

CINNABAR FOUNDATION

Montana Stories, Montana Voices

Featured Projects Funded by the Cinnabar Foundation in 2011

Townsend School District

Project: School Solar Panels, Energy Conservation, and Energy Education

Summary: Townsend School District leaders recognize the ethical and environmental obligations to educate students about alternative energy and energy conservation, and believe that the school needs to lead by example. Townsend schools have installed a biomass boiler, a solar panel system, and a wind turbine. A community



recycling program has been established at the school. This project will expand renewable energy and conservation programs and integrate energy conservation into the school curriculum.

Quote: *“When it comes to student education, the cost and source of energy will be one of the biggest issues vital to their future. Our solar project is helping to save the environment, show fiscal responsibility by reducing school electric costs, and is a valuable real life educational tool for our students, staff and community. Money*

saved on energy also means more money for the classroom.” Brian Patrick, Superintendent of Townsend Schools

Townsend 5th graders work on solar panels. Photo: Allison Bakken

Montana Renewable Energy Association

Project: Demonstrating the Economic Benefits of Renewable Energy

Summary: To help avoid the worst impacts of climate change, Montana must reduce its dependence on fossil fuels. Fortunately, Montana is blessed with abundant renewable energy resources. Representing dozens of Montana businesses and hundreds of employees, MREA works to help Montanans and policymakers understand the multiple economic benefits of small-scale renewable energy in communities. Cinnabar funding will help MREA quantify and communicate these economic benefits in 2011.



Photo: Independent Power Systems

Quote: *“Small-scale renewable energy is my personal passion, but it’s also a career for me and hundreds of other Montanans. I’m a member of the Montana Renewable Energy Association because when renewable energy supporters come together, the whole state benefits. The renewable energy industry faced unprecedented attacks during the 2011 legislative session, but MREA and our allies successfully fought them off by showing how local renewable energy bolsters Montana’s energy security, protects our natural environment, and creates good jobs throughout the state.”* MREA President Conor Darby, Manager of Independent Power Systems, Bozeman

Northern Plains Resource Council

Project: Preserving Family Agriculture and Conserving Clean Water

Summary: This Billings-based organization has built a grassroots Montana network of rural community organizations, **family** farmers and ranchers, and engaged citizens. Northern Plains seeks a transition from the nation’s reliance on coal, advocating increased energy efficiency and use of renewables. Northern Plains is leading efforts to block export of Montana coal to China, protect the rights of landowners impacted by coal development, and prevent damage to Montana’s precious water resources.



Three generations of Aldersons: Jeanie, Irv & Gerrit on their Tongue River Valley ranch

Quote: *“The lifeblood of our region’s economy and way of life is family agriculture. We are working for a future in which people, water, land, and wildlife are valued more than a one-time ‘harvest’ of coal.”* Jeanie Alderson, Tongue River Valley rancher and Northern Plains citizen leader