

Tentative Agenda as of 1-4-2024

Montana Council of Cooperatives
2024 Annual Meeting
January 29th -30th, 2024
Heritage Inn
Great Falls, Montana

Montana Cooperatives Making a Difference

*** Throughout the agenda, MCOC is inviting cooperatives to showcase their innovative approaches in making a difference to Montana Communities. From building out revolving loan funds, creating new investment streams, saving essential services, and supporting cooperation amongst cooperatives, these “Cooperative Impact Highlight Stories” will emphasize how important cooperatives are to Montana and inspire other cooperatives on finding ways to further serve their communities.*

January 29th, 2024

Conference Begins:

1:00 to 1:10pm **Welcome by MCOC President Heidi Borlaug**

1:10pm -2:15pm **Keynote Speakers: The Global Story on Cooperatives Making a Difference
Doug O’Brien- President and CEO of the National Business Cooperative
Association**

Sponsored by: AgWest Farm Credit



BREAK -

2:25-2:35pm **Cooperatives Impact Highlight Story: *Clearwater Credit Union and the Morning Star Credit Union Story:***

- Maria Valandra- Clearwater Credit Union Vice President Community Partnerships
- Sharon Small- The People’s Partners for Community Development Executive Director

Community Members of Rosebud and Bighorn County recognized that they were in a financial desert and created a solution using the cooperative business model. Welcome Morning Star Credit Union, one of the newest cooperatives in the State that is dedicated to providing quality financial services to their communities and members. Hear how Clearwater Credit Union aided in the development of the new credit union and learn more about their mission to reinvest in the communities they serve.

2:35pm- 3:45 pm Finding Common Ground – Cooperation Across the Cooperative Community

A robust cross-sector panel discussion on different cooperative sectors' opportunities and obstacles and where collaboration can occur.

Moderator:

- David Kelsey, Yellowstone Valley Electric Cooperatives and Montana Council of Cooperatives:

Panelists:

- Gerry Singleton, President/CEO of Montana's Credit Unions
- Charlotte Hilton, Chief Operating Officer of Broadband MT
- Tracy McIntyre, Administrator of the Montana Council of Cooperatives
- Art Schmidt, CEO Mountain View Cooperative
- Gary Wiens, CEO Montana Electric Cooperatives' Association
- Paul Travitz, Riverside Crossing Housing Cooperative

3:45pm – 4pm Cooperative Impact Highlight Story: *Utilizing Cooperative Investment Solutions for Housing and Community Revitalization*

- Mandie Reed, Commissioner of the Musselshell Valley Development Cooperative

Seeing the continued need for housing in their community along with a need to revitalize commercial buildings, a dedicated group of community members in Harlowton, Montana came together to form the Musselshell Valley Development Cooperative. The mission of the co-op is to build the potential of the Upper Musselshell Valley through community collaboration, investment, and development. Mandie Reed, a founding member of the newest cooperative in Montana, will share why the community came together to find local solutions.

4pm to 5:30 pm – National Cooperative Business Association- Policy Roundtable Discussion:

This session will focus on how cooperatives in Montana can work with the national cooperative community to protect, defend, and advance cooperatives. Doug O'Brien, President, and CEO of NCBA CLUSA, will be on hand to lead a discussion and receive input that will help shape the national cooperative policy agenda in the coming years. Be prepared to come to the table with ideas on how the co-ops and the cooperative business model can help address some of the nation's greatest challenges and ensure that everyone can participate in today's economy.

6:00pm Networking Hour

**6:30pm The Montana Cooperative Community Celebration Dinner
Hosted by Montana Cooperative Development Center**

Sponsored by Pinion

Join Montana Cooperative Development Center in Celebrating 25 Years

- Awarding the Energized with Cooperative Spirit Award



January 30th, 2024

7:00 to 8:00am Breakfast- Buffet

8:00 to 9:00am (meeting) **MCOC Annual Meeting** – MCOC Board of Directors
Welcome by Congressional Delegates (invited)

- By-law revision adoption- (see website www.montanacouncil.coop for revisions)
- Membership update, value of membership, membership recruitment,
- MCOC strategic planning report and 2024 workplan

9:00am- 10:00am **Designing the 2025 MCOC Policies and Advocacy Workplan**

Break

10:15am- 10:30am **Cooperative Impact Highlight Story: *Impacting local communities through Revolving Loans***

- Jason Moothart, InterBel Telephone Cooperative

InterBel Telephone Cooperative and Lincoln Electric Cooperative came together in 2006 to apply for the Rural Business Development Grant and created the first cooperative revolving loan fund in Montana. Hear from Jason Moothart, General Manager of the InterBel Telephone Cooperative about the impacts the revolving loan fund has had in the greater Eureka area and how the program is continuing to support economic development across their joint service areas.

10:35- 11:15am **Childcare Solutions for Montana Cooperatives – Zero to Five, Montana**

- Rhonda Schwenk, Program Director

Sponsored by Montana ESGR (Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve)



Zero to Five, Montana will join the Montana Cooperative Community to share information on the Montana Child Care Business Connect program and the Family Forward initiative. This is an informative session where members of the Zero to Five, Montana team will share tools, resources and more on how cooperatives can address child care issues for their entity and for their community.

11:45am – 12:00pm **Cooperative Impact Highlight Story: *Saving an Essential Community Cornerstone in Rural Montana***

- **Sue Olson, President of North Country Development Cooperative**

North Country Development Cooperative was incorporated in June 2016 in Whitewater, MT after their local bar and community center had been closed for several months and was being considered for purchase by outside groups. With no other businesses or community centers in the area, it was important that they maintain it. A small group of residents started the cooperative as an option for purchasing North 40 Bar to keep it in operation. Learn more from Sue Olson and others from the Cooperative about how they banded together to save an essential component of their community.

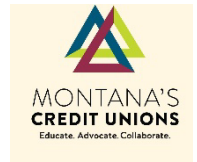
12:30 – 1:45pm

Designing the Montana Cooperative Academy with Great Falls College

- **Quincie Jones, Executive Director of Career and Technical Education**

Sponsored by the Montana's Credit Unions

Stay for lunch and help us plan for the future! MCDC and MCOC have partnered with the Great Falls/MSU College to design a Montana Cooperative Academy, with funding received from CHS Foundation. The team from Great Falls College will lead a discussion with the Cooperative Community to garner insights on how a Cooperative Academy can support and enhance the Cooperative Community of Montana.



1:45-2pm

Door Prizes and Head Home

2:00pm

MCOC Board of Directors Meeting (members are welcomed)