

# Business Council

---

## Mission and Philosophy

The mission of the Wyoming Business Council is to facilitate the growth of Wyoming's economy. To accomplish its goals, the Business Council helps to retain and expand existing Wyoming businesses and industries; recruits industries and their support businesses to the state; and works with communities to develop infrastructure to become business-ready.

The Business Council's divisions include Agribusiness, Business & Industry; Investment Ready Communities; Minerals, Energy & Transportation; and Travel & Tourism. The Business Council has regional offices in Casper, Riverton, Powell, Cheyenne, Gillette, and Rock Springs.

The Wyoming Legislature created the Wyoming Business Council in 1998 to strengthen and diversify the state's foundation industries and to retain our youth through the creation of better job opportunities.

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

### Agency contacts

Tucker Fagan, CEO  
214 W. 15th Street  
Cheyenne, WY 82002  
tfagan1@state.wy.us  
307/777-2800

Bob Jensen, COO  
214 W. 15th Street  
Cheyenne, WY 82002  
bjense1@state.wy.us

### Other locations

Southeast Regional Office – Cheyenne  
Northeast Regional Office – Gillette  
West-Central Regional Office – Riverton  
East-Central Regional Office – Casper  
Southwest Regional Office – Rock Springs  
Northwest Regional Office – Powell

### Year established

1998

### Statutory references

W.S. 9-12-105 through 9-12-401

### Authorized personnel

64 Full-time

### Organizational structure

Executive, Comptroller, Support Services, Agribusiness, Business and Industry, Investment Ready Communities, Minerals, Energy and Transportation, Travel and Tourism.

### Clients served

Businesses, industries, communities and tourists.

### Budget information

Not available

# Agribusiness Division

General information

Cindy Garretson-Wiebel, Director

## Results of outcomes

The Agribusiness Division works with agricultural producers to find ways to diversify their income through value-added goods, consumer-ready products and commodities; to sustain ranching and farming operations; to create jobs; to increase competitiveness in the national and international marketplaces; and to stimulate industry growth.

This division offers workshops and resources on a variety of topics including the production of organic and naturally-grown products and has marketing programs to showcase Wyoming's premium, dairy-quality hay and to increase exposure of Wyoming's genetically superior livestock

This division is also involved in coordinating the Wyoming Leadership Education and Development program (Wyoming L.E.A.D.).

## Division Programs:

### Agricultural Leadership Program

Recognizing the importance of leadership development, the Wyoming Business Council Agribusiness Division and the Wyoming Agricultural Leadership Council formed a partnership to train up and coming leaders in agriculture.

The Wyoming Leadership Education and Development program (Wyoming L.E.A.D.) is designed for individuals involved in production agriculture or agri-business. The program strives to enhance participants' broad-based knowledge, decision-making abilities, and leadership skills for a sustainable agriculture in Wyoming. For more information contact:

Kim Porter,  
Leadership & Diversification Program Manager  
Wyoming Business Council  
Phone: 307/777-6319  
kporte@state.wy.us

### Livestock and Forage Program

Livestock programs help Wyoming producers of genetically superior livestock get their product into the domestic and international marketplace. Bringing buyer and seller together is a major goal of this program and is achieved through promotion at national and international trade events; trade missions; reverse trade missions; Web published directories and hard-copy published directories.

Forage programs are designed to get more Wyoming hay into the national marketplace. This is achieved through promotion at national and international trade events; Web published directories; hard-copy published directories and

the Wyoming Hay hotline. For more information contact:  
Scott Keith,  
Livestock/Forage Cooperative Development Specialist  
Wyoming Business Council  
300 S. Wolcott, Ste. 200  
Casper, WY 82601  
Phone: 307/237.4692  
skeith@state.wy.us

### Income Diversification Program

To help identify diversification opportunities, the WBC Agribusiness Division, along with several other state and federal agencies, formed a collaborative partnership and received a sustainable agriculture grant.

#### Project Components:

- ◆ Resource Guide: A resource guide will be developed and distributed to natural resource professionals, cooperative extension agents, and SBDC counselors.
- ◆ Regional Landowner/Trainer Workshops: Training will be provided to Natural Resources Conservation Service personnel, extension agents, and other professionals, with the resource guide as the course handbook.
- ◆ Training workshops are scheduled in:
  - ◆ Saratoga
  - ◆ Newcastle
  - ◆ Greybull
  - ◆ Pinedale
- ◆ West-wide Conference: The project will culminate with a three-day regional conference in Wyoming, focusing on agricultural enterprise diversification and how individual enterprises contribute to the sustainability of rural communities and western landscapes. The program will include local tours and seminars.
- ◆ Web-site Development: An interactive site with the components of the resource guide and links to other enterprise diversification opportunities will be maintained.

For more information contact:

Kim Porter  
Leadership & Diversification Program Manager  
Wyoming Business Council  
Phone: 307/777-6319  
kporte@state.wy.us

### Livestock Program

Programs in the livestock arena help Wyoming producers of genetically superior livestock get their product into the domestic and international marketplace. Bringing buyer and seller together is a major goal of this program and is achieved through several mediums, including:

- ◆ Promotion at national and international trade events

- ◆ Trade missions
- ◆ Reverse trade missions
- ◆ Web published directories
- ◆ Hard copy published directories

For more information contact:

Scott Keith,  
Livestock/Forage Cooperative Development Specialist  
Wyoming Business Council  
300 S. Wolcott, Ste. 200  
Casper, WY 82601  
Phone: 307/237.4692  
skeith@state.wy.us

#### **Organic/Natural Foods and Value Added Program**

This program is designed to encourage and promote the development of organic/natural foods and value-added agribusiness opportunities and markets for Wyoming agricultural products.

The objective of the program is to provide market information, data base publication, and trade show subsidization. The organic/natural foods and value-added program strives to expose companies to local, national, and international marketing opportunities. The program also aims to educate businesses on federal and state programs, government regulations, and third-party business organizations. This education is done through seminars and individual counseling. For more information contact:

Ted Craig, Value-Added Program Manager  
Wyoming Business Council  
Phone: 307/777-6578  
tcraig@state.wy.us

#### **Wyoming First Program**

The program is designed to assist Wyoming companies with the identification and promotion of their Wyoming Made products or substantially enhanced products and services. Membership allows Wyoming First participants to use the familiar "Bucking Horse and Rider" design stickers and hang tags on their products.

- ◆ Made in Wyoming products were given added visibility and exposure through the expanded Wyoming Products Pavillion at the State Fair and the "Wyoming First" Program grew by 25 percent in total businesses enrolled.

For more information contact:

Ted Craig, Value-Added Program Manager  
Wyoming Business Council  
Phone: 307/777-6578  
tcraig@state.wy.us

#### **International Trade Development**

The Wyoming Business Council establish an International Trade Development function to link Wyoming firms with new markets overseas, promote foreign investments, provide protocol, education and export

promotion assistance. For more information contact:

Cindy Garretson-Weibel, Agribusiness Director  
Wyoming Business Council  
Phone: 307/777-6589  
cgarre@state.wy.us

## **Business and Industry Division**

### **Results of outcomes**

The Business and Industry Division works to create new and better job opportunities in Wyoming by encouraging further business start-ups, by strengthening retention and expansion programs to help existing Wyoming companies, in addition to targeting and recruiting businesses to Wyoming. This division works with local organizations such as economic development groups, chambers of commerce and local governments to help build the foundation for economic development.

This division offers assistance with business permitting as well as consulting and resources regarding financial assistance available to Wyoming businesses and businesses looking to relocate to the state.

This division also administers Tradeshow Incentive Grants to assist Wyoming businesses with the costs to attend trade shows.

### **Division Programs:**

#### **Business Permitting Assistance Office**

The Business Permitting Assistance Office provides one-stop permitting and licensing information for existing Wyoming businesses and businesses wanting to relocate to the state. For more information contact:

Paul Howard, Business Permit Program Manager  
Phone: 307/777-2843  
phowar@state.wy.us

#### **Financial Resources Guide**

Wyoming offers several programs to assist businesses with their financing and training needs - Challenge Loan, Workforce Training Funds, Community Development Block Grants and Industrial Development Revenue Bonds. For more information contact:

Ben Avery, Portfolio/Loan Program Manager  
Phone: 307/777-2863  
bavery@state.wy.us

#### **GRO-Biz**

The Wyoming Procurement Technical Assistance Center is called GRO-Biz. The center assists small businesses and entrepreneurs throughout the State of

Wyoming in selling their products and service to governmental entities. The center is staffed by dedicated and knowledgeable people who have experience in dealing with the contracting arms of the federal government. GRO-Biz offers many free services and one-on-one consulting opportunities.

In cooperation with the University of Wyoming, the Wyoming Business Council provides matching cash funds to secure federal government support for the Government Resources and Opportunities for Business (GRO-Biz) program of the United States Defense Logistics Agency. For more information contact:

Rudy Nesvik, Director  
LCCC  
1400 East College Drive  
Cheyenne, WY 82007  
307/637-4990;  
Toll Free in WY 866-253-3300  
Fax: 307/632-6061  
nesvik@wyoming.com  
Web site: www.gro-biz.com

#### **Market Research Center**

The Market Research Center helps Wyoming businesses access highly sophisticated marketing information. This marketing information will improve the ability of Wyoming businesses to survive and thrive in the new economy.

The Wyoming Business Council provides matching funds to secure federal government support for the University of Wyoming's Market Research Center. For more information contact:

Michael Lambert, Manager  
Phone: 307/766.2688  
mikelamb@uwyo.edu

#### **Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP)**

The Mid-America Manufacturing Technology Center (MAMTC) serves small and mid-sized manufacturers and technology companies in Wyoming by providing counseling, training and resources to help companies grow and prosper. MAMTC helps enhance the productivity, technological performance, and competitiveness by acquiring assistance with manufacturing technology and techniques.

The Wyoming Business Council provides matching funds for the continuation of the Regional Office of the Mid-America Manufacturing Technology Center, located on the campus of the University of Wyoming and administered by the University of Wyoming in conjunction with NIST/Mid-America Manufacturing Technology Center, Inc., a Kansas corporation. For more information contact:

Larry Stewart, Director, MAMTC  
Phone: 1.800.343.1423  
Web site: www.mamtc.com

#### **Tradeshow Incentive Program**

The Wyoming Business Council Trade Incentive Program exists to encourage Wyoming businesses promote and sell their products to statewide, national and international audiences.

The Trade Show Incentive Program is a reimbursable grant; and as such, the applicant must pay all expenditures before the grant award can be disbursed. The business shall function independently in performing this activity and shall assume sole responsibility of any debts or liabilities that may be incurred in regard to this trade event. For more information contact:

Karen Payton, Wyoming Business Council  
Phone: 307/777-2861  
kpayto@state.wy.us

#### **Wyoming Research Products Center**

The Wyoming Research Products Center (RPC) was formally launched on October 1, 1999 as a collaborative effort between the University of Wyoming Research Office and the Wyoming Business Council to provide resources for developing a technology sector in Wyoming.

The technology transfer center is to help inventors statewide and at the university develop their technology innovations into marketable products. Over the last year, the center has worked to setup a program to identify faculty inventions with commercial potential and to help the entrepreneurs develop a company to develop and market the product. For more information contact:

Tony Nevshemal, Manager  
Phone: 307/766.2520  
Web site: www.uwyo.edu/rpc

#### **Wyoming Small Business Development Center**

The Wyoming Small Business Development Center's mission is to strengthen Wyoming businesses and create economic growth by providing excellent management assistance, educational programs and helpful resources for Wyoming small businesses and entrepreneurs.

The Wyoming Business Council has provided matching cash funds to secure federal funding for the Small Business Development Centers in Wyoming. In cooperation with the University of Wyoming, the Business Council believes that the SBDC provides quality services assisting businesses and entrepreneurs throughout the state. For more information contact:

Diane Wolverton, Director, SBDC  
Phone: 1.800.348.5194  
Web site: www.uwyo.edu/sbdc

#### **Wyoming SBIR/STTR Initiative (WSSI)**

The federal Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) programs provide more than \$1.6 billion annually in research and development grants and contracts to qualified small businesses.

The Wyoming SBIR/STTR Initiative (WSSI) is funded by the Wyoming Business Council (WBC) and administered by the University of Wyoming (UW) Vice-President for Research. The initiative assists qualified Wyoming small businesses and individuals in accessing the funds available through the SBIR and STTR Programs.

The Wyoming Business Council uses the program as one method for small businesses in Wyoming to access federal aid to develop their products. The Wyoming Business Council recognized that until a venture capital network can be established, tools were needed to spur innovation and a structure was needed to assist people through to commercialization where jobs are created. For more information contact:

Gene Watson, Manager  
Phone: 1.866.703.3280  
Web site: [www.uwyo.edu/sbir](http://www.uwyo.edu/sbir)

### **Wyoming Women's Business Center**

The Wyoming Women's Business Center offers Wyoming's current and prospective women business owners the business assistance they need, including access to business counseling, training, technical assistance, mentoring and networking opportunities.

The U.S. Small Business Administration primarily funds the Wyoming Women's Business Center, with additional support from the Wyoming Business Council, the University of Wyoming, the Wyoming Small Business Development Center, and the Wyoming Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault. For more information contact:

Rosemary Bratton, Director  
Phone: 307/766.3084  
Web site: [www.wyomingwomen.org](http://www.wyomingwomen.org)

## **Investment Ready Communities Division**

General information  
Steve Achter, Director

### **Results of outcomes**

The Investment Ready Communities Division helps existing Wyoming businesses by strengthening the Business Retention and Expansion Program.

This division works with communities to enhance their capabilities to meet community and economic development needs through such programs as Community Development Block Grants and Business Ready Community Grant and Loan Program.

The division is developing a community self-assessment tool that will help communities determine measures used by corporate businesses in the site selection process. The

division works with communities, local economic development groups and chambers of commerce to develop joint efforts to recruit and expand businesses.

### **Division programs:**

#### **Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program**

The Wyoming Business Council administers the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program for economic and community development projects, and its board of directors approves grant recipients. The Wyoming Community Development Authority manages the portion of funding designated by the Wyoming Business Council for housing in Wyoming.

The CDBG Program is a federally funded pass-through grant program from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Wyoming has received an annual allocation from a low of \$2.2 million to a high of \$3.7 million. For the 2004 program, the state has received \$3,754,809. For more information contact:

Terry Koerwitz, Community Development Program Manager  
Wyoming Business Council  
Phone: 307/777-2812  
[tkoerw@state.wy.us](mailto:tkoerw@state.wy.us)

Julie Kozlowski, Economic Development Grants Program Manager  
Wyoming Business Council  
Phone: 307/777-2821  
[jkolzlo@state.wy.us](mailto:jkolzlo@state.wy.us)

#### **Business Ready Community Grant and Loan Program**

The Business Ready Community Grant and Loan Program is a multi-year program designed to promote economic development at the city, town and county level in order to improve economic health and a stronger state economy. The program offers three types of funding: Business Committed, Community Readiness and Community Enhancement.

**Business Committed Projects:** Businesses committed to locate or expand in the community. Applications will be accepted at any time. Maximum award is \$1.5 million.

**Community Readiness Projects:** No specific business is committed to expand or locate in the community. The community wants to build facilities to ready itself for new business development under a specific strategy or plan of action. A community must demonstrate that appropriate planning has been conducted and capacity exists to accommodate new business development. Maximum award is \$1.5 million.

**Community Enhancement Projects:** An applicant wants to improve the community's aesthetic character or quality of life through such activities as landscaping, recreational or convention facilities in order to make itself more

attractive for business development under a specific strategy or plan of action. No specific business is committed to expand or locate in the applicant's community. Maximum award is \$500,000.

For more information contact:  
Shawn Reese, BRC Manager  
Wyoming Business Council  
Phone: 307/777-2813  
sreese@state.wy.us

### **Wyoming Community Network (WCN)**

The Wyoming Community Network (WCN) has developed an online Searchable Resource Guide for Wyoming communities and businesses. The guide provides users with the latest public and private programs that supply funding and technical assistance.

The online database is unique because it allows any organization with a program to directly control their information. Users also have the flexibility to browse through programs as well as perform key word searches.

The general public can access this resource guide by visiting [www.wyomingcommunitynetwork.com](http://www.wyomingcommunitynetwork.com) and clicking on the Connect to Database link.

The WCN is designed to connect Wyoming communities with resources and programs to aid their development. The network is a non-profit technical assistance arm of the Wyoming Rural Development Council.

For more information on how your community can capitalize on available assistance and resources call 307/777-6430.

### **State of Wyoming Consolidated Plan**

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires that states receiving certain HUD Funds prepare a State Consolidated Plan for Housing and Community Development (Consolidated Plan) and a one-year Action Plan. The state has prepared a one-year Action Plan for the State of Wyoming.

The purpose of the Consolidated Plan is to describe resources expected to be available to address the needs identified in the Consolidated Plan, describe the method for and geographic distribution of funds, describe the activities it plans to undertake to address housing, homeless and other special needs activities and non-housing community development activities as well as describe other actions it intends to take during the next year.

The Plan will also describe Program specific information on the four HUD Community Planning and Development Formula programs, Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Home Investment Partnerships Program (HOME), Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) and Housing Opportunities for Persons with Aids (HOPWA).

For further information, contact the Wyoming Community Development Authority at 307/265.0603 or the Wyoming Business Council at 307/777-2800.

# **Minerals, Energy & Transportation Division**

General information  
Patrick G. Pitet, Director

## **Results of outcomes**

The Minerals, Energy and Transportation Division mission is to assist in the value-added production of the energy and minerals resources in Wyoming.

This will be accomplished through the private sectors continued development of technologies within their industries and the Wyoming Business Council's continuing partnership with the industry to increase the value of products derived from Wyoming's natural resources, and to find new uses and markets for traditional production methods and markets.

In addition, the Division has been given the task of implementing the air service enhancement program in Wyoming. Through the first six months of 2004, the Division was instrumental in increasing air service levels to three Wyoming communities through the issuance of grants to community organizations that have arranged for local air service improvements.

### **Air Service Enhancement**

The Wyoming Air Services Financial Aid Act (Senate File 120), enacted in March 2003, gives the Business Council the responsibility to enter into contracts with entities seeking to increase air traffic and enplanements at Wyoming's ten commercial airports; increase passenger levels between commercial airports in Wyoming and regional airport hubs; assuring competitive air fares and increasing the number of routes flown in the state. For more information contact:

Patrick G. Pitet, Director, Minerals, Energy & Transportation  
Wyoming Business Council  
Phone: 307/777-2841  
ppitet@state.wy.us

### **State Energy Program**

The Wyoming Business Council administers the State Energy Program, funded by the U.S. Department of Energy. The program works to expand opportunities for alternative or renewable energy use in Wyoming using domestic fuels or resources.

Public and private entities, including industries, have become more energy efficient through the flexible State Energy Program that covers buildings, transportation and public outreach.

The Wyoming State Energy Program provides:

- ◆ training seminars for building maintenance personnel in pneumatic controls and efficient boiler operation fields
- ◆ access to Petroleum Violation Escrow Funds to be used for the demonstration of off-the-shelf energy efficiency demonstrations
- ◆ access to many funding mechanisms available on a competitive basis from the U.S. Department of Energy.

For more information contact:  
Tom Fuller, State Energy Program Manager  
Wyoming Business Council  
Phone: 307/777-2804  
tfuller@state.wy.us

## Travel & Tourism

General information  
Diane Shober, Director

### Results of outcomes

Travel & Tourism is the marketing division charged with bringing visitors to Wyoming. By actively promoting Wyoming as a vacation destination to both the domestic and international markets, the division of Travel & Tourism contributes significantly to Wyoming's economic fiber by building a strong tourism industry. In addition, the Film, Arts & Entertainment program markets Wyoming locations to production companies and promotes Wyoming's cultural amenities to further increase economic development and statewide tourism.

### Division programs:

#### Advertising, Web & Research

In addition to staff time and efforts, contracted services are purchased to assist the division. The Division is currently in contract with Barnhart/CMI as Tourism's advertising agency. The services they provide include: Creative Services, Media Purchase/Placement, Research Services, Public Relations and Interactive Website Development.

The division has worked with and purchased extensive tourism research from Longwood's International and Dean Runyon Associates to assist the industry. Research purchased includes: Economic Impact Studies, Visitor Profile Studies, Focus Groups-Advertisements, Benchmark Image Studies and Day Visitor Surveys. For more information contact:

Alan Dubberley, Deputy Director, Travel & Tourism  
Wyoming Business Council  
Phone: 307/777-8561  
adubbe@state.wy.us

#### Americas/Asia Tourism Marketing

The Americas/Asia Tourism Marketing Program promotes Wyoming as a travel destination to the consumer, emphasizing the numerous advantages of vacationing in Wyoming while educating travel agents, AAA/CAA travel counselors, tour operators, consolidators, wholesalers and individual/family travelers on Wyoming travel amenities. The program is concentrated on the United States, Canada and Asia. The Asian market is primarily driven towards Japan through a cooperative program with the States of Utah and Arizona under a joint contract with Fieldstar International based out of Salt Lake City. For more information contact:

John Logan, Americas/Asia Program Manager,  
Travel & Tourism  
Wyoming Business Council  
Phone: 307/777-2852  
jlogan@state.wy.us

#### Customer Service, Information Centers & Fulfillment

The fulfillment program is integral to our marketing strategy and directly related to our advertising program. In addition to supplying fulfillment pieces in response to visitor inquiries, the program also supports travel information centers, domestic travel shows, and domestic and international trade shows. The division prides itself on the quality and timeliness of its travel publications: The Vacation Guide, Vacation Directories, Report on Wyoming (student brochure), and the Tour Planner. The Travel and Tourism website is updated continually throughout the year to assure fresh, accurate and current information. Customer service representatives answer traveler queries both on our 800-number, in-state telephone number and at visitor information centers located in Cheyenne, Laramie, Sheridan, and Sundance. For more information contact:

Sherry Hughes, Manager, Customer Service,  
Travel & Tourism Wyoming Business Council  
Phone: 307/777-2824  
shughe@state.wy.us

#### European Marketing

The European Tourism Marketing Program promotes Wyoming as a travel destination to European travel industry professionals (including tour operators, wholesalers, receptive tour operators, and travel agents) and assists them in the development of tourism products. The program also markets the state to the European media (trade publications, general interest consumer publications, and travel publications) to generate consumer interest and demand for tourism products featuring Wyoming. Along with our neighboring states of Montana, Idaho and South Dakota, the division contracts with Rocky Mountain International to coordinate our marketing efforts in Europe. For more information contact:

Rita Greene Bellardo, European Program Manager  
Travel & Tourism, Wyoming Business Council  
307/777-2853  
rgreen@state.wy.us

### **Media and Public Relations**

This office works closely with over travel writers and editors, broadcasters and other media professionals worldwide to facilitate publication and airing of Wyoming travel stories. Division personnel personally deliver the Wyoming message to more than 30 major daily newspaper and travel magazine editors' offices each year putting Wyoming at the forefront of state tourism marketing. These trips focus on markets with the most potential of bringing visitors to the state. The utilization of contracted video services has allowed us to provide fresh Wyoming footage and television features to such outlets as: NBC News, CBS News, ABC News, FOX News, A&E, Discovery, The Travel Channel and many others each year. For more information contact:

Chuck Coon, Manager, Tourism Media Relations  
Travel & Tourism, Wyoming Business Council  
Phone: 307/777-2831  
ccoona@state.wy.us

### **Film, Arts & Entertainment**

The Film, Arts & Entertainment Program markets Wyoming locations and production, support and crew services to production companies. When film or ad companies work in Wyoming, they contribute significantly to the local economy through local crew hires, rentals and purchases. Viewing Wyoming locations/tourism destinations on the motion picture or television screen impacts potential tourists significantly, and may affect their decision to visit Wyoming.

This program also promotes Wyoming's cultural amenities through partnerships with local art organizations, publications and educational workshops for individual artists. This increases the economic and institutional infrastructure and connectivity between arts and cultural organizations in the state. For more information contact:

Michell Phelan, Manager, Film, Arts & Entertainment  
Travel & Tourism, Wyoming Business Council  
Phone: 307/777-2855  
mphela@state.wy.us

# Business Council organization chart

