

MISSOULA AREA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: August 9, 2010

CONTACT: Jessica Meyers, 406-532-3206

A Nordic Events Center and Training Facility is now in the works in Seeley Lake, Montana. The Missoula Area Economic Development Corporation (MAEDC), is partnering with the BitterRoot Economic Development District (BREDD) and the Seeley Lake Community Council's Economic Development Committee to make the center a reality.

The first step is the initiation of a feasibility study to determine how Seeley Lake can attract international and national attention through the development of a world-class skiing infrastructure. Last month The Montana Department of Commerce awarded a \$15,000 grant to MAEDC for this feasibility study. The grant is conditional, requiring the community to raise an additional \$10,000.

The project concept developed out of a need to create year round economic stability for the Seeley Lake community. The Nordic ski community has already proven its ability to host very successful winter events--the Annual O.S.C.R. cross country ski race and the Seeley Lake Biathlon. These events take place on an acclaimed Nordic trails system built and maintained through thousands of hours of community support. <http://www.SeeleyLakeNordic.org>) A portion of these trails are also incorporated in the Annual Race to the Sky sled dog event, a qualifier for the Iditarod.

The emphasis of the feasibility study will be not only to assess Seeley Lake's ability to attract skiers, but also the ability of such a Nordic Center to provide winter economic opportunities for the greater community. The idea for the project arose from the reported success of similar rural communities in Maine and Washington, now supported by similar Nordic ski centers. This feasibility study will supply economic, market, technical, financial, and management analysis specific to Seeley Lake.

In keeping with its commitment to the community and support for economic development projects, the Seeley Lake Community Foundation (SLCF) has generously announced their "Nordic Challenge." The SLCF will offer a matching donation of one dollar for each dollar raised, up to \$5,000.

As noted by Addrien Marx, Chair of the Seeley Lake Community Foundation, "We are enthusiastic about the opportunities this feasibility study will open up for our community and for the region. Seeley Lake has a great foundation and incredible resources to make this project a remarkable success. We expect the feasibility study will be the first of several steps in a process which has the potential to breathe much-needed life into the year-round economic base of our community."

For more information regarding this grant award, contact Jessica Meyers at the Missoula Area Economic Development Corporation at 406-532-3206. (<http://www.maedc.org>)

For more information regarding the feasibility study for a Nordic Ski Center and Training Facility contact Addrien Marx at 406-677 -4253.

The Seeley Lake Community Foundation will be accepting donations for the "Nordic Challenge" at PO Box 25, Seeley Lake, MT 59868. Be sure to write "Nordic Challenge" on the check memo. (www.seeleylakecommunityfoundation.org)

END