

**Organization Name: Yellowstone Country Montana, Inc**

**Project Name: FY 11 OPPORTUNITY—Minnesota Ski & Snowboarding Expo**

**Application Completed by: Robin Hoover 8-19-10**

**Please explain the need for this project as well as a clear overview of the concept of the project. Narrative must provide enough details that those reviewing the application can comprehend or visualize the full scope of the project. Narrative should be a full overview, yet explicit and to the point.**

Yellowstone Country requests approval to allocate **FY 11 OPPORTUNITY FUNDS** in the amount of **\$1,000.00** to purchase “Ski Yellowstone Country” booth space at the 2010 Minneapolis Ski & Sports Expo, which will take place October 22-24, 2010. Following is the narrative from the proposal submitted to the YCMI BOD:

*Red Lodge Mountain Resort is requesting \$1000 funding on behalf of all four Yellowstone Country ski resorts (Red Lodge Mountain Resort, Bridger Bowl, Moonlight Basin and Big Sky Resort) in support of our fall marketing tour. Our funding request has changed significantly from years past. However, as a group we are committed to continued promotions throughout North Dakota and Minnesota. Our hope is that Yellowstone Country will generously contribute some financial support, which would primarily go toward the “Ski Yellowstone Country” booth at the Minneapolis Ski and Snowboard Expo, our principal stop on the tour. The Minneapolis Ski and Snowboard Expo is estimated to have 18,000 attendees. According to BEWI, of these attendees 43% plan to gather information and 40% are planning travel to a destination ski resort. This is a fantastic opportunity for the Yellowstone Country ski areas to reach devoted skiers and riders planning their out of state winter vacations. 2009 was the first time we have arranged to attend the Expo and unanimously felt it was an overwhelming success. Red Lodge Mountain Resort, Bridger Bowl and Moonlight Basin split the cost of the booth space to represent Ski Yellowstone Country, Montana. Big Sky Resort purchased their own booth for this event. While booth space is rather expensive at the Expo, it is great exposure in one of our most important markets. The funding from Yellowstone Country will lessen the burden on the individual resorts and facilitate a continued presence to attend the Expo. The allotment of the funds will be as follows:*

*Ski Yellowstone Country Booth \$1000*

*I have enclosed a full summary of the 2009 shows where Yellowstone Country brochures were distributed at each stop. Your support allows us to expand on existing shows and develop new ones, which in turn reaches more potential Montana visitors. If you have any questions, please contact me at 800-444-8977 or [groups@RedLodgeMountain.com](mailto:groups@RedLodgeMountain.com). Thank you for your time and consideration!*

*Value of the Minnesota/North Dakota Ski Shows*

*Red Lodge Mountain Resort recognizes the value of the North Dakota and Minnesota visitors. It is estimated that 55% of our out of state guests come from North Dakota and Minnesota. Based on the distance traveled we can assume that these guests are overnight visitors. The Road Show format works best with our North Dakota and Minnesota guests, as it allows us to meet face to face with potential skiers/snowboarders. We distribute our respective resort brochures, the Travel Montana Winter Guide and the Yellowstone Country Travel Guide, as well as, information from our local cities and lodging properties.*

*2009 Venues*

#### *Bismarck, ND*

*In 2009 we had two venues in Bismarck. Every year we work with Huff Hills Ski Resort, the Huff Hills Ski Patrol and Savvy Skate and Board Shop to put on the show, held at Savvy. This show is well established and has a substantial group loyal attendees. We provide food and drinks and we setup our booths in Savvy's indoor skateboard park. Prizes are raffled off throughout the evening. The cost of this show includes the food and drinks, radio and newspaper advertising. This show always has a great turnout. Rob (owner of Savvy) does an excellent job of promoting the show and brings in a lot of his clients; it is also well promoted by Huff Hills and their patrollers. This show provides fantastic exposure to the snowboard crowd. There is always a core group of Bismarck skiers who also attend this event. They create a fun "party" atmosphere and people come to hang out and chat about winter in Montana.*

*Last year we also tried a second venue in Bismarck at the Scheels store, located in Kirkwood Mall. We have been seeking a second venue in Bismarck that may be less intimidating to skiers. Unfortunately, there is no specialty ski shop in the area. Scheels was not the ideal stop for us; the Scheels shoppers are not generally skiers or snowboarders. We were setup at the mall entrance to Scheels, which was not a high traffic location. We unfortunately did not talk to a lot of skiers as we had hoped. In the future if we were to do this show again, much more advertising would be necessary. I think that the more established show at Savvy is more worth investing advertising into rather than splitting our resources in the Bismarck market.*

#### *Grand Forks, ND*

*There are two venues in Grand Forks. The first is at University of North Dakota, where we setup our booths in the Student Union Building. The cost of this show includes the booth space, ads in the student newspaper and posters around campus. This is a worthy college stop with a reasonably high turnout. The tables were in a high traffic area near the campus food court as usual. There is a large amount of interest from students again trying to plan winter or spring break ski trips.*

*The second venue is The Ski and Bike Shop where we usually host an evening event and prizes are given away throughout the evening; however, in 2009 this show was scheduled on a Saturday during the day. The traffic was spread out throughout the day instead of crammed into a couple hours, allowing more time to talk with each guest. Terry's shop is the perfect stop for us. His clientele is very outdoor oriented and very excited to talk about skiing and snowboarding in Montana. They look forward to our visit every year. Terry and his staff are also excellent promoters of winter in Montana and our show. The cost of this show is food, radio and newspaper advertising.*

#### *Fargo, ND*

*There are two venues in Fargo. The first is at North Dakota State University, where we setup our booths in the Student Union Building. The cost for this show includes booth space rental, ads in the student newspaper and posters. This is a great stop with a high turnout every year. This year the tables were in a high traffic area near the campus coffee shop and book store. There is a large amount of interest from students trying to plan winter or spring break ski trips. The second Fargo venue is Scheels. This year we rearranged our schedule to be at the store on the first day of their fall ski and snowboard sale. This is a very high traffic store, where we receive a maximum amount of exposure and it is a free place for us to set up. This year we were in a different location near both the ski and snowboard departments. The traffic was lower in this area of the store; however we were able to talk to more skiers and snowboarders instead of the hunting crowd. Cost for this show includes radio and newspaper advertising; Scheels does share in the cost of the advertising. This is not the perfect location in Fargo to reach skiers and riders; however there are no specialty shops like in some of the other cities.*

#### *Alexandria, MN*

*This show was a new stop for us in 2009. The previous year we were able to attend a gear swap in this area, but were unable to attend the same event this year. We felt it was important to keep in contact with the skiers in this area. Faction, a local board shop, was not the ideal location for this event. It was fairly well attended; however the store setup is not conducive to booth setup. This made it difficult to talk with people. A fair number of people stopped by the store and picked up information. The owner of this store did a lot of promoting for us as well as Andes Tower Hills, the local ski resort. The turnout was lower than we were hoping; however it was exposure to families of skiers and snowboarders in Eastern Minnesota. Cost for this show will include food, radio and newspaper advertising.*

#### *Minneapolis, MN*

*2009 is the first year that the Ski Montana Road Show has made a stop at the Ski and Snowboard Expo. This show is put on by BEWI Productions, a well established producer of winter promotions and expositions.*

*Red Lodge Mountain Resort, Bridger Bowl and Moonlight Basin split the cost of the booth space to represent Ski Yellowstone Country, Montana. Moonlight Basin did not have a rep at this event; however, they were represented by Bucks T4, a Big Sky lodging property. Big Sky Resort purchased their own booth at this event.*

*It was well worth rearranging our road show schedule to go to this event. This show has high attendance of skiers and snowboarders. These people are seriously looking to plan their winter ski trips. There were also a lot of ski clubs at this event. This is great exposure for us in one of our most important markets. It is very important for us to attend this event again next year.*

*The 2010 Minneapolis Ski and Snowboard Expo is scheduled for October 22-24 at the Mall of America in Bloomington, Minnesota.*

The YCMI FY 11 Marketing Plan cites one of our premier strengths as our four major ski areas; therefore, this is an opportunity to showcase these ski destinations in the region in a venue other than our winter television spots. Supporting efforts by our vertical market partners aids us in meeting the following goals outlined within our plan: attract new tourism dollars into the region by increasing awareness, maximize efficiency of dollars spent through a cohesive effort, which is in effect, building the partnerships and leveraging existing promotional funds; clear objectives set forth in the State 5-Year Strategic Plan, and finally, by distributing community and regional information about everything there is to see and do in Yellowstone Country, we continue to work toward our goal of marketing Yellowstone Country as a year-round, premier vacation destination.

Relevant target geographic markets in the YCMI annual marketing plan are identified as Minneapolis/St Paul & Fargo/Moorhead (MN), Bismarck, Minot, Dickinson and Williston, ND.

#### **Develop Objectives**

- Continue building a database for direct marketing campaigns
- Compile demographic and geographic statistics for use in strategic planning and marketing
- Track leads at the shows for use in strategic planning and marketing our vertical ski/snowboard market segments in the Dakota area
- Increase awareness of Yellowstone Country's premier ski destinations

**Identify the portions of your marketing plan, which support this project.**

- Attract new tourism dollars into the region.
- Encourage visitors to stay longer while visiting Yellowstone Country.
- Maximize efficiency of dollars spent to promote tourism through a cohesive effort: promoting our vertical markets (such as fly fishing, golf, and skiing) with the focus on family, mature travelers and travel related industries.
- Market Yellowstone Country as a year-round vacation destination
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**Does this project support the Strategic Plan? Yes No If so, describe how.**

- **Goal 1: Increase Four-season Tourism Revenues Statewide Through Effective Marketing & Promotions, Focusing on the High-Value, Low-Impact Visitors.**

The YC travel planner is designed as an all-season showcase of the diversity of year-round recreation found throughout the region.

- **Goal 5: Support Appropriate Tourism Business Growth**

Actions 5.1.a, b, c, d., 5.2.a. are supported by implementing key Opportunity & Joint Venture Marketing projects.

**Detail pages attached Yes No**

**Budget page must be attached for approval.**

**YELLOWSTONE COUNTRY PROJECT BUDGET  
FY 11 OPPORTUNITY**

State Tourism Funds	Other Funds	Total
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**MARKETING/ADVERTISING:**

Booth Space rental	\$1000	+		\$0	=	\$1000
	\$0	+		\$0	=	\$0
	\$0	+		\$0	=	\$0
<b>TOTAL</b>	\$1000			\$0		\$1000

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<b>REGION/CVB</b>	<b>PROJECT</b>	\$4000	+		\$0	\$4000
<b>TOTAL</b>						

