



*The Only Way to Yellowstone®*

**WIND RIVER VISITORS COUNCIL**  
P.O. Box 925 Lander, WY 82520 USA • 307-332-5546 • info@windriver.org • www.windriver.org

April 7, 2023

To all parties of the Joint Powers Agreement,

Attached is the Wind River Visitors Council's proposed budget and operating plan, effective July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024 for your review and approval per the Joint Powers Agreement. The Wind River Visitors Council respectfully requests that April be used as a month to answer questions, meet and/or discuss the budget as necessary and that budget hearings take place in May and June. Please do not hesitate to contact any of the town, city or county representatives listed below with questions. Please submit your approval no later than June 30, 2023.

Thank you.

Helen Wilson  
Executive Director, WRVC

**Wind River Visitors Council Board Members**

Julie Buller  
City of Riverton Appointment

Cy Lee  
County Commissioners Appointment

Helen Gordon  
Town of Hudson Appointment

Krista Lobera  
City of Lander Appointment

Hal Herron  
City of Riverton Appointment

Kip Post  
County Commissioners Appointment

Joel Highsmith  
Town of Shoshoni Appointment

Owen Sweeney  
City of Lander Appointment

Randy Lahr  
Town of Dubois Appointment

Frank Welty  
Town of Dubois Appointment

**FY 2023-2024 Wind River Visitors Council Budget to Joint Powers Members—DRAFT**

A	B	C	D	E	F	G
	<b>Budget Category</b>	<b>Code</b>	<b>2022-2023 Budget</b>	<b>2023-2024 Budget</b>	<b>Summary Total</b>	<b>% of Budget</b>
1	<b>Income</b>					
2	Lodging Tax	4009	\$729,500	\$1,016,610		
3	Interest Earned	4501	\$75	\$1,572		
4	Destination Development	DD	\$300,000	\$0		
5	<b>Total Revenue</b>		<b>\$ 1,029,575</b>	<b>\$ 1,018,182</b>	<b>\$ 1,018,182</b>	<b>100.00%</b>
6						
7	<b>Expenses</b>					
8	<b>Accounting Services</b>					
9	Accounting Services	5000	\$13,973	\$10,000		
10	Office Expense	5100	\$307	\$600		
11	Postage / Office	5200	\$35	\$50		
12	CPA Review or Audit	5300	\$16,434	\$18,000		
13	<b>Total Accounting Services</b>		<b>\$30,749</b>	<b>\$28,650</b>		
14	<b>Board Expenses</b>					
15	Board Expenses	5400	\$2,500	\$2,500		
16	Wyoming Governor's Hospitality & Tourism Convention (3 participants)	5500	\$4,000	\$5,000		
17	<b>Total Board Expenses</b>		<b>\$6,500</b>	<b>\$7,500</b>		
18	<b>Total Accounting and Board Expenses</b>		<b>\$ 37,249</b>	<b>\$ 36,150</b>	<b>\$ 36,150</b>	<b>3.55%</b>
19						
20	<b>WRVC Office, Staff and Services</b>					
21	WRVC Office Services	6000	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000		
22	WRVC Payroll (2 Staff \$75k, \$43k), Compensation Adjustment up to 10% FUTA/SUTA/FICA Taxes, Workers Compensation, Unemployment Insurance (25% of payroll)	6100	\$ 118,000	\$ 129,800		
23	Staff (2) Medical Benefits (\$16,618 year), Retirement Benefits (\$930 year)	6200	\$ 31,550	\$ 32,450		
24	Cellular Telephone Stipend (\$50 per month)	6300	\$ 15,240	\$ 17,548		
25	Conference Attendance, Mileage, Meals	6400	\$ 1,200	\$ 600		
26		6500	\$ 5,000	\$ 15,000		
27	<b>Total WRVC Office, Staff and Services</b>		<b>\$190,990</b>	<b>\$215,398</b>	<b>\$215,398</b>	<b>21.16%</b>
28						
29	<b>Wind River Country Tourism Asset Development (TAD) \$254,153</b>					
30	Community of Dubois 37.6%	7000	\$63,284	\$95,562		
31	Community of Lander 30.2%	7100	\$54,348	\$76,754		
32	Community of Riverton 32.2%	7200	\$64,743	\$81,837		
33	Community of Shoshoni-Flat Rate	7300	\$8,000	\$10,400		
34	Community of Hudson-Flat Rate	7400	\$4,000	\$5,200		
35	<b>Total Tourism Asset Development Program</b>		<b>\$ 194,375</b>	<b>\$ 269,753</b>	<b>\$ 269,753</b>	<b>26.49%</b>
36						
37	<b>Marketing Campaign</b>					
38	Website Development	8000	\$5,950	\$11,000		
39	Direct Marketing, Leads, Online Marketing and Social Media	8025	\$62,720	\$84,815		
40	Google DMO Program	8050	\$0	\$0		
41	Regional & State Partnerships	8075	\$3,992	\$13,600		
42	Community Planning & Training	8100	\$7,500	\$10,000		
43	Photo and Video Library	8125	\$7,500	\$10,000		
44	Driving tour map 30,000; \$8K, WRIR 0, freight; \$7K, sticker reprint 6,000; \$6K	8150	\$29,646	\$70,000		
45	Press Relations/Events/Packages/Social Media	8175	\$57,036	\$49,300		
46	FAM Tours / Press Trips	8200	\$10,000	\$20,000		
47	Print Ads (Wyoming Official Travel Guide; \$9,500, Additional Print Ads \$10,500)	8225	\$10,189	\$20,000		
48	Pony Express—\$665, Certified Folder—\$5,500, Jackson Hole Airport—\$150;	8250	\$5,963	\$6,315		
49	Billboard in Shoshoni	8275	\$500	\$500		
50	Market Research and Analysis	8300	\$0	\$0		
51	Fulfillment Program (postage, packets)	8325	\$15,816	\$22,000		
52	New Opportunities	8350	\$17,000	\$73,746		
53	Ambassador & Lodging Tax Education	8375	\$2,000	\$2,000		
54	Niche Target Marketing	8400	\$15,399	\$11,255		
55	Conference/Meeting Marketing	8425	\$0	\$5,000		
56	Group Tour Business	8450	\$0	\$2,500		
57	Support for Wind River Indian Reservation Interpretive Plan	8475	\$25,000	\$35,000		
58	International Marketing (Global Inspiration Program, \$5,750)	8500	\$10,750	\$19,850		
59	<b>Total Marketing Campaign</b>		<b>\$286,961</b>	<b>\$466,881</b>		<b>45.85%</b>
60						
61	Air Service Marketing	9000	\$20,000	\$30,000	\$30,000	2.95%
62	<b>Total Expenses</b>		<b>\$ 729,575</b>	<b>\$ 1,018,182</b>		<b>100.00%</b>
63						
64	<b>Destination Development (\$300,000)</b>				<b>Paid Expenses</b>	<b>Balance</b>
65	Digital Sign—Riverton	DD		\$50,000		
66	Digital Sign—Hudson	DD		\$34,650		
67	Art Banner Project Expansion—Hudson and Riverton	DD		\$30,000		
68	TravelStories Downtown Dubois Walking Tour—Dubois	DD		\$10,000		
69	Wayfinding/Informational Signage—Lander	DD		\$31,550		
70	Signage at the Bus Loop—Lander	DD		\$20,000		
71	Destination Development Co-Op	DD		\$2,700	\$2,700	\$0
72	National Park Journal, Yellowstone	DD		\$12,000		
73	Tripadvisor State Co-Op	DD		\$8,000		
74	Dubois Trail and Informational Signage	DD		\$31,550		
75	Special Projects Coordinator	DD		\$20,000		
76	Communication/Meetings/Graphic Design Supplies	DD		\$3,000		
77	A Wind River Indian Reservation-Specific Kiosk	DD		\$21,550		
78	The New Fly Fisher Television Show	DD		\$15,000		
79	Video Display in the Lander Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center	DD		\$10,000		
80				<b>300,000</b>	<b>\$2,700</b>	<b>\$297,300</b>

## FY 2023-2024 Joint Powers Budget Notes

Code	Amount	Description
4009	\$1,016,610	<b>Lodging Tax:</b> This is the actual lodging tax revenue that was collected in fiscal year 2021 to 2022 and will serve as the budget for fiscal year 2023 to 2024.
4501	\$1,572	<b>Interest Earned:</b> Interest income in the beginning of fiscal year 2022 to 2023 averaged \$131 per month. This comes to \$1,572 for the full fiscal year.
5000	\$10,000	<b>Accounting Services:</b> This number has been reduced based on this fiscal year's actual spendings.
5100	\$600	<b>Office Expense:</b> This number has been increased based on this fiscal year's actual spendings.
5200	\$50	<b>Postage/Office:</b> This number has been increased based on this fiscal year's actual spendings.
5300	\$18,000	<b>CPA Review or Audit:</b> The Wind River Visitors Council will require another CPA audit in fiscal year 2023 to 2024.
5400	\$2,500	<b>Board Expenses:</b> Because of facility and catering cost increases, as well as the number of Board Members requesting mileage reimbursements, this line item has been increased from \$1,050 to \$2,500.
5500	\$5,000	<b>Wyoming Governor's Hospitality &amp; Tourism Convention (3 participants):</b> The Wind River Visitors Council is budgeting for three Board Members to attend the Wyoming Governor's Hospitality and Tourism Convention.
6000	\$20,000	<b>WRVC Office Services:</b> This number is remaining the same.
6100	\$129,800	<b>WRVC Payroll:</b> This number has been increased to account for the recent Board vote to budget for compensation adjustments up to 10 percent.
6200	\$32,450	<b>Taxes, Workers Compensation, Unemployment Insurance:</b> 25% of payroll.
6300	\$17,548	<b>Staff Medical and Retirement Benefits:</b> Medical Benefits have been estimated at \$16,618, which accounts for a 10% increase from the current fiscal year. At the maximum salaries in line 6100, if both staff contributed the maximum allowable amount to their Simple IRA, then the WRVC's match would be \$930.
6400	\$600	<b>Cellular Telephone Stipend:</b> This is for a \$50 per month cellular

		telephone stipend.
6500	\$15,000	<b>Conference Attendance, Mileage, Meals:</b> This amount has been increased so that the Executive Director can attend more conferences. In addition to conference attendance, this budget line also includes mileage for both staff members and business meals that the WRVC hosts.
7000	\$95,562	<b>Dubois TAD:</b> Dubois brought in 37.6% of the lodging tax in fiscal year 2021 to 2022. \$95,562 is 37.6% of the 25% that is distributed to Dubois, Lander and Riverton.
7100	\$76,754	<b>Lander TAD:</b> Lander brought in 30.2% of the lodging tax in fiscal year 2021 to 2022. \$76,754 is 30.2% of the 25% that is distributed to Dubois, Lander and Riverton.
7200	\$81,837	<b>Riverton TAD:</b> Riverton brought in 32.2% of the lodging tax in fiscal year 2021 to 2022. \$81,837 is 32.2% of the 25% that is distributed to Dubois, Lander and Riverton.
7300	\$10,400	<b>Shoshoni TAD:</b> Lodging tax throughout Fremont County has increased. Therefore, TAD funding has increased. Shoshoni's increase is from \$8,000 to \$10,400.
7400	\$5,200	<b>Hudson TAD:</b> Lodging tax throughout Fremont County has increased. Therefore, TAD funding has increased. Hudson's increase is from \$4,000 to \$5,200.
8000	\$11,000	<b>Website Development:</b> This amount includes six republished blogs from The Rendezvous magazine at \$200 each; six blogs written by guest writers at \$300 each; website management, hosting and services at \$2,000; domain and plug-in renewals at \$500; email hosting at \$500 and website development at \$5,000.
8025	\$84,815	<b>Direct Marketing, Leads, Online Marketing and Social Media:</b> This budget line includes email marketing software at \$6,600; a Wyoming Tourism unlimited leads co-op at \$10K; a SEM co-op at \$16,800; paid social media at \$1,200; Wyoming Tourism sponsored content at \$10,920; banners on Wyoming Tourism at \$2,800; Wyoming Tourism spring and fall co-ops at \$20,000; National Park Trips leads at \$4,500 and a National Park Trips display ad and advertorial at \$11,995.
8050	\$0	<b>Google DMO Program:</b> We will be participating in this as part of the Destination Development Program.
8075	\$13,600	<b>Regional and State Partnerships:</b> This budget line includes the production of the WRVC's annual report, chamber memberships and local and national partnerships and memberships.
8100	\$10,000	<b>Community Planning and Training:</b> This budget line includes

		sponsored content, ads and sponsoring #Snapped on County 10.
8125	\$10,000	<b>Photo and Video Library:</b> This budget line includes new photo and video acquisition.
8150	\$70,000	<b>Literature and Sticker Reprints:</b> The WRVC will need 116,750 vacation guides at \$48K, 30,000 self-guided driving tour maps at \$8K, freight at \$7K and 6,000 sticker reprints at \$7K.
8175	\$49,300	<b>Press Relations/Events/Packages/Social Media:</b> The monthly event calendar will cost \$2,500. Public relations will cost \$24,000. Social media management will cost \$15,600. Industry and consumer newsletters will cost \$7,200.
8200	\$20,000	<b>FAM Tours / Press Trips:</b> This number has been doubled from the current fiscal year.
8225	\$20,000	<b>Print Ads:</b> This budget line includes a full page ad in the Wyoming Official Travel Guide at \$9,500 and the opportunity for an additional print ad in another publication.
8250	\$6,315	<b>Literature Distribution:</b> This budget line includes multi-state literature distribution at \$5,500, literature distribution in Teton County at \$665 and a rack space in the Jackson Hole airport at \$150.
8275	\$500	<b>Billboard in Shoshoni:</b> This is the annual cost of the billboard in Shoshoni.
8300	\$0	<b>Market Research and Analysis:</b> With the CWC feasibility study and the Wyoming Office of Tourism's Zartico program in the works, additional funds have not been allocated for market research and analysis. If an opportunity presents itself, funding could come from "New Opportunities."
8325	\$22,000	<b>Fulfillment Program (postage, packets):</b> This budget line includes postage, handling of vacation packets, email requests, brochure storage and services.
8350	\$73,746	<b>New Opportunities:</b> This budget line reflects new projects that are unknown at this time.
8375	\$2,000	<b>Ambassador and Lodging Tax Education:</b> This number has been reduced based on this fiscal year's actual spendings.
8400	\$11,255	<b>Niche Marketing:</b> This budget line includes advertising on the Jackson Hole Chamber website under the categories of Summer Activities, Camping, Snowmobiling, Winter Activities, Hiking/Backpacking and Arts and Culture at \$3,500. It also includes a display ad in the Jackson Hole Chamber Explorer Magazine at \$3,455. It includes support for the trek program through the Fremont County Museums at \$4,000 and sponsoring a National Bighorn

		Sheep Center ad on the Jackson Hole Chamber of Commerce website at \$300.
8425	\$5,000	<b>Conference/Meeting Marketing:</b> This budget line is for conference and meeting marketing.
8450	\$2,500	<b>Group Tour Business:</b> This budget line is for group tour marketing.
8475	\$35,000	<b>Wind River Indian Reservation Interpretive Plan:</b> This budget line supports projects on the Wind River Indian Reservation. Fiscal year 2023 to 2024's big project is a museum-quality documentary of St. Stephens Indian Mission.
8500	\$19,850	<b>International Marketing Programs:</b> This budget line supports an international and lead generating campaign at \$10K, a display ad on the Real America Guide Map at \$600, participation in the Global Inspiration Program at \$5,750 and participation in the Visit the USA Traffic Program at \$3,500.
9000	\$30,000	<b>Air Service Marketing:</b> This budget line supports air service marketing through the FAST group.

## **Wind River Visitors Council (WRVC) Fiscal Year 2023 to 2024 Budget Narrative**

### **Joint Powers Board Summary**

The Wind River Visitors Council, a Destination Marketing Organization (DMO), is charged with the responsibility of investing lodging tax revenues to facilitate wider promotion and marketing of Fremont County and the Wind River Indian Reservation (branded as Wind River Country) as a tourist and visitor destination.

The Wind River Visitors Council's mission is to stimulate tourism by increasing awareness of, and encouraging visitation to, the unique destinations, activities and events in Wind River Country.

### **Fiscal Year 2023 to 2024 Budget**

The attached WRVC Joint Powers Board Budget was approved by the Wind River Visitors Council's Board of Directors on Thursday, March 23, 2023 for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2023 and ending June 30, 2024.

### **Revenue**

The Wind River Visitors Council uses the previous full fiscal year's actual numbers for its budget. The last full fiscal year was FY 2021 to 2022, with revenue of \$1,016,610, which is the number that you'll see in the proposed Joint Powers Budget. This was a record-breaking tourism year for Fremont County, with the previous 12 month "record" being \$734,689.52 (FY 2018 to 2019). Please see the included "Fremont County Lodging Tax Collections" graph.

The benefit to this model is that the TAD funds in the budget are actual, not projected. This helps recipients of TAD funds to budget accordingly, as they know exactly how much they'll be receiving.

In fiscal year 2022 to 2023 the WRVC received lodging tax revenue and a Destination Development Program grant through the Wyoming Office of Tourism in the amount of \$300,000. Destination Development Program funds must be spent by June 30, 2024. Destination Development Program projects are listed at the bottom of the 2023 to 2024 Joint Powers Budget.

### **Oversight**

Because the annual lodging tax collections and CARES revenue exceeded \$1,000,000 in fiscal year 2021 to 2022, the WRVC was required by state statute to have a CPA financial audit conducted. This was the WRVC's first audit, and the auditor expressed that "for a first-year audit, having two findings is unheard of." They were both housekeeping items and unavoidable. Due to revenue so far in 2022 to 2023 and the Destination Development Program grant, the WRVC will once again be required to get a CPA financial audit. The financial audit is submitted to the Wyoming Department of Audit and the County Clerk's office as public record.

Budgeted Income		Percent of Budget
Lodging Tax Revenue and Interest Income	\$1,018,182	100%

Budgeted Expenses	Cost	Percent of Budget
Accounting, CPA Audit and Board Operation	\$36,150	3.55%
Office Staff Payroll, Taxes, Benefits and Office Services (rent, administration, etc.)	\$215,398	21.16%
Tourism Asset Development (TAD) Program	\$269,753	26.49%
Marketing Campaign	\$466,881	45.85%
Air Service Marketing (FAST)	\$30,000	2.95%
TOTAL	\$1,018,182	100%
<b>Over/(Under) Expenditures</b>	0	

### **Lodging Tax Vote**

The two percent lodging tax was renewed in November 2022 with overwhelming support, as indicated by a 72 percent vote in favor of renewing.

The five percent statewide lodging tax went into effect on January 1, 2021, and Fremont County started receiving two percent of that when Fremont County's tax went up for renewal. The state lodging tax guarantees two percent lodging tax collections to Fremont County. The remaining two percent was on the 2022 ballot for public vote to bring the County's collections back up to its four percent rate. A breakdown is below.

### **Fremont County (1/1/21)**

3% Statewide lodging tax (goes to the Wyoming Office of Tourism)

4% Local option

7% Total lodging tax

### **Fremont County (1/1/23)**

3% Statewide lodging tax (goes to the Wyoming Office of Tourism)

2% State local guarantee (comes from the Wyoming Office of Tourism)

2% Local option

7% Total lodging tax

### **Jobs and Wages**

Tourism creates jobs and living wages for year-round residents. In 2022, Fremont County tourism directly supported 1,665 jobs. These salaries are in turn spent in secondary markets such as contractors, utilities, taxes and general everyday local living.



### Travel Trends for 2023

- Consumers are booking vacations earlier
- There is an increase in international travel
- Travel costs are on the rise
- There is an increase in off-season travel
- There is an increase in off-grid travel and connecting with nature

### Tourism Asset Development (TAD) Program

Our Joint Powers communities of Dubois, Hudson, Lander, Riverton and Shoshoni function as our visitor centers throughout Fremont County. The Lander and Riverton Chambers of Commerce and the Towns of Dubois, Hudson and Shoshoni receive an allocation from the 25 percent of all lodging taxes collected in the form of the Tourism Asset Development (TAD) program. These funds are under local control to empower our communities to provide much needed visitor services, staff and local grant programs to support community tourism development and events. The FY 2023/2024 budget puts 25 percent of lodging tax collections at \$254,153, this is up from \$182,375 in FY 2022/2023. TAD funding is distributed to each community based on their percentage of contribution to the lodging tax collections. Shoshoni and Hudson receive a flat rate, which is significantly higher than their percentage of actual lodging tax collections.

### TAD distributions for FY 2023/2024 will be:

Dubois 37.6%	7000	\$95,562
Lander 30.2%	7100	\$76,754
Riverton 32.2%	7200	\$81,837
Shoshoni-flat rate	7300	\$10,400
Hudson-flat rate	7400	\$5,200
Total TAD Program		\$269,753

# Fremont County Lodging Tax Collections

(Source: Wyoming Department of Revenue)

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
<b>July</b>	\$87,513.50	\$77,747.08	\$68,977.20	\$88,147.68	\$87,331.20	\$57,078.97	\$128,851.47	\$121,114.01
<b>August</b>	\$120,161.63	\$119,558.34	\$97,863.24	\$132,820.79	\$116,138.02	\$103,524.40	\$166,881.99	\$159,201.31
<b>September</b>	\$103,555.85	\$121,979.86	\$136,510.43	\$121,074.32	\$110,570.80	\$119,039.14	\$141,012.80	\$131,327.68
<b>October</b>	\$78,521.41	\$82,457.36	\$135,684.13	\$92,822.73	\$131,303.72	\$96,609.43	\$104,610.46	\$161,539.35
<b>November</b>	\$65,634.16	\$66,320.69	\$60,656.37	\$74,941.32	\$62,477.23	\$55,640.27	\$127,396.06	\$66,529.20
<b>December</b>	\$35,863.06	\$28,180.25	\$19,345.61	\$19,015.36	\$39,919.44	\$41,054.05	\$42,669.91	\$42,757.39
<b>January</b>	\$26,285.38	\$24,854.02	\$35,059.29	\$20,424.06	\$34,534.93	\$30,150.89	\$39,330.21	\$42,626.27
<b>February</b>	\$29,793.27	\$28,315.62	\$35,103.14	\$35,548.75	\$32,238.55	\$35,123.06	\$40,338.62	\$46,395.65
<b>March</b>	\$42,612.90	\$41,364.69	\$32,397.61	\$29,958.44	\$36,985.04	\$37,491.44	\$44,848.47	
<b>April</b>	\$31,209.25	\$29,770.09	\$37,741.83	\$34,868.18	\$32,041.45	\$45,623.20	\$57,967.09	
<b>May</b>	\$34,060.95	\$30,993.80	\$30,913.52	\$37,983.64	\$17,600.12	\$45,320.51	\$55,570.82	
<b>June</b>	\$45,406.33	\$40,827.68	\$37,353.76	\$47,084.25	\$29,190.44	\$62,844.46	\$67,132.87	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$700,617.69</b>	<b>\$692,369.48</b>	<b>\$727,606.13</b>	<b>\$734,689.52</b>	<b>\$730,330.94</b>	<b>\$729,499.82</b>	<b>\$1,016,610.77</b>	<b>\$771,490.86</b>

## **Some Highlights from Fiscal Year 2022 to 2023 (so far)**

In addition to marketing to local, state, national and international audiences, the Wind River Visitors Council is also involved in lots of projects. Some of the projects from the current fiscal year (2022 to 2023) are listed below.

### **Lander Chamber of Commerce Community Awards Luncheon**

This year's speaker at the Lander Chamber of Commerce's annual Community Awards Luncheon was the Wind River Visitors Council's Executive Director, Helen Wilson. Helen provided an update on marketing efforts, tourism and media coverage of Wind River Country. The event took place on Friday, March 3 at the Lander Community & Convention Center. The Chamber recognized outstanding individuals and businesses in the community.

### **Tourism Study of Fremont and Hot Springs Counties**

The Wind River Visitors Council is assisting Central Wyoming College with a tourism study, conducted by PGAV Destinations. This study could result in opportunities to apply for funding for asset development throughout Wind River Country. The WRVC provided a Familiarization Tour to support the study.

### **Destination Development Program**

Destination Development Program projects that are in the works include an expansion of the Art Banner Project in Hudson and Riverton, a TravelStorys Downtown Dubois walking tour, wayfinding/informational signage in Lander, signage at the Bus Loop in Lander, two State marketing co-ops, advertising in the *National Park Journal*, *Yellowstone*, trail and informational signage in Dubois, communication/meetings/graphic design supplies, a kiosk on the Wind River Indian Reservation, a video profiling fishing in the backcountry of the Wind River Range and a video display in the Lander Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center.

### **Signs at the Frank B. Wise Business Center and in Hudson and Riverton**

The WRVC continues to help to get a digital sign at the Frank B. Wise Business Center on the Wind River Indian Reservation. Signs in Hudson and Riverton have been added to these efforts.

### **Riverton Community Celebration**

On January 21, the WRVC hosted a Riverton Community Celebration to celebrate Riverton and the start of the ice racing season. The event was open to the public and took place at Bunks BBQ and included food and an opportunity to meet Mayor Hancock, Riverton's new Mayor. The evening was co-hosted by the Wyoming Off-Road Racers

Association (WORRA), the Hampton Inn & Suites and the WYRiverton Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Center.

### **Dubois Chamber of Commerce Annual Mixer**

On November 18, 2022, the WRVC sponsored the Dubois WY Annual Chamber of Commerce Member Mixer. The Dew Boyz Diner did the catering, and the event provided an opportunity to visit with the Wind River Visitors Council Board of Directors and staff, and chat with the Dubois Chamber of Commerce about ways to help businesses reach their goals.

### **Wyoming Governor's Hospitality & Tourism Convention**

The WRVC's Treasurer, Helen Gordon, and Executive Director, Helen Wilson, braved the weather and attended the Wyoming Governor's Hospitality & Tourism Convention in Cheyenne, Wyoming from January 29 to 31. They caught up with others in the tourism and hospitality industry, attended presentations and met with partners.

### **Winter in the Wilds of Wyoming, Press Trip**

The WRVC hosted a winter press trip. Four writers came to the area to explore winter in Wind River Country. Activities included visiting the bison herd on the Wind River Indian Reservation, exploring Sinks Canyon State Park by snowshoe, snowmobiling on Togwotee Pass, touring the National Bighorn Sheep Center and the National Museum of Military Vehicles and enjoying fine dining and accommodations throughout Wind River Country. Following are links to two of the articles that resulted from this trip:

Matador Network, Wyoming's Wind River Country Makes for the Ultimate Western Road Trip: <https://matadornetwork.com/read/wind-river-country-wyoming/>

Men's Journal, Wyoming's Wind River Range is a Winter Adventurer's Best-Kept Secret:

<https://www.mensjournal.com/travel/best-activities-wind-river-range-wyoming>

### **Wyoming Outdoor Recreation Grant**

The WRVC helped several groups apply for the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) grant, which was offered through the Wyoming Office of Outdoor Recreation. Awards will be offered between \$20,000 and \$749,000. The grants are being evaluated for ARPA eligibility, economic impact, new outdoor recreation infrastructure, budget and project costs, a funding match, financial risk assessment and community support. Projects could include trails, trailheads, play area development, water-based recreation, shooting ranges, publicly managed campground infrastructure, climbing infrastructure, etc.

## **Go Beyond Yellowstone to Riverton, Wyoming**

The WRVC recently completed a new promotional video of Riverton. Here's the link, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U8Rt9zxeJAg&t=6s>.

## **TravelStorys**

The WRVC worked with the Northern Arapaho Economic Development Commission on the completion of a Wind River Indian Reservation Audio Tour. The tour had 10 Eastern Shoshone sites, and 10 Northern Arapaho sites were added. The full tour is available at this link, <https://windriver.org/destinations/wind-river-indian-reservation/>.

## **Media Coverage**

The Wind River Visitors Council often sends out press releases, submits applications for media awards and organizes media visits. Last year, the WRVC applied for the 2022 Sunset Travel Awards. Wyoming's Wind River Country received the award titled "Remarkable Outdoor Recreation Region." Here's the link, <https://www.sunset.com/travel/2022-sunset-travel-awards>.

In addition, a media visit for a writer from Cowboys & Indians was organized, and an article was released titled "Wyoming's Wind River Country." Fort Washakie, the Northern Arapaho Experience Room, the National Museum of Military Vehicles and the Eastern Shoshone Tribe Buffalo Tour were featured, <https://www.cowboysindians.com/2022/05/wyomings-wind-river-country/>.

Also, the Wind River Rally was featured in 5280's The Best of the Mountain West 2022, <https://www.5280.com/best-of-the-mountain-west-2022/>. This event was sponsored by the Wind River Visitors Council.

Following are some other places where Wind River Country was recently featured:

- 11 Amazing Yurt Getaways Across the Country: Lander got number 10, <https://financebuzz.com/amazing-yurt-getaways>.
- The 5 Best Places to Visit in Wyoming, According to the Superintendent of Grand Teton National Park: The Wind River Indian Reservation was featured, <https://matadornetwork.com/read/places-to-visit-in-wyoming/>.
- 9 of the Best Wyoming Hiking Trails for Amazing Views and Small Crowds: Dubois Badlands was featured, <https://matadornetwork.com/read/wyoming-hiking-trails/>.
- The 12 best day trips in the Rocky Mountains: Sinks Canyon State Park was featured, <https://www.lonelyplanet.com/articles/best-day-trips-rocky-mountains-usa>.

- Explore The Lesser Known Side Of Wyoming On This Three Day Getaway: Dubois, The National Bighorn Sheep Center, Lander, the Wind River Wild Horse Sanctuary, Sinks Canyon and Atlantic City were featured, <https://www.onlyinyourstate.com/wyoming/everyday-explorers-wind-river-wy/>.
- Going To Yellowstone? Consider A Self-Driven Tour Of The Wind River Indian Reservation: The Wind River Indian Reservation was featured, <https://www.thetravel.com/take-a-self-drive-tour-of-the-wind-river-reservation-wyoming/>.
- 10 Winter Hikes to Keep You Trailblazing All Year Round: Sinks Canyon State Park, Whiskey Mountain and the Dubois Scenic Overlook were featured, <https://www.mensjournal.com/adventure/best-winter-hikes>.
- The Guide to Wedding Destinations in the American West: 3 Spear Ranch in Dubois was featured, <https://www.theknot.com/content/western-wedding-destinations>.
- So Long and Tanks for All the Tanks: Touring the Museum of Military Vehicles: The National Museum of Military Vehicles was featured, <https://www.cnet.com/culture/so-long-and-tanks-for-all-the-tanks-touring-the-museum-of-military-vehicles/>.
- Tea Time across America: Brooks Lake Lodge & Spa was featured, <https://55pluslifemag.com/tea-time-across-america/>.
- 22 Last-Minute Trips to Take Between Christmas and New Year's: Wind River Country was featured, <https://blog.cheapism.com/last-minute-travel-december/>.
- Taylor Sheridan: Writing the Real American West: The Wind River Indian Reservation was featured, <https://movieweb.com/taylor-sheridan-movies-writer-american-west/>.
- Regenerative Travel Is the Next Phase of Responsible Tourism: community-owned eco lodge on the Wind River Indian Reservation was featured, <https://www.yahoo.com/lifestyle/regenerative-travel-next-phase-responsible-111833432.html>.
- Wyoming man invests \$100M into National Museum of Military Vehicles on Fox Nation's 'Hidden Gems': The National Museum of Military Vehicles was featured, <https://www.foxnews.com/lifestyle/wyoming-national-museum-military-vehicles-fox-nation-hidden-gems>.
- From the Wild West to dinosaur fossils, here are 7 wild museums in Wyoming: The National Bighorn Sheep Center, The National Museum of Military Vehicles and The Museum of the American West were featured, <https://www.lonelyplanet.com/articles/best-museums-in-wyoming>.
- 14 Best All Inclusive Resorts for Teens: Triangle C Dude Ranch was featured, <https://www.tripstodiscover.com/all-inclusive-resorts-for-teens/>.