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Navajo County Communities Team Up To Brand Region, Attract Businesses

HOLBROOK, AZ — The **Navajo County Regional Development Council (NCRDC)** has contracted with an economic development marketing and branding expert to promote the Navajo County region as a great place to bring and build a business.

Following a competitive proposal process, NCRDC has contracted with **Lori Martinek** of **Presentation Plus** to develop a detailed branding strategy that facilitates business attraction, retention and expansion and to develop a regional website that promotes the new brand. The project is scheduled to be completed by September 2010.

“This is an exciting and significant project for Navajo County and its communities,” stated **County Supervisor David Tenney**. “Recovering from the economic downturn will require a lot of proactive, forward thinking, which is what this project is all about.”

NCRDC was created in 2007 and is comprised of communities throughout the region. Council members include representatives from Winslow, Holbrook, Snowflake, Taylor, Show Low and Pinetop-Lakeside. Unincorporated areas are represented by Navajo County. Representatives from Apache County, St. Johns and Eagar also participate on the council.

The multi-level project will begin with visioning workshops that will be held throughout the region in early April, followed by the development of a detailed branding strategy. That strategy will be translated into image, identity and marketing concepts, according to Martinek, whose firm has worked on similar regional, county and community projects across the country.

Together with the Council, **Presentation Plus** will also lead the design and development of a website for the region, which will serve as a gateway to economic development information on each of the communities. “It will be designed as a business attraction and development tool, which will be created with the specific needs of site selectors and expanding

companies in mind,” she noted. “The goal here is to facilitate beneficial economic development. Our audience will be business owners, entrepreneurs and key economic development investors, infrastructure developers and stakeholders.”

Beneficial economic development could include the successful attraction of new jobs to the region, noted Tenney. “Our goal is to create new employment opportunities for our existing workforce and that means bringing good jobs to the region.”

According to Martinek, who has been actively involved in economic development for nearly 20 years, there are some good lessons to be learned from the economic challenges of the past 18 months.

“Although it can be exciting to land a single company that produces 300 jobs, it is often more productive and prudent to work toward attracting six companies that will each bring 50 new jobs to the region,” she explained. Her firm will conduct a cluster analysis as part of the project to determine existing industry patterns. Existing clusters could identify opportunities to target businesses that would benefit from being located within close regional proximity to each other.

Presentation Plus is a full service marketing and public relations firm that specializes in economic development and community branding and marketing. The firm was founded in 1988 and is headquartered in Cave Creek, Arizona.

Lori Martinek is a branding expert and author who was a featured speaker at the Governor’s Regional and Rural Development Conference in 2008 and 2009. She is scheduled to speak again at this year’s conference, which will be held October 13-15 in Flagstaff.

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Martinek can be contacted by calling (623) 537-0888 or by visiting her firm’s website at www.pplusonline.com.

Additional information on NCRDC is available by calling **Navajo County Government and Community Relations Administrator Rod Ross** at (928) 205-7663, or by visiting the county’s website at www.navajocountyaz.gov.