



Grant Details

118486 - FY23 DMO Plan

122496 - FY23 Dillon CVB DMO Plan

DOC Office of Tourism

Grant Title: FY23 Dillon CVB DMO Plan
Grant Number: 23-51-046
Grant Status: Underway
Comments:
Applicant Organization: Beaverhead County Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture
Grantee Contact: Rebecca Jones
Award Year: FY23
Program Area: DOC Office of Tourism
Amounts:
Contract Dates: Contract Sent 06/15/2022 Contract Received 07/01/2022 Contract Executed 06/30/2023
Project Dates: Proposal Date 06/15/2022 Project Start 07/01/2022 Project End 06/30/2023
Grant Administrator: Barb Sanem
Contract Number: 23-51-046
Award Year: FY23
Contract Dates

Contract Sent Contract Received Contract Executed Contract Legal

Project Dates 07/01/2022
06/30/2023

Project Start Project End

Comments
Amendment Comments

DMO Plan Narrative

1. Describe Your Destination

Describe your destination (who you are, who you wish to attract and why they would come) addressing your strengths, opportunities, and potential challenges.

Welcome to Dillon! We are a rodeo town, a ranching town, a fly fishing town, and a hunting town! Dillon is situated in the sweeping Beaverhead Valley into which the Big Hole and Beaverhead rivers converge. This is where you can discover and explore the beginnings of Montana. Lose Yourself | Discover Yourself!

This is a community of a gold mine of history, ranging from native Americans trekking through the area to Lewis and Clark's famous journey, to gold rushers and vigilantes from the railroad to teamsters, farmers, and ranchers. So much is well-preserved and waiting for you to explore.

Beaverhead River is a Blue-Ribbon Trout Stream that is a favorite for expert fly fishermen/women. Our county museum in Dillon is devoted to preserving local history. Bannack State Park is located just southwest of Dillon. It is a registered historic landmark and the site of Montana's first major gold discovery on July 28, 1862. Over 50 buildings line Main Street recalling Montana's formative years.

Dillon is home to the largest of the national forests in Montana covering 3.35 million acres lying in eight Southwest Montana counties. With an extensive trail system, visitors can experience the wide-open space and breathtaking views. Stand on the spot Lewis & Clark stood overlooking the valley, there is truly discovery in every direction.

Southwest Montana's rich history is on full display in downtown Dillon alongside unique shopping opportunities and vibrant new businesses. Dillon's business composition reflects an agricultural influence and railroad impact on the community. Historic buildings are tangible reminders of men and women who brought their dreams, blood, sweat and tears to reality and can still be experienced today.

Discover the unique architecture of structures that line the downtown area from the Carnegie Library to the Beaverhead County Courthouse. Take a historic walking tour and enjoy not only the architecture, but also the story told behind each structure. The brick and stone structures post-date an 1882 fire which ravaged the business district. Where business and agriculture came together into a true community, is the story of people with strong beliefs in the future and willingness to work, making those dreams a reality.

Opportunities

- Our website will provide vital information for visitors who will be looking for a unique experience which will encourage them to visit Dillon. Information on Dillon will offer experiences that can only be found in Beaverhead County.
- The Beaverhead Treasure Hunt | Calling all treasure hunters, Visit Beaverhead County to find a small, solid glass, paper weight in one of the businesses in Beaverhead County. The paper weight is yours to keep, just bring it by the Dillon Visitors Center to let us know you found it and receive another prize to shop in our local businesses.

- From blue-ribbon trout fishing to hiking surrounding mountains visitors will find a welcoming place to stay when they take exit 62 or 63 off I-15. Dillon connects to Yellowstone, Pioneer Scenic Byway, Big Hole Battlefield, Red Rock National Wildlife Refuge and Crystal Park. With our wide-open space and beautiful scenery Dillon offers visitors a unique place to stay while exploring by day and relaxing by night.

Challenges

- The severe drought will impact our fishing seasons, if the FWP close our rivers in late July or August.
- The drought will also impact our ability to build our winter travel season.
- The fire season will also have an impact in July, August and September.

Further marketing will assist visitors with maps, phone numbers, websites, calendars and other essential utilities that will provide for an exceptional experience in Southwest Montana.

In addition, the Chamber will use the CVB designated funds to provide an un-matched visitor center experience to those travelers who wish to stop in a physical location and access visitor information. This will include having trained, knowledgeable staff and printed materials to assist visitors traveling in and through Beaverhead County. Personal assistance will enhance a visitor's experience to Montana.

Beaverhead County Data.pdf

2. Align with Montana Brand

Briefly describe how your destination aligns with the Montana Brand.

Dillon Exemplifies the Montana Brand

More spectacular unspoiled nature: Dillon sits in a valley surrounded by natural beauty, two destination trout streams, home to the largest national forests in Montana and three state parks, one national park including Interstate 15 making the town an epicenter for visitors' exploration of Beaverhead County.

Vibrant and charming small town: A vibrant downtown that merges historical charm with contemporary culture.

Breathtaking experiences by day, relaxing hospitality at night: Fishing blue-ribbon trout streams, rock-hounding, bird watching, exploring Beaverhead-Deer Lodge National Forest, investigating ghost towns. However, you choose to spend the daylight hours, your evenings will be full of fantastic food and relaxing accommodations in Dillon.

Strengths:

- Dillon is adjacent to Interstate-15 and is a crossroads for Montana Highways 91,41 and 278, which each connect Beaverhead County's rural communities and visitor attractions.
- Beaverhead County is home to the Beaverhead-Deer Lodge National Forest and the Beaverhead and Big Hole Rivers which offer un-matched outdoor opportunities for visitors.
- Dillon provides a full range of lodging, dining, and shopping options that help make for a great vacation on any budget with a sense of Montana sophistication that visitors find both surprising and comfortable.

- A place to discover the rich history of Beaverhead County through a historic walking tour of downtown, county museum and a railroad depot.
- City of Dillon has been nationally recognized as Tree City, USA by the Arbor Day Foundation.
- Energized downtown with a fine art gallery, national renowned bookstore, Patagonia outlet, Great Harvest Corporation and unique stores that can only be found in Dillon.
- Annual signature events: Territory Days in June, Sr. Pro Rodeo and Dillon History Days in July, Montana's Biggest Weekend | Labor Day Rodeo (parade, fair, and concert), Beaverhead Marathon, Dinner in the Park, Halloween Party, Parade of Lights/Festival of Trees in December are just a few events that take place throughout the year.

3. What is the strategic role of your DMO?

Select all that apply: Destination Marketing, Destination Management, Destination Stewardship, Destination Development).

Destination Marketing, Destination Development

Based on the strategic role you serve, provide the following information.

3a. Define your audience(s) (demographic, geographic, and psycho-graphic).

Seasonal Traffic

Travelers coming through Montana from north to south using I-15. Arrivalist data shows that 46% of visitors enter I-15 from the south. It shows that our top three out of state visitors were Idaho, Utah, California. Visitors find fuel and refreshments from Dillon businesses and it is a great way to provide opportunities to inspire spontaneous adventure or to inspire a future planned trip to the region. This market can be motivated by easy access to sites of interest and convenient travel route alternatives that allow for discovery of points of interest. This market will also be motivated by access to R.V. accommodations.

Leisure Travel

The leisure traveler are active mature and young families that are looking for affordable variety and a bit of culture and shopping with their outdoor centered vacation. Access to public lands is an incentive for fishing, hiking, camping, rock hounding and wildlife viewing. The leisure traveler will be connected via I-15 to Glacier and Yellowstone National Parks as well as State Parks. Dillon is an ideal place for visitors to stop, fuel, eat, lodge and enjoy a couple of days exploring our trails, ghost towns, get weather updates, wildlife conditions, river conditions and trail openings.

History Buffs

This market consists of individuals who enjoy learning about western history and culture. They are seeking to visit ghost towns, historical landmarks such as the Lewis & Clark Expedition, Big Hole Battlefield, Bannack State Park and mining sites throughout the region.

3b. What research supports your DMO strategy?

County Arrivalist Data shows 46% of visitors enter via I-15 South from Idaho into Montana.

Arrivalist Data 2021 Top 5 residency of origin for nonresident visitors to Dillon: Idaho, Utah, California, Washington, Oregon. See attached visitor's logs.

ITRR research specific to Dillon.

Brand MT research specific to Dillon.

3c. What are your emerging markets?

Recreational hiking and biking:

The Dillon area has expanded its trail system that connects many trails in Dillon. With the increase of the trail system in Dillon, there have been several running/hiking events added to the summer season. This brings in many people from outside of Montana to participate. With the added bicycle camp Dillon has become the stop off point for long distance bicyclers looking to find a place to stay over for the night. This market is looking for a place to eat, pick up snacks and refreshment for their journey through Montana. This is an emerging market and continue to see an influx of cyclists through our region. Several area businesses have recieved annual groups of cyclists for two summers in a row.

4. Define and describe your overall goals.

A goal is an idea of the future or desired result that a person or group of people envisions, plans and commits to achieve.

Overall goal of the Dillon CVB is to increase tourism for our area. Our area still has a long slow period over the winter months, so another goal would be to focus on the winter traveller for snowmobling, skiing, snowshoeing, photography and wildlife sightings.

4a. Describe proposed tactics and projects as related to overall goals and controlled by the organization in its financial statements.

We would like to produce the first-ever slick-stock professionally printed brochure, that will be distributed to regional airports for two years. We would also like to increase our wintertime travel marketing, using online/digital with major media outlets and print ads in airline magazines. We would also like to increase our bus/coach traffic in the summer months, with a print ad in a Bus Tours magazine. We would also like to increase our visiability for the Yellowstone NP traveller with online/digital ads with the National Park Tours.

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Objectives/Metrics/Evaluation

Objectives	Measurable Metrics for Success	Report the Metric Achieved	Evaluation of Measurable Metrics for Success
<p>Objective 1: To advertise online/digitally and in print to increase visitors for winter travellers.</p>	<p>Metric 1: Measured by getting ads placed with National Parks Trips/Outdoor for online/digital and placing ads with Bus Tours Magazine and Hemispheres magazine. We will request analytical data and benchmarking from National Parks Trips/Outdoor, Bus Tours and Hemispheres Magazines.</p>	<p>We placed print ads in the following:</p> <p>Southwest Montana 2022 Official Regional Travel Guide</p> <p>Bus Tours Magazine for Sept/Oct and Nov/Dec of 2022</p> <p>2023 USA Today Winter Travel Guide</p> <p>Hemispheres (United Airlines) Magazine October and November 2022</p> <p>We placed digital/online advertising with National Parks Trips in 2022 as well as an editorial about our area.</p>	<p>Southwest Montana 2022 Official Regional Travel Guide: 130,000 copies distributed at over 1,000 racks, including those in Salt Lake City, Idaho Falls, Spokane and Coeur d'Alene.</p> <p>Bus Tours Magazine: 8,050 event tour operators</p> <p>USA Today Winter Go Escape Travel Guide: 10m sent winter travel guide link, 300,000 Wyndham Rewards, 815,000 GoRVing.com, 226,00 opt-in followers and 125,000 subscribers of Frommer's, 5m Carnival Cruise Line, and millions of daily viewers digitally from USA Today.</p> <p>Hemispheres (United Airlines) magazine: 500,000 copies on over 4,500 daily flights, all cabins and 3,000 copies in all United lounges, also on digital platforms.</p> <p>National Park Trips: YellowstonePark.com: 9 Reasons to Visit Dillon Montana URL w/ 1,762 pageviews / 5:40 avg. time on page; Yellowstone to Glacier National Park Road Trip URL w/11,427 pageviews / 3:05 avg. time on page; Yellowstone Newsletter Feature on Mar. 7th URL 125 clicks; National Park Facebook post on March 9th w/ 35,266 impressions / 2,539 engagements / 1,240 clicks.</p>

<p>Objective 2: Website traffic is critical to the success of the Dillon DMO. Visitors from across the nation and the world rely on the website to gain information and learn how to recreate here, safely and learn what to expect and what not to expect. Dillon is the basecamp to many fishing and hunting expeditions in far southwest Montana. To continually update our website with seasonal updates, events, new businesses, and keep it fresh is an important contributor to Dillon DMO's Montana experience.</p>	<p>Metric 2: Use the Google analytics to track the website traffic and compare to previous year's traffic. Increase the website traffic by 5%. 2022 comparison of 3,728 site sessions and 96% new visitors to the website, this should increase by 5% in 2023.</p>	<p>Site sessions on the www.visitdillonmt.com website increased 16% from 3,728 in 2022 to 4,438 site sessions in 2023. The most popular page was our events page with the updated events throughout the seasons. The visitors as well as resident have begun using the website/events page to learn what was happening in Dillon!</p> <p>A 9% increase in new unique visitors from 3,338 in 2022 to 3,668 in 2023 was seen as a successful metric.</p> <p>So, the objective of a 5% increase in both metrics was achieved in FY23!</p>	<p>The marketing objective of maintaining and increasing the traffic to the website was successful in FY23! With the site sessions increasing by 16% and the most popular page being the events page, the visitDillonMT website has become a reliable source for information for seasonal travel and seasonal events planning for both visitors as well as residents. Keeping this website updated, maintaining the active business listings, and including the website URL in all the paid media ads, this marketing method has proven successful.</p> <p>In 2022, the VisitDillon brochure was launched. Due to high-demand, a second printing was needed in 2023. This brochure is distributed at the baggage claim racks in regional airports (Butte, Bozeman, West Yellowstone, Helena, Missoula and Idaho Falls). The URL was included on each page of the brochure, making it very easy for visitors to access the website regardless of where they were located.</p> <p>Having a clear, easy to read website has become imperative for our visitor center's success!</p>
<p>Objective 3: The purpose of this project is to engage the community and attract visitors. Similar projects present across the country in Oregon and Maine with glass floats or glass orbs. We launched this project in 2021 with little blue cowboy hat paper weights. This year, we will partner with The University of Montana Western Glass Arts Program to produce 100 small glass paper weights to be hidden in Dillon and the surrounding county for visitors to find them from Memorial Day to Labor Day.</p>	<p>Metric 3: To complete the Beaverhead Treasure Hunt project, all 168 glass paper weights should be hidden in area businesses by July 4th weekend, so that visitors may find them. We will track our out of area visitors, by the measurement of who brings the paper weights back to be entered into a drawing. Last year, this program attracted 8 out of state visitors to our area and engaged over 90 local residents. This year, we hope to double our out of state visitors and continue to engage our local residents.</p>	<p>We had 122 out of 168 paperweights notified that they were found. Almost all 168 have been found at this point, the finders just haven't told us. Of the 122, 11 were from out of state. While not doubling the out of state finders, we have increased them by 37%.</p>	<p>The 2023 Beaverhead Treasure Hunt was a success! In 2021, we launched this community-engagement program, in a way to draw people together using our Facebook page as the main channel of communication. We would hide the glass paperweights in businesses around the county and Dillon. On our Facebook page, residents and visitors would search for the paperweights and then bring them back to the Visitors Center to share what they had found. I would snap their photo and post on our Facebook page, which would continue to further the treasure hunt! The person's name would be entered into a drawing to win \$100 in Chamber Bucks from the Chamber. The finder gets to keep the beautifully, hand-crafted paperweight as their treasure! The winner of the Chamber Bucks is drawn and announced in mid-September each year.</p> <p>The partnership with The University of Montana Western Glass Arts Program and The University of Montana Western Foundation to produce these wonderful glass paperweights has proven to be a viable community-outreach program. The residents of Beaverhead County and Dillon have come to anticipate "what the paperweights will be this year!" We have had visitors come to the visitor center with their paperweight in hand, happy to participate! Eventhough we did not double the out-of-state finders, we did increase them by 37%, so perhaps our metric was a little ambitious. This is a wonderful community engagement activity that our town and area has grown to love. We look forward to sharing this program again in FY24.</p>

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DMO Budget

Allowable Methods	Amount Budgeted	% of Budget Allocated	Amount Expended	% of Budget Expended
Administration	\$8,220.00	12.94	\$8,270.59	100.62
Earned Media/Tourism Sales	\$3,000.00	4.72	\$0.00	0
Education/Outreach	\$1,600.00	2.52	\$1,119.73	69.98
Paid Media	\$34,000.00	53.55	\$29,250.00	86.03
Marketing Personnel	\$4,500.00	7.09	\$1,000.00	22.22
Research	\$2,400.00	3.78	\$1,476.00	61.5
Visitor Services	\$3,400.00	5.35	\$6,371.13	187.39
Website Development (Online, Website, Mobile)	\$6,380.00	10.05	\$4,572.00	71.66
	\$63,500.00	100.00	\$52,059.45	

Narrative Evaluation

At the Dillon DMO, Fiscal Year 23 was a smooth year, all of the previous issues with the administration of the office have been resolved and this marketing year seemed to have been administered in an orderly fashion. Here is a brief executive summary:

1) **Bed-Tax Collections:** Since Q1 2021, Dillon DMO has continued to see 9 consecutive quarters of bed-tax collection increases! While much of that was due to the bounce in visitors post COVID, and the solar farm construction, one could argue that the marketing plan has attributed to this continued success. Our evidence is that the visitor center has seen an increase in visitations during those 9 quarters. Over the course of 2021 to 2023, we have seen a 21% increase in visitors, and not experienced a decrease back to pre-2020 levels. The international visitor numbers are increasing as well with visitors from not just Canada, but also the UK, Australia, New Zealand, Russia, Germany, Denmark and Romania.

2) **Marketing Plan Audit:** For FY23, the marketing plan audit was conducted smoothly and accurately. We cannot stress enough how important for record-keeping it is to have a consistent, capable leader to manage the grant process. This Chamber must continue to strive to make this role sustainable so that this grant process may be conducted with efficiency and accuracy. While the Chamber has increased its memberships from 48 to the current list of 151 businesses, being a small town with limited business growth opportunities, growing Chamber memberships to a sustainable level continues to be a challenge.

3) **Website Administration:**

The marketing objective of maintaining and increasing the traffic to the website was successful in FY23! With the site sessions increasing by 16% and the most popular page being the events page, the visitDillonMT website has become a reliable source for information for seasonal travel and seasonal events planning for both visitors as well as residents. Keeping this website updated, maintaining the active business listings, and including the website URL in all the paid media ads, this marketing method has proven successful.

In 2022, the VisitDillon brochure was launched. Due to high-demand, a second printing was needed in 2023. This brochure is distributed at the baggage claim racks in regional airports (Butte, Bozeman, West Yellowstone, Helena, Missoula and Idaho Falls). The website URL was included on each page of the brochure, making it very easy for visitors to access the website regardless of where they were located.

Having a clear, easy to read website has become imperative for our DMO's success!

4) **Marketing Focus:** Since 2021, the marketing has shifted to a focus on the wintertime traveller and winter activities such as skiing, sledding, ice fishing and wildlife watching. Annually, Dillon sees as many sunny days as Phoenix Arizona, hence the new solar farms in our area, so encouraging folks from the region to stay for long weekends in the winter is a viable marketing focus. We continue to work to establish a Tourism Business Improvement District (TBID) in Dillon, in an effort to have the opportunity to bid on youth sports tournaments for the winter months as well as other marketing efforts. We have received signed petitions from two locally-owned properties and seek to receive signed petitions from some of our largest properties in Dillon, of which some are not Montana-owned. We will continue this effort to get these petitions signed soon.

The Paid-Media buys have focussed on being billboard, print magazines, and digital OTT marketing. The VisitDillon billboard was moved from just outside of Dillon to I-90 between Whitehall and Butte. This decision was made in an effort to capture some of the tourists travelling on I-90 between the two national parks. The print ads have been directed to Hemisphere's magazine, USA Today Winter Travel guide, and Bus Tours magazine. The opportunity to capture as much awareness as possible is the reasoning behind these ad selections. The digital marketing continues to be done through National Parks Trips, where they also provide an editorial for Dillon.

5) **Community-Wide Events:** While Dillon Montana promotes several regionally advertised events, such as Dillon Jaycee's Montana's Biggest Weekend-PRCA Rodeo over Labor Day weekend, the Dillon DMO is a sponsor of the event, but does not host the event, as the office has limited human resources. The Chamber hosts several business-related monthly events for Dillon, but none are really focused on drawing visitors.

So, in 2021, we launched a community-engagement program, in a way to draw people together using our Facebook page as the main channel of communication. We would hide the glass paperweights in businesses around the county and Dillon. On our Facebook page, residents and visitors would search for the paperweights and then bring them back to the Visitors Center to share what they had found. I would snap their photo and post on our Facebook page, which would continue to further the treasure hunt! The person's name would be entered into a drawing to win \$100 in Chamber Bucks from the Chamber. The finder gets to keep the beautifully, hand-crafted paperweight as their treasure! The winner of the Chamber Bucks is drawn and announced in mid-September each year.

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We look forward to FY24 when we may continue to see an increase in our bed-tax collections, the visitors and community-engagement! Thank you to the staff at the Dept. of Commerce and BrandMT for your continued support in helping the Dillon DMO achieve our goals!

Reg/CVB Required Documents

Description	File Name	File Size
Beaverhead Chamber of Commerce & Agriculture By-Laws	BCCA proposed Bylaws 3-2021.docx	637 KB
Revised bylaws including mission and purpose, fully executed copy available upon request after May 12, 2022.	BCCA proposed Bylaws 5-2022.docx	635 KB
Here is the compliance check list, the board resolution approving the FY23 marketing plan and budget, as well as our bylaws.	scan0116.pdf	7.7 MB
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