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## Lastest news....

Welcome to the first Vision West ND Newsletter!  
The newsletter contains an update from the Vision West ND Consortium Meeting, Faces of the Consortium and other announcements.



### ~ Mission of Vision West ND ~

Lead, educate, and collaborate to mobilize the 19 western North Dakota counties toward a resilient and prosperous quality of life for all residents.



## ~ February Consortium Meeting Update ~

There were 26 consortium members and guests that attended the Economic Diversification through Cluster Identification Workshop and Consortium Meeting held at the Strom Center at Dickinson State University on February 11.

Karalea Cox, consultant with DLN Consulting, Inc., presented information on traded and regional cluster development. She showed how clusters form and develop through different industries. Cox used the California wine industry as a cluster example and then

guided attendees in applying the same principles to the Vision West ND region. The group discussed the possibilities for a plastic plant near Minot or refinery near Belfield, ND. At the end of the presentation Chairman Dukart asked for a committee to explore possible clusters in Western North Dakota. Members on the committee include Jim Parke, Roosevelt Custer Regional Council; Ray Ann Kilen, Dickinson State University; Neil Scharpe, Minot State University; Melanie Bauer-Dukart, USDA-Rural Development; and Donna Scott, Dunn County Commissioner. Karalea Cox will work with the group to select an industry to focus on. More information on clusters, [www.clustermapping.us](http://www.clustermapping.us) and to see the Vision West ND Region,

[www.clustermapping.us/region/custom/vision\\_west\\_nd\\_by\\_karaleacox](http://www.clustermapping.us/region/custom/vision_west_nd_by_karaleacox).

Annie Carlson and her husband John own and operate Morning Joy Farms (MJF) located in Mercer, ND. The Carlsons live on their family farm with their three young children. Annie spoke about the farm's operational structure raise grass-fed sheep, hogs, turkeys, and chickens. MJF markets its products through a customized website and local farmers markets. It offers options to meet consumers' needs. Morning Joy Farm's offers include whole animal, cut selection and freezer meals. The freezer meals and other baked goods are produced in a commercial kitchen funded in part by the North Dakota Department of Commerce's Agricultural Products Utilization Commission (APUC). For more information: [www.morningjoyfarm.com](http://www.morningjoyfarm.com)

Matt Perdue, researcher at the Strom Center at DSU and a Ray, ND native, presented an update on the progress of the Mainstreet Success Project. He facilitated the completion of focus group sessions in communities around western North Dakota including Hettinger, Killdeer and Crosby. Perdue's early findings show that family ties are a big motivator in most small communities. Other findings revealed that half of all respondents would like to see improvements to their downtowns and half would like to see more diverse recreational opportunities. He had respondents list what they thought a small town needed. Child care and restaurants generally topped the list. Perdue is still working to compile the data and expects to complete the study by early spring. Data from Bowman, Beach, Ray, Stanley, and Beulah is still being collected.

Joel Manske the Fargo field office director presented on behalf of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Manske presented information on HUD's mission and vision. He also outlined the states that compose the Region VIII territory, which is based out of Denver. Manske continued his presentation by introducing HUD's major program offices and related FHA programs.

Manske provided the consortium members with details regarding the application process for single family home programs , multi-family home programs, public housing programs and office of Native American programs(ONAP). These programs are a mix of grants and loans that applicants can apply for. For more information on HUD programs please visit, [www.hud.gov](http://www.hud.gov).



## Face of the Consortium - Divide County

**Member:** Divide County

**Member Type:** Voting Member

**Representative:** KayCee Lindsey

**Position:** Community Development Director, Divide County Jobs Development Authority

**Divide County** is a growing community in northwest North Dakota. The northern border is Saskatchewan, Canada, the western border is Montana, and the county is bordered on the east and south by Burke and Williams Counties. The county seat is located in Crosby and the other incorporated communities include Ambrose, Fortuna, and Noonan. Divide County has historically been a rural, agricultural community with the local economy based on farm and ranch. Recently, the expansion of oil and gas exploration and production in the Bakken and Three Forks formations has diversified the local economy. Read more about county representative KayCee Lindsey and Divide County.

**Tell us about you:** (Professional) KayCee took the position of the Divide County Jobs Development Authority Executive Director in 2010. She is also the Small Business Development Center Counselor for Divide County, which was part of the position when she started in 2010. Since 2010, she has worked with over \$12,000,000 worth of investment back into the area through business start-ups and expansions. She has served as President of the Crosby Area Chamber, served as Secretary of the Divide County Fair Board and is involved with assisting many boards and organizations throughout the county. KayCee is currently assisting with a Community Health Needs Assessment for our local hospital, St. Luke's Medical Center. KayCee enjoys helping to keep the community continue to grow and flourish.

**Tell us about you:** (Personal) KayCee was raised in Hazen, North Dakota and graduated with an Associates of Applied Science Degree in Dental Hygiene in 2006. KayCee and her husband Devin have a daughter DelliAnn(3), with another on the way in May. She enjoys spending time with her family and friends, reading, and sewing!

**Involvement with Vision West ND:** KayCee was appointed to be the Vision West ND Consortium Member from Divide County by the Divide County Commissioners in 2011 when the Vision West ND Consortium was formed. She has been involved in forming the Steering Committee and assisted with the community meetings that worked on the Divide County Strategic Plan. Although, the local steering committee hasn't met in quite some time, many of the goals are still being met. Since the release of the Strategic Plan,

there have been more sidewalks, a splash-pad park, an outdoor volleyball court, and handicapped parking on Main Street, and currently a large daycare facility is being built. These are just a few of the plans and goals from the Divide County Strategic Plan. KayCee is the current Secretary for the Vision West ND Consortium, and is involved in the Child Care Committee and the Industrial Valuation Committees.

**Favorite moment or moments with the VWND Consortium Meeting?** KayCee really enjoys attending all of the meetings, but networking with the members is the most rewarding. KayCee said, "it truly has been such a great experience to get to know everyone and help work towards bettering our communities and our region as a whole. It has definitely made me a more confident individual and has broadened my knowledge base! I also am really happy that I had the opportunity to represent Vision West ND with a few others in Washington, D.C. & in Boston. These are all part of some great memories that I will never forget!"

Visit the Divide County website at, [www.dividecountynd.org](http://www.dividecountynd.org) and like their page on Facebook.

### **ND Reclamation Conference - Landowner Panel**



The North Dakota State Reclamation Conference was held at the Astoria in Dickinson, ND on February 23rd. Members in attendance at the meeting were Troy Coons, president of the NW Landowners and pipeline committee member; Doug Perkins, Houston Engineering, Inc. and Chair of pipeline committee; and Deb Nelson Consortium Administrator. Vision West ND was a conference sponsor.



## **Face of the Consortium - Houston Engineering Inc.**

**Member:** Houston Engineering, Inc.

**Member Type:** Associate Member

**Representative:** Douglas Perkins

**Position:** Dickinson Office Manager

**Houston Engineering, Inc. (HEI)** started in 1968 as a small civil engineering firm in Fargo, ND. Today HEI is presently headquartered in Fargo, ND with offices across North Dakota and Minnesota. North Dakota offices are located in Fargo, Bismarck, Dickinson, Minot and Grand Forks. HEI employ nearly 180 professionals across its different offices in ND and MN and offers services in water resources, transportation, infrastructure, environmental and technology.

**Tell us about you:** (Professional) Doug has been involved in municipal civil engineering since 1989. He has worked primarily with water, pipeline, and roadway projects. Doug particularly enjoys working and interacting with people. This experience has helped him be an impressive Office Manager at Houston Engineering.

**Tell us about you:** (Personal) Doug was raised in the mountain states of Utah and Idaho. He has been married for over 22 years and he and his wife are raising four children; three boys and one girl. Doug is passionate about devoting time to his family. He receives great joy participating in outdoor activities like fishing and camping, especially when he can share the experiences with his sons. Other hobbies Doug enjoys include reading and gardening.

**Involvement with Vision West ND:** Doug has been a member of Vision West ND for almost a year. He gained interest in Vision West ND initiatives because he wanted to be a part of creating solutions for the challenges faced by western ND. Doug serves as the chair of the Consortium's newly developed Pipeline Committee.

**Favorite moment or moments with the VWND Consortium?** Doug appreciates the content delivered by Consortium presenters. The information he receives is a resource for him to understand the changing environment across the state.

Visit the Houston Engineering, Inc. website at, [www.houstoneng.com](http://www.houstoneng.com).



**Please welcome Stantec as a new Associate Member!**  
**Stantec is represented by Carron Day.**



## Announcements:

March 8, 2016 - VWND Consortium Meeting - Conference Call

April 14, 2016 - VWND Consortium Meeting - Williston

June 14, 2016 - VWND Transfer of Knowledge Workshop - Minot

*For more information on announcements visit the VWND website.*



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