
Financial Assistant/
Loan Fund Contract Manager*



*Right: Betty Safranski,
Front Office*



Staff Listing

NWRDC Staff

Darla Bergquist, Aging Program Development Specialist
 Carol Bye, Senior LinkAge Specialist
 Cameron Fanfulik, Loan Fund Manager/Economic Dev.
 Leon Heath, Executive Director/Economic Dev.
 Jennifer Olson, Emergency Operations/Comm. Dev.
 Lois Pagnac, Senior LinkAge/Outreach Specialist
 Rose Reed, Senior LinkAge Specialist
 Danica Robson, Aging Program Director
 Betty Safranski, Front Office
 Troy Schroeder, Transportation Planner
 Brenda Solberg, Front Office/Financial/Loan Fund
 Carol Sorensen, Financial Officer
 Mara Wittman, Arts Council Director

Northwest Regional Development Commission



Above: NWRDC Board of Directors (front row; left to right) Velma Oakland, Elvera Cullen and Gary Kiesow. (back row; left to right) Joe Bouvette, Warren Strandell, Kimberley Johnson and Warren Olson.

COMMISSION MEMBERSHIP

Kittson County

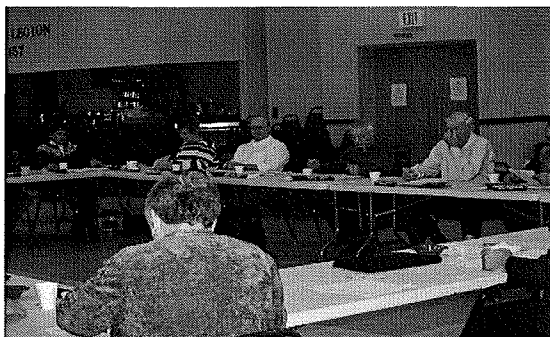
**Dr. Joe Bouvette	Hallock	County
*Kimberley Johnson	Kennedy	Townships
Pete Kautzman III	Karlstad	Municipalities
Gregory Peterson	Lancaster	Municipalities
Betty Younggren	Hallock	SWCD

Marshall County

*Gary Kiesow	Goodridge	County
Bob Kliner	Warren	Municipalities
Loran Lusignan	Grygla	Townships
Gail Yutrzenka	Argyle	School Board

Norman County

Glen Brookshire	Halstad	Municipalities
Fred Jamison	Ada	Townships
*Warren Olson	Halstad	County



Above: Annual Commission Meeting in East Grand Forks.

Pennington County

*Elvera Cullen	TRF	Municipalities
John Erickson	RLF	Townships
Oliver Swanson	TRF	County

Polk County

Eugene Dufault	Crookston	Townships
Martha Hurtado	Crookston	Minorities
Gerald Jacobson	Fertile	Labor
Keith Mykleseth	Crookston	Municipalities
Bill Montague	Crookston	Financial Institute
*Warren Strandell	EGF	County
Tracey Sundeen	Crookston	Seniors
Arlene Tucker	Crookston	Women
Kathleen Twite	EGF	Business

Red Lake County

Anne Jaeger	Plummer	Municipalities
Genevieve Knott	RLF	Townships
Donna Linder	Oklee	School Board
Robert Melby	Oklee	Low Income
*Velma Oakland	RLF	County
Vaughn Thorfinnson	RLF	Vocational Schools
Ronald Weiss	RLF	Watershed Dist.

Roseau County

Selvin Erickson	Badger	Townships
*Orris Rasmussen	Roseau	County
Gerry Schiltz	Roseau	Municipalities

*Board Members

**Chairperson



Left: Kittson County commission members.

Right: Carol Sorensen, Financial Officer, speaking with the Norman County Board Members.



NORTHWEST REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION BUDGET

<u>REVENUES</u>	ACTUAL REVENUES	PROJECTED
	<u>CY' 2008</u>	<u>CY' 2009</u>
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMIN.	\$52,628	\$52,628
		\$0
	\$52,628	\$52,628
STATE		
MN/DOT	\$52,011	\$50,000
STATE ARTS BOARD	\$126,011	\$107,229
MINNESOTA BOARD ON AGING	\$2,890,431	\$3,228,604
MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES	\$51,321	\$48,567
MINNESOTA SESQUICENTENNIAL	\$5,000	\$0
MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY	\$24,556	\$92,500
	\$3,149,330	\$3,526,900
PRIVATE FOUNDATIONS		
MCKNIGHT FOUNDATION - ARTS	\$45,695	\$41,750
NW MN FOUNDATION	\$17,768	\$0
BLANDIN FOUNDATION	\$214	\$18,369
SW MN FOUNDATION	\$3,942	\$12,500
	\$67,619	\$72,619
LOCAL GOVERNMENTAL		
LOCAL LEVY	\$204,419	\$215,332
CITY OF ADA	\$663	\$0
WILKIN COUNTY	\$12,297	\$6,900
LOCAL PROJECTS	\$10,835	
	\$228,214	\$222,232
MISCELLANEOUS		
NORTHWEST ENTERPRISE FUND	\$825,068	\$623,151
INTEREST	\$18,726	\$10,300
CONFERENCE REGIST./MISC.	\$4,638	\$1,000
	\$848,432	\$634,451
TOTAL REVENUES	<u><u>\$4,346,223</u></u>	<u><u>\$4,508,830</u></u>

<u>EXPENDITURES</u>	ACTUAL EXPENDITURES	PROJECTED
	<u>CY' 2008</u>	<u>CY' 2009</u>
SALARY/FRINGE	\$703,903	\$750,577
STAFF TRAVEL & REGISTRATIONS	\$53,020	\$67,419
COMMISSION/COMMITTEE TRAVEL/PER DIEM	\$38,157	\$46,944
PROFESSIONAL FEES	\$42,216	\$16,837
PRINTING & POSTAGE	\$22,952	\$29,801
RENT & MAINTENANCE	\$17,900	\$16,500
TELEPHONE & INTERNET COSTS	\$8,386	\$11,700
SUPPLIES	\$13,820	\$11,401
EQUIPMENT PURCHASED BY PROGRAMS	\$20,298	\$0
OTHER OFFICE EXPENSES	\$29,254	\$42,195
TOTAL ADMINISTRATIVE	\$949,907	\$993,374
REGRANTED-ARTS	\$85,766	\$68,791
REGRANTED-AGING	\$1,115,519	\$1,458,062
REGION 4 AGING PROGRAM	\$1,426,633	\$1,439,603
BUSINESS LOANS	\$757,000	\$550,000
FIXED ASSETS/RESTRICTED FUND	\$6,411	\$5,000
DEPRECIATION	(\$7,838)	(\$6,000)
	(\$1,427)	(\$1,000)
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	<u><u>\$4,333,399</u></u>	<u><u>\$4,508,830</u></u>
INCREASE (DECREASE) TO FUND BALANCE	<u><u>\$12,824</u></u>	<u><u>\$0</u></u>

Program Highlights



Program Highlights Calendar Year 2008

Serving
*Kittson, Marshall, Norman, Pennington
Polk, Red Lake, Roseau*

Aging

AREA AGENCY ON AGING

Purpose: To build a proactive, comprehensive and coordinated system of advocacy and services that ensures the rights and benefits of all older people.

Program Funding Sources: Older Americans Act through the Minnesota Board on Aging - \$389,226; Minnesota Board on Aging EDP - \$51,321; RDC Tax Levy - \$71,655.

Regrant Funding Sources: Older Americans Act - \$678,839; U.S. Department of Agriculture Nutrition Program - \$191,549; State Nutrition Program - \$152,504; Region 4 AAA Pass Through - \$1,409,419.

Service Priorities: Regrant priorities are: nutrition, congregate and home delivered meals, legal service, transportation, chore/home repair, housekeeping, visiting and medical forms assistance. Support priorities are advocacy, education, support of county committees on aging and senior centers, inter-agency linkages, and information/referral.



Above: Seated (left to right) Carol Bye, Senior LinkAge Specialist and Danica Robson, Aging Program Director. Standing (left to right) Rose Reed, Senior LinkAge Specialist, Darla Bergquist, Region 2 Aging Program Developer and Lois Pagnac, Senior LinkAge Specialist/Volunteer Coordinator.

Aging Highlights

Larger Planning and Service Area • • •

In our fourth year of the partnership in our larger planning and service area we continue to work closely with the West Central office to examine our operational procedures. This year we conducted a single request for proposal process for awarding contracts to service providers.

2010 Forums - Communities for a Lifetime • • •

Throughout the year we have provided 25 Communities For a Lifetime presentations to city councils, county boards, chamber of commerce's and other groups along our PSA. We are involved in Communities For a Lifetime/Community Stewardship planning efforts in five communities; Bemidji, Park Rapids, Black Duck, Oklee and Fergus Falls. In addition, we have convened two community forums that highlighted the Vital Aging Network's Vital Communities tool kit. This toolkit encourages individuals to become involved in their communities at a grassroots level.

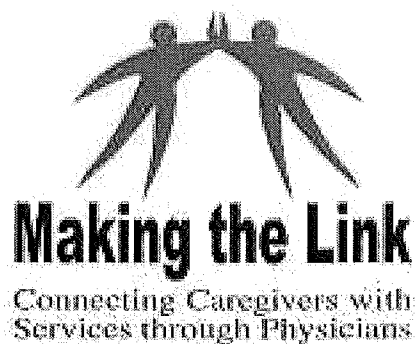
Falls Prevention Initiative • • •

During 2008 we became heavily involved in the development of evidenced-based program development in a multi-county region. These efforts have resulted in the development of six Fall's Prevention coalitions, seven Bone Builders programs, and eight Faithfully Fit programs that are supported through local Parish nurses located within church congregations within our PSA. Furthermore, we have seen an increase in the utilization of the Stand

Up and Be strong curriculum that we offered education and training to Physical Therapists, Parish nurses, Home Health nurses, Public nurses and Living at Home program staff.

Making the Link • • •

Physicians and health care professionals are key to helping identify individuals who are serving in a caregiver capacity. As part of our "Making the Link" initiative, presentations were provided in seven clinic and hospital facilities, reaching over 100 physicians and health care professionals.



Caregiver in the Workplace Education • • •

Throughout the year Caregiver Education has been provided to 15 different employers within our PSA. We will reach additional caregivers through our participation at employer sponsored health fairs for Artic Cat and Marvin Windows.

Aging continued

ElderCare Development Partnership • • •

Work with the ElderCare Development Partnership continues into the fourth year of our project. The primary focus of ElderCare Development Partnerships is to increase the availability of community based options for seniors, and to reduce the impact of chronic disease within our communities. Our efforts continue to focus around increasing the availability of Parish Nurse Programs and Health Ministries, and to increase the availability of residential options including: adult foster care, assisted living, and other less restrictive options for seniors.

Adult Foster Care Development • • •

We have provided technical assistance to 13 Adult Foster Care providers, including one on the Red Lake reservation. Our assistance included issues ranging from marketing, referral sources and developing service packages. Many providers report an increase in referrals and occupancy. We provided technical assistance to one provider interested in expanding her Adult Foster Home license through a renovation project that included assistance with grant applications to fund this project.

Parish Nurse Partnership Development • • •

This program continues to see growth and expansion throughout our PSA. We provided scholarships to 9 nurses that attended the Parish nurse training offered at Concordia College. Two of these Parish nurses are serving

the Red Lake Reservation. We continue to provide technical assistance to 2 Community-based Parish nurse programs that provided Parish nursing services to the community at large within Becker County and Clearwater County. During this year, we have provided technical assistance to 1 new hospital-based Parish nurse program and two existing hospital-based programs. In addition, we provided technical assistance to churches interested in developing a Parish Nurse or Health Ministry Program.

Community Based Parish Nursing • • •

Technical assistance was provided to Community Based Parish Nurse Programs in Clearbrook and Osage. In this model of service, a Parish Nurse is shared by a number of churches, or groups within a community. The program in Osage has identified their focus as a healing mission to help support people in crisis or with day-to-day struggles in the Osage and Ponsford area of the White Earth Reservation. In addition, we have developed 16 Health ministry programs in faith communities to improve the informal service to seniors.

Community Service Development Grantees • • •

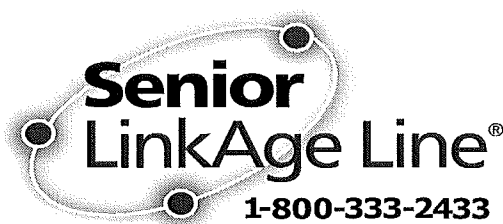
Nine agencies received technical assistance to help with development of grant proposals to the Department of Human Services. Many of these applications were for the renovation of facilities or new construction of Assisted Living facilities and services in our planning and service area.

Senior LinkAge Line® Highlights

Senior LinkAge® Calls Received • • •

Senior LinkAge Line® Specialists provided assistance to over 4,947 callers on the Senior LinkAge Line® during 2008. Over 3,868 additional contacts were made on behalf of these callers to provide assistance with their issues by calling prescription plans, contacting other agencies for services and resolving issues with insurance companies and getting them connected to services that they needed.

SLL Specialists provided one-on-one assistance to 334 persons around the region.



Presentations • • •

Over 30 presentations were given this year to provide information to seniors, family members, service providers and caregivers. The focus of these presentations was on Medicare Preventative Benefits, Falls Prevention and DTV Transition. The Senior LinkAge Line® staff also worked with senior centers, and other agencies around the region to facilitate the setting up of Medication Management Sessions for one-on-one consultations with a pharmacist to review prescriptions seniors were taking. Staff and volunteers participated in various health fairs and flu clinics providing information on the extra help available for Medicare beneficiaries for their Medicare Part D premiums.

Senior LinkAge Line® continued

Volunteers • • •

Each year our SHIP volunteers continue to play a larger role in assisting us with a wide variety of activities. In 2008, they volunteered over 725 hours providing assistance to over 1,000 individuals with Medicare Part D prescription drug benefit enrollment, individual counseling, computer education (Senior Surf Events), Health Fairs, Flu Clinics (LIS Outreach) and assisting in the office on many projects. The volunteers also attended many training sessions on current issues relevant to Health Insurance Counseling provided by the Area Agency on Aging.

One of our volunteers received national recognition for his service as a volunteer and traveled to Washington, DC in May to receive his award. Elden Johnson was awarded the MetLife Foundation Older Americans Enrich America award. From all 50 states, only 25 senior volunteers were selected for this award. Staff member, Rose Reed, accompanied the Johnson's on the trip to Washington, DC.

Two more volunteers were trained to provide the Senior Surf computer education classes and have established regular Senior Surf Events at the Park Rapids Library and the East Grand Forks Senior Center.

Our sincere thanks go out to all of our dedicated volunteers.



Left: Tammy Sykes, LSS Caregiver Support Program, Lois Pagnac, AAA Staff, and Marilyn Carlson, Volunteer, at the Artic Health Fair in TRF.



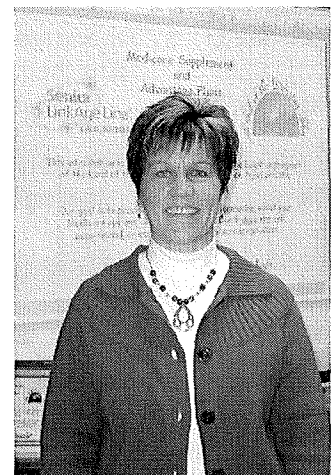
Right: Group of recipients at the awards ceremony in Washington, D.C.

Special Collaborations....

In the beginning of October, MeritCare Health Systems made a decision to not accept the Unicare PFFS (Private Fee-for-Service) plans in 2009. Senior LinkAge Line® was contacted for assistance in educating and assisting over 3,700 Unicare clients. Educational sessions and in-person assistance were arranged at both the Thief River Falls and Bemidji clinics to help these individuals choose other plans.



Photos: Courtesy of TRF Times



Innovis Health Systems also decided to not take any Medicare Advantage Private Fee-for-Service plans which affected many consumers in the Polk, Mahnomen and Norman county areas. Senior LinkAge Line® staff, Carol Bye (right) participated in educational sessions to provide assistance and information in Mahnomen, Park Rapids and Fosston.

2008 Aging Grantees

Kittson County Senior Medical Travel - Provided 388 one-way trips to 36 persons.

Northwest Sentencing to Service Chore Program - Provided 1,339 hours of chore service to 130 persons.

Roseau County Senior Medical Travel - Provided 1,088 one-way trips to 99 persons.

Roseau County Sentencing to Service Chore Program - Provided 861 hours of chore services to 20 persons.

Tri-County Community Corrections Sentencing to Service Chore Program - Provided 3,875 hours of chore service to 166 persons.

Valley Housekeeping Program - Provided 5,657.5 hours of homemaker services to 129 persons.

LSS Caregiver/Respite Program - Provided 1,642 hours of Caregiver Counseling services to 186 persons and 5,742.25 hours of Respite services to 58 persons.

Northwoods Interfaith Caregiver Program - Provided 269 hours of Caregiver Counseling services to 50 persons and 5,550.5 hours of Caregiver Respite to 31 persons.

Park Rapids LAH/BNP/Interfaith Caregivers Program - Provided 56 hours of Caregiver Coaching services to 18 persons, 223 hours of Caregiver Counseling services to 37 persons and 827.5 hours of Caregiver Respite services to 30 persons.

Medication Management - Provided 115 in-depth medication management sessions to 148 persons in Regions 1, 2 & 4.

Legal Services - Provided 1,233 hours of legal services to 257 persons and provided 21 educational sessions to 515 persons in Region 1, 2 & 4.

Lakewood Home Health Aide Program - Provided 455 hours of home health aide services to 8 persons.

Clearwater Senior Transportation - Provided 324 one-way trips to 119 persons.

Beltrami County Frail/Elderly Home Modification - Provided 108 hours of home modification services to 33 persons.

LSS Senior Nutrition Program - Provided 180,878 Congregate and 75,296 Home Delivered Meals to 10,395 persons.



Left to Right: Seniors enjoying their meal at the Senior Meal Site in Warren, MN.

www.MinnesotaHelp.infoTM

Arts

NORTHWEST MINNESOTA ARTS COUNCIL

Purpose: To promote, develop and encourage artistic growth and excellence of arts organizations and individual artists in northwestern Minnesota by conducting programs, awarding grants, and providing services.

Program Funding Sources: MN State Arts Board - \$71,746 and Interest - \$451; McKnight Foundation - \$15,122; RDC Tax Levy - \$2,240; Miscellaneous - \$3,453.

Re-Grant Funding Sources: MN State Arts Board - \$54,265; McKnight Foundation - \$30,573.

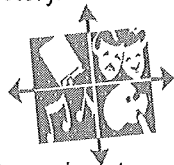
Re-Grant Programs: *State Funds:* Arts Project; Artist in the Schools. *McKnight Funds:* Adult Fellowship; Student Artist Grants; Small Capital; Hispanic Arts Initiative.

Service Priorities: Direction setting, Northwest Minnesota Art Exhibit, information including website, newsletter, training/workshops, directory.

Arts Highlights

Sesquicentennial Art Exhibit •••

The Arts Council applied to the Sesquicentennial Commission and they were awarded \$5,000.00, and the NWRDC provided \$6,360 from the Tax Levy to plan and implement an art exhibit in 2008 that involved 450 area school students creating 150 pieces of new artwork on the 150 years of statehood for Minnesota theme. All the art was created within 5" acrylic cubes. The artwork was displayed at seven locations in 2008 including being part of the Capitol for a Day celebration in Thief River Falls. It is very popular and will continue to tour in 2009.



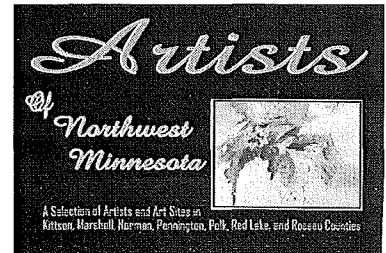
Right: Mara Wittman,
Arts Council Director



Artist of Northwest Minnesota Booklet •••

3,000 copies of our marketing booklet for 33 Northwest Minnesota artists were published and distributed in 2008.

This project is a collaboration with Region 2 Arts Council. Copies are available for free.



Grant Program Summaries

Arts Project Grant Program •••

From January 1, 2008 - December 31, 2008, we re-granted \$42,285 to 9 different productions and 14 sponsorship projects throughout the region. Six of the projects were specifically aimed at children. An estimated 10,980 adults and over 3,170 youth were impacted by the grant activity.

Artists in the Schools Grant Program •••

In 2008, \$11,980 was regranted to area schools. Nine projects were awarded serving 3,000 students. Several artists from the Compas Roster came into our schools for writing and photography residencies. Other schools supported our area's Safari touring childrens' theatre week-long workshop and productions.

Small Capital Grants •••

\$4,920 was granted to arts organizations to purchase various artistic equipment including a digital piano and lighting equipment. Two organizations received awards. Seven school districts received \$1,000 each to purchase artistic equipment. Items purchased included art paint brushes, cameras, speakers, kilns, and microphones.

McKnight Artist Grants •••

Four adult artists and ten student artists received awards this calendar year. In the Individual Artist Fellowship category \$7,600 was granted. In the Student Artist Training Mentorship category \$5,000 was granted. Most awards were for technical training.

Hispanic Arts Initiative Grants •••

One hispanic youth dance troupe based in Oslo received a grant for \$1,200.00.

Arts continued

Services and Technical Assistance

Statewide Needs Assessment •••

Partnered with the Minnesota State Arts Board in 2008 to survey residents in northwest minnesota. Conducted two focus groups: one for seniors in Stephen and one for business/tourism representatives in Thief River Falls.

Legacy Amendment •••

In November 2008, the Legacy Amendment was passed on the ballot. This was due in part, to educating the public on the impact that the amendment would have on increased arts activity in our region.

Promotion and Increasing Visibility •••

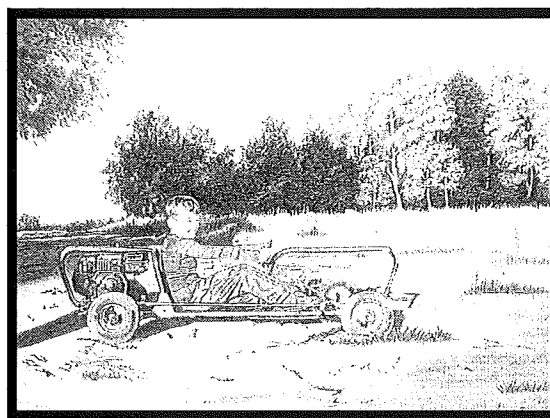
In 2008 the general public was continually informed through our 65+ page web site and our Northwest Arts newsletter (3 editions) reaching 850+ arts constituents. Staff conducted four grant writing and informational workshops in 2008.

Minnesota's Historic Northwest •••

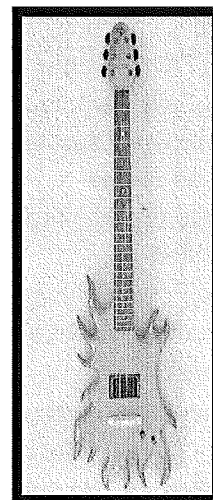
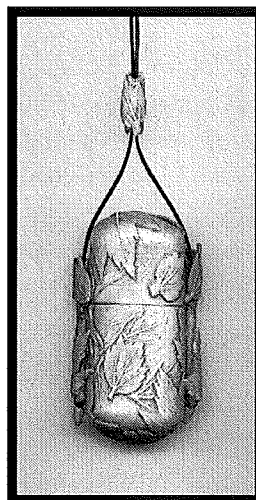
In 2008 our office actively assisted this group of eleven county historical societies with a few projects, including the formatting of a group newsletter and the publication of their sesquicentennial book and traveling exhibit entitled Traveling Through Time in Minnesota's Historic Northwest.

Northwest Minnesota Art Exhibition •••

Coordinated 2008 exhibit in Roseau at the Library and City Center building from April 30 - May 4, 2008. This included the jury process, registration, hanging, and artist reception. 124 pieces were on display for almost a week. \$1,650.00 of awards were given to artists based on the recommendations of juror Suzi Rhae Ross of Cass Lake, Minnesota. Suzi is pictured with many of the award winning pieces below.



Lucille Nelson won first place for her drawing above. Below left to right: Jennifer Patterson's second place clay jewelry piece. Steven Kvasager of Oklee's original artistic guitar won a merit award.



Northwest Minnesota Art Exhibition Awards:

Adult Award Winners

1st Prize: \$500.00 Lucile Nelson, Argyle: (drawing)
2nd Prize: \$250.00 Jennifer Patterson, Alvarado: (jewelry)
3rd Prize: \$100.00 Rock Bakken, Hallock: (painting)
Merit - Wood: \$50.00 Gordon Olson, McIntosh
Merit - Painting: \$50.00 Margaret Anderson, Lancaster
Merit - Photography: \$50.00 Deb Aune, Gatzke
Merit - Sculpture: \$50.00 Steven Kvasager, Oklee
Merit - Computer art: \$50.00 Steven Reynolds, Roseau
People's Choice: \$100.00 Rock Bakken, Hallock

High School Student Award Winners

1st Prize: \$150.00 Alexy Johnston, Warren: (photo)
2nd Prize: \$75.00 Josh Mercil, Crookston: (mixed)
3rd Prize: \$50.00 Brittany Czapiewski, Oslo: (drawing)
Merit - Photo: \$25.00 Kristen Maruska, Warren
Merit - Painting: \$25.00 Amy Roesch, Crookston
Merit - Sculpture Clay: \$25.00 Calla Blokzi, Crookston
Merit - Sculpture Wire: \$25.00 Carrie Alme, Greenbush
Merit - Digital: \$25.00 Mercedes Lubarski, Warren
People's Choice: \$50.00 Brittany Czapiewski, Oslo

Arts Grants Listing for Calendar Year 2008. . .

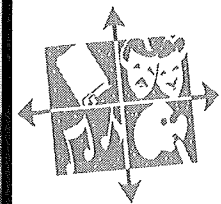
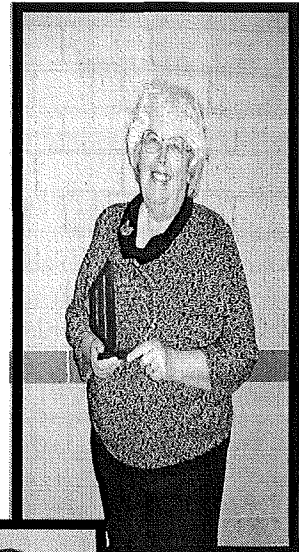
Arts Project Grantee	Award
Ada Summer Children's Theater	\$1,900.00
Middle River Community Theater	\$1,000.00
City of Roseau	\$1,920.00
East Grand Forks Campbell Library	\$810.00
Crookston Community Theater	\$2,285.00
Association of the French of the North	\$2,000.00
Roseau Area Friends of the Library	\$2,080.00
Pennington County	\$3,000.00
Polk County Fair Board	\$1,000.00
Warroad Summer Theater	\$2,950.00
City of Karlstad	\$2,050.00
East Grand Forks Campbell Library	\$620.00
Crookston Library	\$940.00
Middle River Community Theater	\$1,810.00
Thief River Falls Community Arts Council	\$2,000.00
Thief River Falls Community Arts Council	\$1,000.00
Roseau Area Arts Association	\$380.00
Summer Arts Stages	\$3,000.00
Northland Community Technical College	\$2,400.00
City of Fosston	\$3,000.00
East Grand Forks Heritage Foundation	\$1,640.00
Warroad Summer Theatre	\$3,000.00
Stephen Arts Council	\$1,500.00

Artist in the Schools Grantee	Award
Norman County East School District	\$925.00
Warren/Alvarado/Oslo School District	\$1,130.00
Thief River Falls School District	\$2,000.00
Lancaster School District	\$1,350.00
Tri-County School District	\$1,275.00
Crookston School District	\$1,950.00
Tri-County School District	\$1,500.00
Fosston School District	\$650.00
Roseau School District	\$1,200.00

Small Capital Grantee	Award
St. Joseph Catholic School	\$1,000.00
Ada/Borup School District	\$1,000.00
Fosston School District	\$1,000.00
East Grand Forks School District	\$1,000.00
Oklee School District	\$1,000.00
Red Lake County Central School District	\$1,000.00
Stephen/Argyle School District	\$1,000.00
Thief River Falls Community Arts Council	\$3,220.00
Warroad Summer Theatre	\$1,700.00

Annette Hermansen of Roseau with her Arts Advocate of the Year award. Annette was recognized for her dedicated service to the literary and visual arts in the Roseau area.

Bernie Wilebski (left) accepts the Artists of the Year award from Arts Council Chairperson Cindy Tsukichi for her outstanding skills at involving children in the creation of art.



Northwest Artist of the Year Award for 2008

Bernie Wilebski, Kennedy (visual art) \$500.00

Northwest Arts Advocate Award for 2008

Annette Hermansen, Roseau \$500.00

Hispanic Arts Initiative

Mision Luterana del Valle Rio Rojo \$1,200.00

Individual Artist Fellowship

Patricia Peterson, Middle River \$1,200.00

Jean Ranstrom, Alvarado \$4,000.00

Bruce Flaig, Fertile \$1,200.00

Carol Evenson, Crookston \$1,200.00

Student Training Mentor Grantee

Davis Mills. Stephen \$500.00

Jodi Polasky, Fosston \$500.00

Bridget Carlson, Crookston \$500.00

Amber Joel, Badger \$500.00

Brandon Lien, East Grand Forks \$500.00

Max Wolpert, Crookston \$500.00

Sara Mercil, Mentor \$500.00

Marshall McKeever, Erskine \$500.00

Jaylin Stroot, Roseau \$500.00

Brittany Oftedahl, Fertile \$500.00

Economic Development

Purpose: To assist business and industry in the creation and retention of jobs.

Program Funding Sources: United States Economic Development Administration (EDA) - \$52,628; RDC Tax Levy - \$54,999.

Service Priorities: Business development with an emphasis on agricultural value-added and manufacturing, labor force development and promoting Northwest Minnesota.

Economic Development Highlights

2008 CEDS • • • Updated statistical information in the CEDS and examined demographic and social trends to determine if any strategy adjustments are needed. Economic Development Committee recommended consideration of adding energy development as a major strategy. Responded to EDA's request for information about local projects, and started the process of revising the CEDS to include those projects.

Business Assistance • • • Staff provided approximately 1,250 hours of technical assistance to businesses on issues such as: financial packaging, business plan development, tax incentive program, marketing and finding state and federal program resources. Projects with the most significant impact are described below. In some cases specific business names are not included at the request of the business.

Land of the Dancing Sky Job Opportunity Building Zones (JOBZ) Administration • • •

Due to legal and legislative challenges over the past two years, the JOBZ program has seen no new activity from qualified businesses applying to their local communities to participate in this initiative. In late 2008, however, three businesses in the manufacturing/processing sector have expressed interest in JOBZ tax incentives as part of their business plan for future startup. If businesses apply and are accepted as qualified JOBZ businesses in 2009, they will have seven years left of tax incentives from the State of Minnesota. The JOBZ program legislation is slated to sunset on December 31, 2015.

NW Minnesota Renewable Energy Group • • •

Assisted local group with development of a template for purposes of determining energy consumption and best prospects for renewable energy development. The template will provide a step by step methodology using county census data, energy demand/consumption estimates, renewable energy potential, and infrastructure inventory that summarizes development possibilities. The



Economic/Community Development Staff

Economic Development: Cam Fanfulik (seated right), Standing (left to right) Jennifer Olson and Leon Heath.

Community Development: Troy Schroeder (seated left), Standing (left to right) Jennifer Olson, Leon Heath and Mara Wittman.

end result is a document that will help county economic development leaders make informed decisions regarding future energy development, and can serve as a development model for counties across the state.

Local Wind Energy Development • • •

Acting as Renewable Energy Development Initiative (REDI) organizer in northwest Minnesota. Duties include providing organizing and technical assistance to rural entities seeking to develop wind energy projects, and raising awareness of benefits of renewable energy development, energy conservation and energy efficiency. Assisted three local investment groups in Pennington, Polk and Kittson counties with information and technical assistance for wind farm development.

Northstar Agri-Industries, Hallock, MN • • •

Provided staff assistance with information on production tax incentives, infrastructure development and federal EDA requirements. The business is in the final stages of establishing a debt equity component to the project and expects to move forward with the construction phase during 2009.

UMC University Center Application • • • Assisted with an application by the University of Minnesota, Crookston to become a Federal Economic Development Administration University Center for rural Minnesota. Application approved and continued assistance with start-up. Co-sponsored Annual Planning retreat for RDC/EDA Districts in Minnesota with UMC.

Economic Development Continued

River Cinema, Inc., East Grand Forks, MN • • •

Provided owners with business advice, technical assistance and loan funds towards the establishment of a 12-plex theater and entertainment center located in the Riverwalk Centre in downtown East Grand Forks. The business has taken in more than 400,000 customers since its grand opening, and is a valuable anchor tenant for the downtown restaurant and shopping district. It has also resulted in the creation of six full-time and ten part-time jobs.

Jered's Grocery, McIntosh, MN • • •

Assisted business owners with technical assistance and loan funds to purchase an existing grocery store, and keep it as a successful business providing an essential service in a small community. This project keeps a young family living and working in the community, and preserves an essential community asset.

Home Lumber and Design Center, Inc., Thief River Falls, MN • • •

Provided technical assistance and loan funds for the purchase of an existing lumberyard and transforming it into a home design center with lumber and home improvement product retail sales. The project retains several employees from the previous business, creates jobs, and provides a unique place with modeling showrooms for customers to see first-hand how improvements will look in their home.



Above: Home Lumber and Design Center, Thief River Falls, MN.

McIntosh Machine and Mfg, Inc., McIntosh, MN • • •

Assisted business owner with business advice, technical assistance and loan funds towards the purchase of an existing parts manufacturer. The project leverages public and private funds that retains eight employees and creates three new jobs, and keeps a successful manufacturing business located in the formerly vacant high school building in McIntosh.

J & N Concrete Construction, Warren, MN • • •

Provided small loan for a start-up business that performs a valued community service, creates two jobs, and improves a blighted area of the city. The business owners used a strategy of keeping their start-up and overhead costs low with the purchase and inexpensive renovation of a vacant building, cleaned up the surrounding property, used construction equipment they already owned for their business, and delayed purchase of high-end items until the first year of business was completed. The business has already developed a reputation for excellent work and quick project completion, and has many customers lined up for the coming year.

EDA Infrastructure Grants • • •

Submitted grant applications to federal EDA for infrastructure improvements to the City of Fosston and City of Kennedy. The Fosston project will use funds to enlarge its industrial park due to interest from ag manufacturing, software servicing, and light manufacturing/assembly businesses that are looking at Fosston as an expansion site. The project would include sewer, water, street, curb and gutter improvements.

The City of Kennedy is applying for funds that will convert a recently vacated school building into a "green" incubator for small business development. The incubator would undergo energy efficiency upgrades, conversion from fossil fuels to geothermal heating/cooling, and have a wind tower for electrical generation. The incubator would house a wind farm developer's maintenance facility and potentially offer office space for a nearby food-grade oil processor, as well as spin-off small businesses that need inexpensive commercial space.

Kittson Co. Economic Development Authority • • •

Assisted in the establishment of a Revolving Loan Fund for the funding of potential projects and technical assistance to businesses and individuals within Kittson County. Assisted in the completion of a grant application to the Northwest Minnesota Foundation to complete an Economic Development Plan and project development activities.

Labor Force Development • • • Completed an application to the Blandin Foundation for expansion of the Labor Force Development project - application approved for \$20,000. Community Partnership - Provided staff support to the Community Partnership in Grygla, Middle River, Newfolden, Oklee, Plummer, Red Lake Falls, Thief River Falls, and Warren to support housing and labor growth. Member communities implemented a variety of programs which resulted in the development or planning of 130 new lots, 24 rental units, 75 senior units, and 25 single family units. Started development of labor force development strategies to address needs of local employers.

Community Development

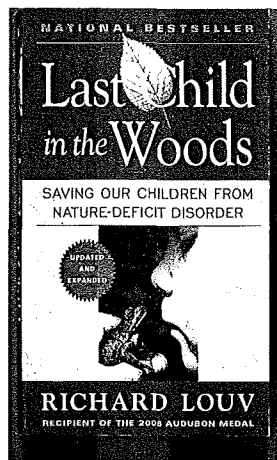
NORTHWEST REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Purpose: To assist communities in maintaining and improving our quality of life including infrastructure, recreation, culture and community services.

Funding Source: Local Tax Levy - \$55,459; and interest \$18,275; Misc. - \$860. Some projects also involve U.S. EDA Funding.

Service Priorities: Comprehensive planning and zoning ordinances, tourism and recreation promotion, mapping and GIS services, housing development, infrastructure financing, and local issues such as web sites, flood mitigation and emergency services planning.

Local Issues Highlights



Last Child in the Woods • • •

Partnered with US Fish and Wildlife Services to distribute 500 copies of the book "Last Child in the Woods" by Richard Louv. This book promotes the idea that the indoors lifestyles being adopted by youth are unhealthy and could leave us with new generations with no interest in maintaining natural areas, parks, and wildlife areas.

DNR Local Input • • • Assisted the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources to organize an information, planning, and input meeting for Region One to address conflicts between environmental and recreational uses, and to identify common interests including promotion of local natural resource assets. Sessions resulted in a set of recommendations from DNR staff related to increasing conflict resolution efforts.

Roseau Downtown Development • • • Assisted the Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development Authority, and the Convention and Visitors Bureau to complete a plan for increasing retail activity and hiring staff. City has implemented the plan including hiring a part time staff person.

Winger Planning and Development • • • Completed a community planning process to identify short and long term goals and implementation steps for a city improvement and development effort. Planning and Zoning ordinance completed and approved by the Council. Implementation started including Community Development Block Grant application, clean-up at salvage yards, and development of a business incubator.

Newfolden Planning and Zoning • • • Assisted the City in the completion of a Development Plan and initial work on a zoning ordinance and map. Plan focuses on housing development and improvements to retail services.

2010 Census Preplanning • • • Currently aiding the Kansas City Regional Office of the US Census Bureau on a project that involves reviewing various boundaries for the upcoming 2010 Census for Northwest Minnesota.

Web Site Promotion of NW Minnesota • • • Sections of the Visit Northwest Minnesota website VisitNWMinnesota.com were continually updated in 2008. These included the county pages, the tourism directory, and the Arts/Historical Sites listings.

Tourism Directory • • • Updated the 2008 version of the Northwest Minnesota Visitor and Recreation Guide. Published the guide to our visitnwminnesota.com web site. Printed 1,300 copies of the 48 page guide for distribution; in which, 500 were displayed and handed out at the Regional Township Association Meeting. More effort was made by staff to collect e-mail and web site addresses and to feature our area's National wildlife recreation.



Community Development Continued

Rocksbury Township Planning and Zoning • • •

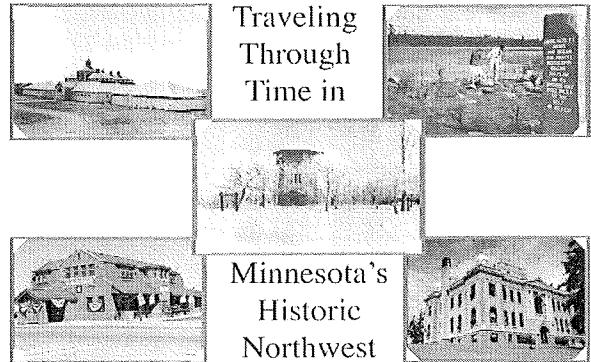
Completed rewriting zoning ordinances to address housing and commercial growth. Plan and Ordinance approved including identification of growth areas to address growth plans for Thief River Falls. Development Plan and Ordinances approved and public hearing completed.

Marketplace for Entrepreneurs • • •

Northwest Minnesota Arts Council had a booth at the January 2008 Marketplace in Grand Forks. We encouraged artists to attend the track of workshops aimed at artists as small business owners. Springboard for the Arts lead the workshops. This was a collaboration with North Valley Arts Council in Grand Forks.

Kittson County Website Assistance • • • Provided the county with some Microsoft Frontpage training for their staff.

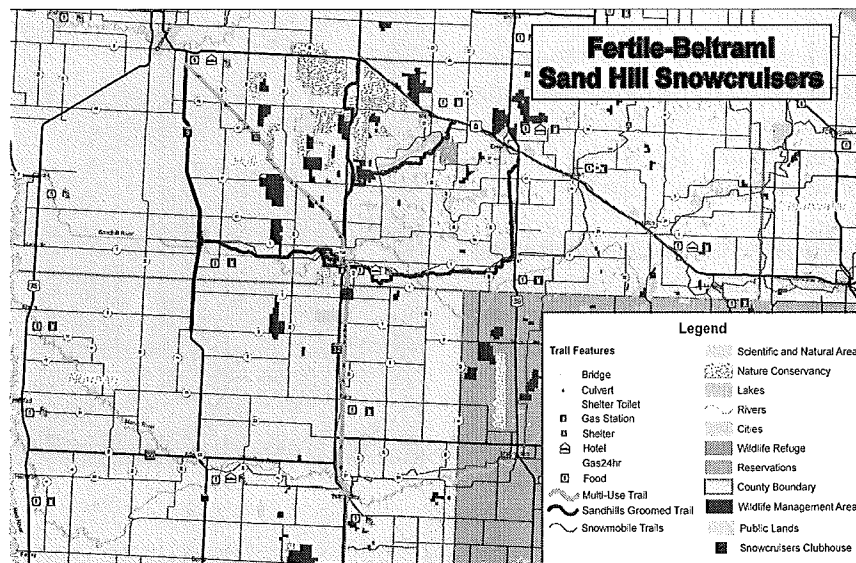
Minnesota's Historical Northwest • • • Assisted this 10+ county group in joint projects including formatting their newsletter and their Traveling Through Time in Minnesota's Historic Northwest book on Minnesota's Sesquicentennial. The book is available and for sale for \$20.00.



Featuring the counties of: Clearwater, Beltrami, Kittson, Lake of the Woods, Mahanomen, Marshall, Pennington, Polk, Red Lake and Roseau.

The Fertile-Beltrami Snowcruisers Purchase a Rail Abandonment from Ada to Beltrami

The Fertile-Beltrami Snowcruisers recently purchased a rail abandonment from Ada to Beltrami to develop into a multi-use trail system. Minnesota Northern Rail submitted for the abandonment after several years of spring flooding weakened the bridges and rail bank to the point of benefit/cost analysis indicated a net loss to continue to operate the rail line. The RDC assisted the Agassiz Recreational Trail Joint Powers Board (ART Board) with communication with the Federal Surface Transportation Board in Washington D.C., and the attorney for Minnesota Northern from Chicago. The RDC drafted letters for the ART Board that indicated the importance of keeping the entire corridor intact and the importance this rail bank has on the long range trail planning efforts taking place in NW Minnesota. The Fertile-Beltrami Snowcruisers took the lead role over from the ART Board to complete the purchase. The snowcruisers secured funding through the local bank and purchased the 17-mile abandonment for around \$200,000. The club is now working with the DNR on development of this multi-use trail. The economic impact these trail corridors have on the region is very positive.



Additional Community & Economic Development Projects

Trail Development • • • Assisted additional local clubs, organizations, and facilities with trail development including: Area Snowmobile Clubs with trail mapping and GPS points, Lake Bronson and Forian Park with trail planning and funding, Newfolden with trail planning and funding, Fertile Sandhills Recreation Area with GPS points.

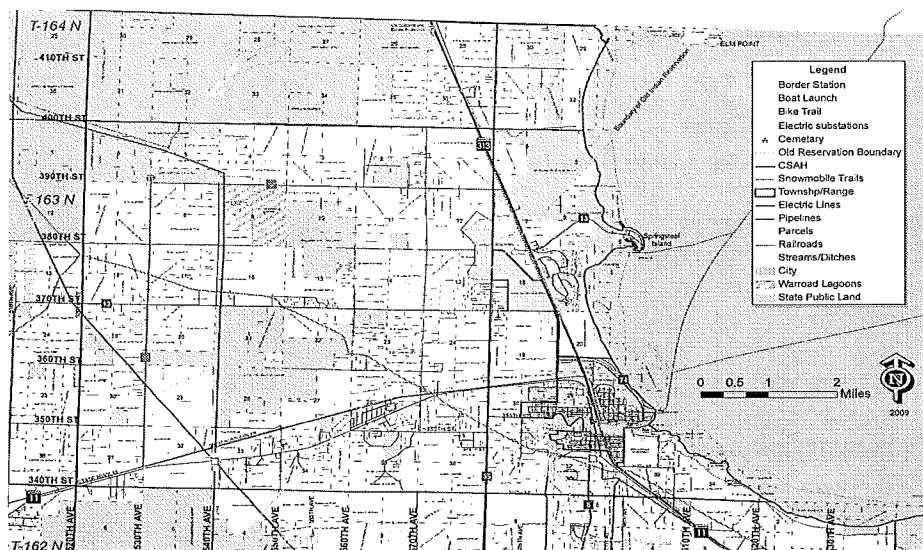
Community Planning and Grant Writing • • • Assisted additional communities including: Lancaster with industrial park funding, Thief River Falls with industrial park funding, East Grand Forks with downtown revitalization, Erskine with school re-use, Ada Promotions with job development, Plummer with housing development, Marshall County EDA with job development, Fisher with zoning and planning, and Excel Township with planning and zoning related to feedlot regulation.

St. Vincent Dike • • • Provided technical advice concerning completion of grant requirements for dike improvements as funded by MN DNR and development of a plan and funding strategies for additional improvements related to 100 year protection.

Community Promotions • • • Assisted and worked with additional communities and groups with efforts to promote the area including: Riverland with promotional materials, Highway 75 with strategy development, Norman County with a brochure update, Waters of the Dancing Sky with a brochure update, Kittson County EDA with strategy development, and the Manitoba Regional Commission with US/Canadian tourism promotion.

Lake Township Planning and Zoning

The RDC developed land use planning maps for Lake Township for the development of zoning ordinances for the township. The map was broken out into smaller planning zones that focused on the Warroad Estates, Springsteel Island, Pine Ridge Estates, and Parkers Addition. The county has done parcel mapping with Pro-West Associates and placed the county information on this web link. <http://136.234.18.34/website/roseau/main.php> The map can be zoomed to a specific area of interest and the user has the capability of turning on different layers to create different maps. The aerial photo is included along with parcels, section corners, ditches, rivers, wetlands, soils, elevations, and land use. The county based web page is a great resource for anyone that would like to create maps for trail use or other recreational and business related ventures.



Enterprise Loan Fund

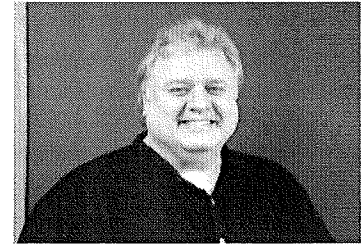
Purpose: To strengthen and diversify the economy by providing a source of low interest financing to businesses, when credit is not otherwise available from other sources, to ensure the successful completion of activities to be financed.

Program Funding Sources: Loan Interest and Loan Fees - \$68,068.

Loan Funding Sources: Loan Repayments and Loan Interest - \$757,000.

Service Priorities: Financing for-profit businesses which create or retain jobs, especially for the long term underemployed or unemployed.

Right: Cam Fanfalik,
Loan Fund Manager/
Economic Dev.



Historical Loan Activity (period ending 12/31/08)

Loan Fund activities have played an integral role in financing several business start-ups and expansions over the past year. There have been on-going requests for loan applications and technical assistance from clients throughout the area, which positively reflects the entrepreneurial strengths of the region.

The following is a brief summary of total Loan Fund Activity:

Total Loans Made	162
Active Loans	48
Total Amount of Loans	\$10,640,324
Other Financing Leveraged	\$52,317,444
Jobs Created/Retained	1,489

2008 Loan Activity

The Enterprise Fund Loan Committee approved funding for several new start-ups and business expansions in a variety of sectors:

- Manufacturing
- Restaurant
- Grocery
- Construction
- Lumber Sales and Home Design Services
- Movie Theater/Entertainment
- Health Spa Sales and Services

Historical Loan Activity by County (period ending 12/31/08)

<u>County</u>	<u># of Loans</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Kittson	18	\$1,024,621.00
Marshall	34	\$2,153,705.00
Norman	15	\$660,938.00
Pennington	11	\$859,850.00
Polk	49	\$3,513,225.00
Red Lake	10	\$583,115.00
Roseau	25	\$1,844,876.00

Loans totaling \$757,000 were made to:

Melody's Cafe - Warren
River Cinema, Inc. - East Grand Forks
Home Lumber & Design Center, Inc. - Thief River Falls
Ada Building Center, Inc. - Ada
J & N Concrete Construction - Warren
McIntosh Machine & Mfg., Inc. - McIntosh
Sun-N-Things, Inc. - East Grand Forks
Jered's Grocery - McIntosh

Loan Activity assisted in creating 14 full-time equivalent jobs, 13 part-time equivalent jobs, and retained more than 24 full-time equivalent jobs in essential community businesses and services.

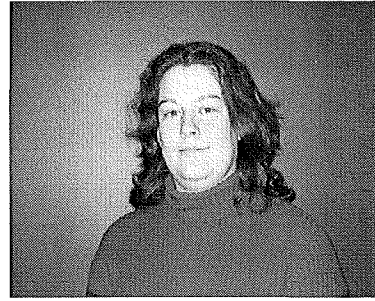
Emergency Operations

Emergency Operations Planning Highlights

Purpose: To aid HSEM Region 3 in the preparation, planning & implementation of activities related to regional mitigation, response & recovery.

Program Funding Sources: MN Dept. of Public Safety
- \$24,556.

Service Priorities: Utilize a specifically geared, annually evolving work program to support existing Emergency Management capabilities throughout Northwest Minnesota, as approved by Regional Emergency Management, Regional Program Coordinator & HSEM staff.

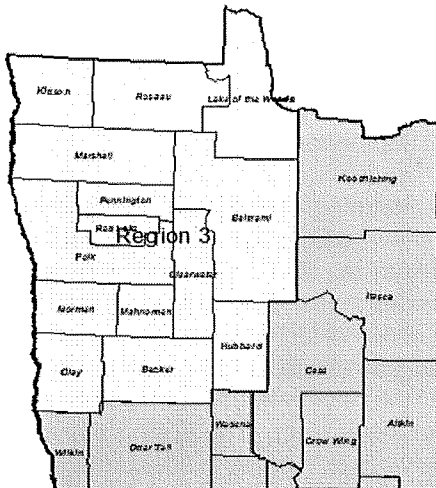


Above: Jennifer Olson, Emergency Operations Planner

The Northwest Regional Development Commission has began a new partnership with the fourteen counties in HSEM Region 3 (Homeland Security & Emergency Management) in Northwest Minnesota and the state of Minnesota, performing a variety of work tasks to aid in the regional progression of emergency management & mitigation strategies, projects & capabilities. HSEM Region 3 is composed of the following counties: Beltrami, Clay, Clearwater, Becker, Hubbard, Kittson, Lake of the Woods, Mahanomen, Marshall, Norman, Pennington, Polk, Red Lake & Roseau.

Specific work duties related to this program are focused on an annual basis, based in part off of annual investment strategies put forward by Northwest Minnesota Emergency Management, Region 3 Regional Program Coordinator, Minnesota Homeland Security & Emergency Management and the United States Federal Government. Duties performed in 2008 include the following:

- Fiscal agent responsibilities for received grants
- Quarterly progress reports
- Yearly grant writing based on specific outlined investment objectives
- Planner position responsibilities for duties assigned by Emergency Management & the Regional Program Coordinator.
- Composition of a study detailing critical infrastructure in the region, including maps, locations & a plan of action to reduce individual risks, if any exist.
- Attendance at four regional quarterly meetings
- Attendance at the yearly AMEM (Association of Minnesota Emergency Managers) Conference



2008 Priorities

- Enhancement of regional interoperable communications system capacities
- Protection of critical infrastructure during emergency situations
- Increasing local GIS and GPS mapping capabilities
- Support for County Emergency Management, Regional Program Coordinator & HSEM staff
- Planning and support for multi-county projects

Special Projects

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

Funding Sources: Local Communities - \$7,835; NW MN Foundation - \$17,768.

Staff: Leon Heath, Jennifer Olson and Mike Moore, TRF Community Development Director

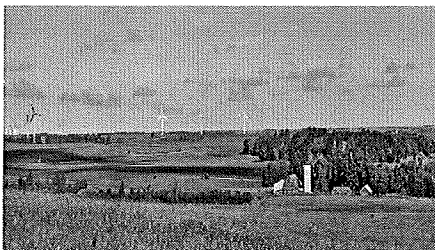
The Communities of Grygla, Middle River, Newfolden, Oklee, Plummer, Red Lake Falls, St. Hilaire, Thief River Falls, and Warren continued to work on housing and work force development issues. The Partnership was created to respond to the needs of local employers including: housing shortages and difficulties finding adequate numbers of skilled workers. Communities put together a number of different housing projects including the development of over 100 new lots, construction of new homes, construction of new apartment buildings, and work on housing plans and ordinances. A Work Force Development Task Force was put in place, and the group identified the recruitment of workers who like rural and prairie living as best long range approach. Work priorities for 2009 will include the development of improved career education systems and highlighting the great job opportunities in our area. The NWRDC provides staff assistance and support for the project including acting as the fiscal agent.

WIND ENERGY

Funding Sources: Southwest Initiative Fund - \$3,942.

Staff: Cam Fanfulik

The NWRDC is partnering with Rural Energy Development Initiative (REDI), Southwest Minnesota Initiative Foundation, and Northwest Minnesota Foundation to provide organizing and technical assistance to rural entities seeking to develop wind energy projects in northwest Minnesota. Low-interest loans will be made available for feasibility studies of potential projects. The project will also raise awareness of the benefits of renewable energy development, energy conservation, and energy efficiency.



ADA ADVANCES

Funding Sources: Northwest Minnesota Foundation and Ada Area Promotions - \$663; Tax Levy - \$51.



Staff: Leon Heath and Neil Doty & Associates, Fargo

Provided staff support for a project of Ada Area Promotions, the Ada Economic Development Authority, and the City of Ada to establish a new joint economic development process and identify a vision for the future of the Community.

The project identified roles and responsibilities for each organization, completed a draft vision statement for the Community, and formed an Investors Group to help provide equity capital for new or expanding businesses.

WILKIN COUNTY HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

Funding Sources: Wilkin County/MN Dept. of Public Safety - \$12,297

Staff: Jennifer Olson

The Northwest Regional Development Commission is composing an All Hazard Mitigation Plan for Wilkin County. When completed, the plan will have multiple functions including maintaining eligibility for funding, increased preparedness, continual mitigation strategies and lessened risk.

EMS MAPS

Funding Sources: Greater NW Emergency Services - \$3,000; Tax Levy - \$714.

Staff: Troy Schroeder

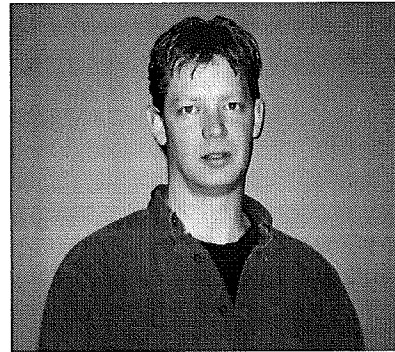
The RDC Planning Department contracted with the Greater Northwest Emergency Medical Service to create city maps with the E911 rural addressing labels and hospitals on the maps. The maps were provided to each EMS service district for incorporation into a county based mapping program the RDC completed for the EMS district in 2005. All the cities in the 14 county service area were mapped for this project. The EMS group continues to use GIS services to improve the performance standards on each emergency response.

Transportation

Purpose: To insure safe efficient movement of people and commodities in the region. Provide an ongoing forum for important transportation issues in the region. Assist Mn/DOT and provide input with it's planning efforts and programs.

Funding Sources: MN Department of Transportation \$52,011; RDC Tax Levy - \$12,944.

Service Priorities: Direction setting, comprehensive regional planning, legislative advocacy, MN/DOT project coordination.



Above: Troy Schroeder, Transportation Planner

Transportation Highlights

Region is Planning Constructing on Red River Bridges

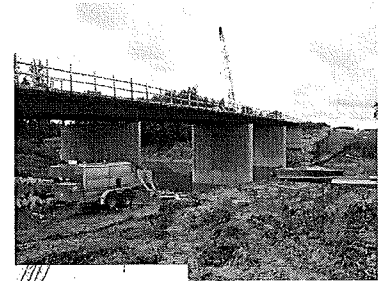
Mn/DOT completed bridge inspections of all the fracture critical bridges in the state as ordered by the commissioner of transportation. The resulting information led to numerous projects getting advanced for construction repair or replacement. Norman County is replacing the Perley Bridge with North Dakota doing a road realignment and grade raise to bring the road out of the 100-year floodplain. The new bridge length equals 801 feet; bridge width is at 39 feet. The bridge should be open to traffic in early 2009 depending on flooding conditions. The Shelly Bridge is also being replaced and plans to open for traffic in early summer of 2009.

Polk County is planning to replace the Thompson Bridge in 2012; the project could be advanced with the potential Economic Stimulus Package coming from Washington DC to Minnesota for construction of roads and bridges. This is a fracture critical bridge, with a sufficiency rating of 34.1, that continues to deteriorate and the soils around it continue to move. Polk and Grand Forks Counties are working jointly to get this bridge replaced. Polk County's share of the project is estimated at 4.5 million.

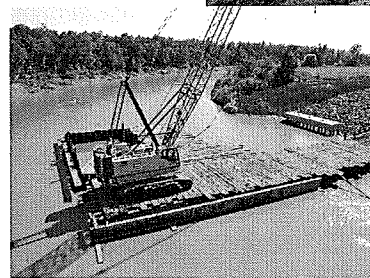
The survey and preliminary bridge plans have been approved by MNDOT. The county is in the process to purchase right of way and will have this project ready for construction in 2009 if stimulus money is made available.

Discussions are happening between the Mn/DOT Bridge Division and the ND/DOT on how the two departments can work together for the best management of both the Kennedy and Sorlie Bridges. These are both fracture critical structures that need to be addressed. The Sorlie Bridge is on the Historical list which will add to the replacement cost. Repainting the bridges is still an option but will still cost a couple million dollars.

Marshall County has two fracture critical bridges that are on the list for replacement. The Oslo and the 317 (Grafton) bridge are the two being discussed. The Grafton Bridge could be removed once the useful life is complete.



Above: **Top:** Construction workers are placing beams on the Perley bridge. The bridge is scheduled to open in May 2009.



Bottom: The Contractor has completed the coffer dam for the center pier. The coffer dam is in the process of being de-watered, after which approximately 6' at the bottom will be excavated prior to driving piling.

The TAC Bridge Committee will be discussing options to assist in a smooth transition if the ultimate decision is removal. The Oslo Bridge is planned for replacement in 2012-2015, other options include painting the Oslo and Sorlie Bridges.

Kittson County is getting a new bridge at Drayton on highway 11, construction length of 4,700 feet with a 40 foot width. Construction will take place in 2009-2010 at an estimated cost of \$38 million. The old bridge will remain open while constructing the new bridge. The Pembina Bridge had a new pier replaced in 2008. The replacement is the result of a river bank sloping on the Minnesota side.

Northern and Western MN Freight Plans

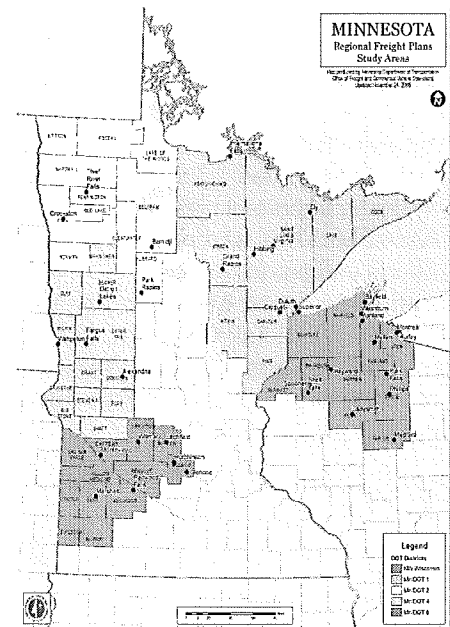
The Minnesota Department of Transportation (Mn/DOT) in partnership with the Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council, Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT), University of Wisconsin-Superior, and regional development commissions, are developing two regional freight transportation plans: The Northern Minnesota and Northwest Wisconsin Freight Plan, and the Western Minnesota (Red River) Freight Plan. The purpose of these multi-modal freight plans is to build on prior planning activities by providing a better understanding of the demands of freight on the regional transportation infrastructure and to identify policies, programs, and projects that can accommodate those demands. The map at the right illustrates the regions of the state included in Mn/DOT's freight plans. Mn/DOT Districts 1, 2 and NW Wisconsin constitute the northern freight plan. Districts 2, 4 and 8 constitute the western freight plan.

These freight plans are intended to inform transportation decision-makers on current and future investment decisions that address freight related needs on regional transportation systems. These plans will also provide a framework to:

- Examine local freight movements and trends not captured in larger planning studies, including region-specific and industry-specific trends and issues;
- Document existing freight transportation systems and their importance to the viability of different sectors of the area's economy including agricultural, energy, timber, forest products and mining;
- Recommend projects, program and/or policy changes to address freight needs, including funding strategies and private sector partnerships; and
- Strengthen relationships with freight and business community through outreach activities.

Effectively engaging and communicating with key stakeholders and the public is an important component of the planning effort, resulting in better decision making for people and goods movement. In-person interviews of key freight stakeholders in the region have been a primary method of reaching out directly to businesses that rely on the region's transportation networks to receive production inputs, and move finished products to consumer markets. Marvin Windows, Polaris, Central Boiler, Digikey, Arctic Cat, Dahlgrens, Cenex Harvest States, and American Crystal Sugar are some of the industries that will have a tier one interview conducted by Wilbur-Smith Associates, Mn/DOT, and the RDC. Approximately 50 in-person interviews have been scheduled in the two study groups. A tier two interview will be conducted via telephone or web-based surveys for the other targeted users of the system.

Additional input will be collected at three regional freight forums: February 25th in Duluth; March 12th in Willmar; and March 18th in Fargo. At these forums, we will share information from *Task 1: System Inventory* and *Task 2: Freight Flows*, as well as summary information gathered through the in-person interviews and web-based surveys. The goal at the forums is to seek the opinions of the regions business leaders about the information gathered, and the key issues emerging from the data gathered through the mid-point of the planning effort. After the initial presentation, attendees will be asked to participate in a work session to probe and discuss issues and identify and prioritize potential projects.



USTH 2 Sinkhole

The Regional Development Commissions Transportation Planners visited the USTH 2 sinkhole east of Crookston during the annual MRDO retreat. Mn/DOT plans to move both the east and west traffic lanes to the south. The riverbank slide was caused by the shrinking and swelling of the clays along the riverbank and the low water levels in the river. Similar situations have occurred along the Red Lake River in Crookston and Red Lake Falls. Mn/DOT will continue to monitor sensitive areas along the river.

Plans and Publications

Prepared by NWRDC

Plans

2008 Area Plan on Aging - The Area Plan on Aging examines senior input and demographic data to establish priorities for the use of Title III Older Americans Act funds. Includes information on the unique characteristics of our region, demographics, accomplishments, program outcomes and budget information.

CY 2008 Work Program - Details the goals and objectives of the Commission in each of the programs and planning areas.

2008 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) - This document examines economic, social, and physical information about the seven counties in Northwest Minnesota and makes recommendations on activities to enhance and improve the economy. The recommendations concentrate on job creation, promotion, agriculture, and housing which can help address population loss.

FY 2009 Regional Arts Plans - Goals, strategies and work activities for State Arts Funds and McKnight Arts Funds are included in these plans.

Revolving Loan Fund Plan - Describes the program elements and guidelines for the loan fund.

Hazard Mitigation Plans - Portrayal of information about hazards and actions being taken to decrease or eliminate existing risks. Hazard Mitigation Plans for the following counties have been approved & adopted: Becker, Clay, Kittson, Marshall, Norman, Otter Tail, Pennington, Polk, Red Lake and Roseau. Wilkin County's Hazard Mitigation Plan is currently being composed.

Excel Township Comprehensive Plan & Zoning Ordinance - The Township has completed a draft of a new comprehensive plan and zoning ordinance which will help address issues related to feedlots and intermixing farm and residential development.

Northern and Western MN Freight Plans - The RDC is participating in freight plans for Northern & Western MN. The purpose of these multi-modal freight plans is to build on prior planning activities by providing a better understanding of the demands of freight on the regional transportation infrastructure and to identify policies, programs, and projects that can accommodate those demands.

Rocksbury Township Plan and Zoning Ordinance - The township finalized their comprehensive plan and completed work on a revised zoning ordinance. The new ordinance focuses on planning for Thief River Falls growth needs, supporting rural lifestyles, encouraging higher density housing in existing areas with similar characteristics, and reducing the need for zoning permits when there is no change in usage. NWRDC provided staff assistance for writing the plan and ordinance.

Winger Plan and Zoning Ordinance - The City completed a new comprehensive plan and zoning ordinance. The plan and ordinance focus on encouraging new business development in the downtown area and improving the overall appearance of the community. The Winger EDA also completed the formal organizational process and started a series of actions to implement the development activities. NWRDC provided staff assistance for writing the plan and ordinance.

Publications

Directory of Artists and Arts Organizations - The directory contains listings of regional artists, arts organizations, school district offices and public libraries. Published online at www.nwrdc.org/arts.htm.

Artists of Northwest Minnesota - Booklet to market 34 artists in the region. 3,000 printed in 2008.

150 Years of Statehood in Minnesota: Cubed! art exhibit catalog for the special sesquicentennial exhibit.

Directory of Government Units of Service Agencies - The directory contains listings of service agencies and governmental offices from the township level through the legislative level.

CY 2008 Annual Report - Information on the funding and work activities of the Commission over the past year. Published and distributed to local officials and legislators.

Northwest Arts - Newsletter developed for the artists, arts organizations and schools in northwest Minnesota.

Senior News - Newsletter developed for the Senior Citizens and service providers of Region One, Two and Four.

www.nwrdc.org - Published updates of program information changes to our agency website.

www.visitnwminnesota.com - Web site devoted to the services, resources and recreational opportunities of our seven counties. Includes an on-line version of the Northwest Minnesota Visitor & Recreation Guide. Shopping, Land of the Dancing Sky Info. and JOB'Z Info.

Northwest Minnesota Visitor and Recreation Guide - A comprehensive listing of attractions and facilities which offer opportunities and services to local and outside visitors to area communities.

www.housingnwminnesota.org - Housing related information that is documented for the following communities: Grygla, Middle River, Newfolden, Oklee, Plummer, Red Lake Falls, St. Hilaire, Thief River Falls and Warren.

Committee Membership List

Region 1 Aging Advisory Committee

Terence Blacklance	Thief River Falls
Bob Carlson	Thief River Falls
Allen Ducharme	Red Lake Falls
* Matthew Edman	Alvarado
Jamie Hennen	Ada
Gerald Jacobson	Fertile
Keith Mykleseth	Crookston
Warren Olson	Halstad
Julie Pahlen	Roseau
Orris Rasmussen	Roseau
LeRoy Vonasek	Warren
Ronald Weiss	Red Lake Falls
Betty Younggren	Hallock

Region 2 Aging Advisory Committee

Karen Ahmann	Mahnomen
Elveda Bliss	Park Rapids
Ann Daley	Bemidji
* Dick Devine	Park Rapids
Raymer Hoyum	Kelliher
W. Patrick Johnson	Clearbrook
Kathy Judkins	Bemidji
Ken Moorman	Baudette
John Nelson	Clearbrook
John Oren	Baudette
Joe Vene	Bemidji
Nancy Wendler	Baudette

Regional Arts Council

Betty Halvorson	Plummer
Alice Hofstad	Plummer
Patricia Jacklitch	East Grand Forks
Kimberley Johnson	Kennedy
Dale Knotek	Crookston
Gen Knott	Red Lake Falls
Ken Kylmanen	Twin Valley
Honey Olson	Ada
Betty Pikop	Stephen
* Cindy Tsukichi	Thief River Falls
Mary Vatsdal	Roseau
Janelle Wiedrich	Hallock

Transportation Advisory Committee

Milton Alm	Norman County
John Anderson	Kittson County
Lon Aune	Marshall County
Kelly Bengtson	Kittson County
Sharon Bring	Marshall County
Mike Flaagan	Pennington County
Marvin Gunderson	Norman County
* Donald Jensen	Pennington County
Alan Johnston	Roseau County
Brian Ketring	Roseau County
Courtney Kleven	Red Lake County
Rich Sanders	Polk County
Warren Strandell	Polk County
Ronald Weiss	Red Lake County

Bridge Subcommittee

Milton Alm	Norman County
Kelly Bengtson	Kittson County
Sharon Bring	Marshall County
Curtis Carlson	Marshall County
Warren Strandell	Polk County

Enterprise Fund

Loan Fund Committee

* Randall Aarestad	Halstad
Reed Engelstad	Red Lake Falls
James Herdliska	Erskine
Shannon Mortenson	Kennedy
Todd Peterson	Roseau
Doug Safar	Warren
James Snyder	Thief River Falls

Job & Career Committee

Gerald Jacobson	Fertile
Al Leiran	Ada
* Duane Lyberg	Hallock
Bill Montague	Crookston
Mike Moore	Thief River Falls
Velma Oakland	Red Lake Falls
Jim Richter	East Grand Forks

Promotions Committee

Delores Adkins	Ada
Pam Heeten	Roseau
Keith Mykleseth	Crookston
Jim Thomasson	Mentor
Ethel Thorlacious	Stephen

*Chair

Drees, Risky & Vallager, Ltd.

Certified Public Accountants

117 South Broadway
Crookston, Minnesota 56716
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INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT

Board of Directors
Northwest Regional Development Commission
Warren, Minnesota 56762

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of the governmental activities and general fund of the Northwest Regional Development Commission as of and for the year ended December 31, 2007, which collectively comprise the Commission's basic financial statements as listed in the table of contents. These financial statements are the responsibility of Northwest Regional Development Commission's management. Our responsibility is to express opinions on these financial statements based on our audit.

We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation. We believe that our audit provides a reasonable basis for our opinions.

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the respective financial position of the governmental activities and the general fund of the Northwest Regional Development Commission as of December 31, 2007 and the respective changes in financial position for the year then ended in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

In accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*, we have also issued reports dated June 5, 2008 on our consideration of Northwest Regional Development Commission's internal control over financial reporting and our tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts and grant agreements and other matters. The purpose of those reports is to describe the scope of our testing of internal control over financial reporting and compliance and the results of that testing and not provide an opinion on the internal control over financial reporting or on compliance. These reports are an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* and should be considered in conjunction with this report in considering the results of our audit.

The management's discussion and analysis and budgetary comparison information on pages 5 through 10 and page 26, respectively, are not a required part of the basic financial statements but are supplementary information required by accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. We have applied certain limited procedures, which consisted principally of inquiries of management regarding the methods of measurement and presentation of the required supplementary information. However, we did not audit the information and express no opinion on it.

Our audit was conducted for the purpose of forming opinions on the financial statements that collectively comprise the Northwest Regional Development Commission's basic financial statements. The other supplementary information presented for purposes of additional analysis and are not a required part of the basic financial statements. The accompanying Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards is presented for purposes of additional analysis as required by U.S. Office of Management and Budget Circular A-133, *Audits of States, Local Governments and Non-Profit Organizations*, and is also not a required part of the basic financial statements of the Northwest Regional Development Commission. Such information has been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audit of the basic financial statements and, in our opinion, are fairly stated in all material respects in relation to the basic financial statements taken as a whole.

June 5, 2008
Crookston, Minnesota

DREES, RISKEY & VALLAGER, LTD.

Drees, Risky & Vallager, Ltd.
Certified Public Accountants

Members of Minnesota and North Dakota Society of CPA's
Members of American Institute of Certified Public Accountants

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