
DEC Mission Statement

The Montana DEC will **support Montana exporters** and **provide a collective Montana exporter voice** to advise on **export education** needs and disseminate education opportunities to its collective networks; and to **advise policy makers on export policies** under consideration and provide suggestions for future legislation.

Next meeting

The Montana DEC winter meeting will be the **week of January 11th**. DEC members are encouraged to [indicate in this survey their preferred date](#). More information, including the agenda, will be sent at least 2 weeks prior to the meeting.

Attendees

Official DEC Members*

Barry, Woods' Powr Grip, Chair
Richard – The Law Office of Richard Hegger, Vice Chair
Carey – US Commercial Service, Executive Secretary
Katie – Spika Design & Manufacturing
Joel – Ascent Vision
Linda – Paradise Dental
Adam – Resonon
Kyle – Agmor
Tibor – Resodyn
Sam – Crowley Fleck
Bill – MacBride Law
Angie – Montana Dept of Commerce-ExportMontana
Brigitta – MounTerra & Montana World Trade Center
Jenni – Montana Manufacturing Extension Center

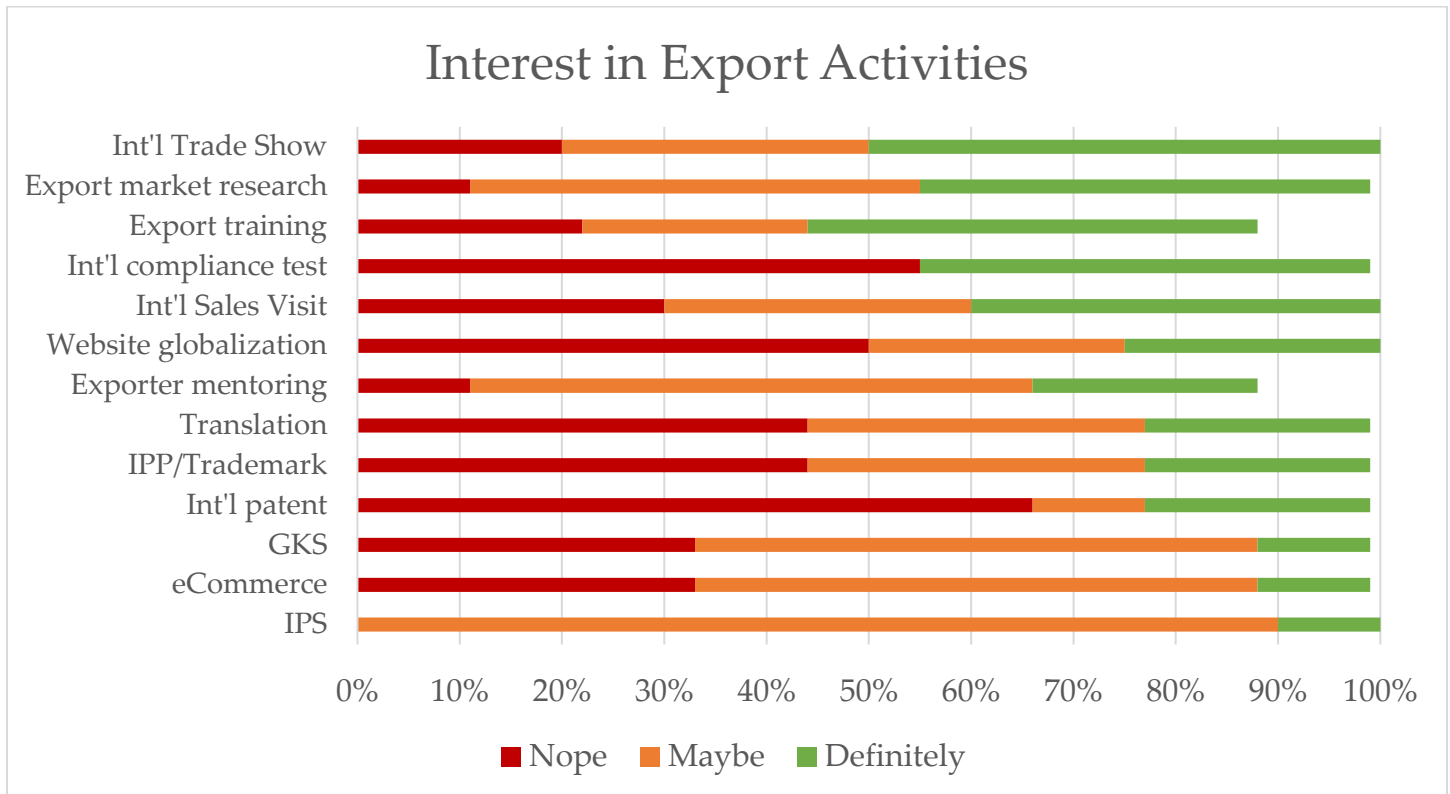
**Official DEC membership, controlled by the US Department of Commerce, can be accepted in June in even-numbered years.*

Guests

Harold – Diversified Plastics (filling vacancy for past member from Diversified Plastics)
Katie – ExportMontana
Canon – ExportMontana

ExportMontana requested DEC input on future international trade promotion plans. The results are indicated below.

- Interest in exporting has not waned due to COVID closures.
- The personal view of the next 12 months is split evenly as Optimistic and Neutral.
- Most are not traveling internationally now, but at least 50% indicated that they will be by March 2021.
- The most popular export activities are:
 - International trade shows
 - Export market research
 - Export training



- Virtual options are acceptable for training opportunities, but not as well accepted for meeting new buyers.
- Top export training topics, in order, are:
 - eCommerce
 - Export 101
 - International market research
 - International compliance testing

STEP Grant Update

Angelyn provided an update on [ExportMontana's STEP grant](#). ExportMontana will soon announce \$525,814 in funding for Sept 30, 2020 – Sept 29, 2022 for:

- The reimbursement rate, historically at 50%, is now 75%.
- Funding grants for individual Montana exporters for:

- International Trade Show Exhibition (including virtual) – up to \$10,000 reimbursement + up to \$2,000 travel stipend
- Language Translation Services & Production Fees – up to \$6,000 reimbursement
- U.S. Commercial Service Programs – up to \$5,000 reimbursement + up to \$2,000 travel stipend
- International Compliance Testing & Patent Fees – up to \$6,000 reimbursement
- Website Globalization & Montana Online Global Program – up to \$6,000 reimbursement
- International Travel Stipend – up to \$2,000 reimbursement
- Hosting Montana Pavilions for Montana exporter industry groups:
 - (Recruiting) May 2020, Sub-Saharan Africa, companies selling into South Africa, etc.
 - (Recruiting) March 2021, Germany, EnforceTac & IWA, tactical and defense industry & outdoor and hunting industry
 - (Recruiting) March 2021, Germany, EWF, fly fishing products and services
 - (Planning) July 2021, Canada, Global Energy Show, oil field and oil sands products and services
 - (Planning) August 2021, Canada, Alberta Gift + Home Show, Made in Montana products
- Hosting Montana Sales Missions for Montana exporters
 - (Confirmed) February 2021, South Africa, Virtual Sales Mission, for any company selling into South Africa
 - (Planning) August 2021, South Africa, Sales Mission, follow-up to Feb virtual mission
 - (Planning) 2022, Japan, Montana-Japan Brewery & Distillery Exchange
- Likely to start moving towards 50/50 balance of trade shows and trade missions.

USDOC Activities Update

Carey provided an update on US Department of Commerce services, including:

- US Commercial Service's reduced program fees for FY20 and FY21 for:
 - [Initial Market Check](#): initial assessment of the market potential
 - [International Company Profile](#): background check on a foreign company
 - [International Partner Search](#): introductions to potential international reps, distributors, etc.
 - [Gold Key Matching Service](#): in-country meetings with potential international reps, distributors, etc.
 - These are all eligible for 75% [STEP grant](#) reimbursement, too
- Rural Export Center's programs
 - [RAISE customized market research service](#): ExportMT and USCS will co-host a webinar with the REC to get Montana companies signed up for this service.
 - See Attachment 1 for RAISE information.

- A sample RAISE report and matrix will be emailed to DEC members along with these minutes.
- [Website globalization & international market research seminars](#): Brigitta has offered the Montana World Trade Center to coordinate 2 locations for this in-person seminar and revenue share with DEC. MMEC offered facilities in Bozeman.
- These are all eligible for 75% [STEP grant](#) reimbursement, too

Exporter of the Year

The COVID pandemic prevented the Montana DEC from awarding the 2019 [Montana Exporter of the Year](#) award on time. However, DEC members agreed to:

- Review and determine award status for **2019 EOTY** applicant(s) in early October. If award is warranted, likely host a virtual award ceremony.
- Move forward with the **2020 EOTY** on the normal schedule (application due by end of February 2021).

DEC Exporter Mentoring

As part of DEC Membership, members agree to **mentor other Montana exporters**. As a recent example, Dianna from Towhaul, Carey from USCS, and Angie from ExportMT provided mentoring services to a Lewistown exporter.

DEC members will also be **invited as guest speakers** for export service providers' webinars and trainings to provide their expertise and experience.

The export service providers greatly appreciate DEC members' time and effort on behalf of our State's international sales!

DEC Advocacy

For future DEC meetings, especially in-person meetings of substance, such as the EOTY award ceremony, DEC members may invite State and Federal legislators and staff to attend.

The Montana DEC's mission includes advocacy for international trade policy issues. Currently, on a Federal level, there are 2 bills proposed that will materially damage the US Commercial Service (see below). As Montana only has 1 overseas office (in Japan), our state's exporters are heavily reliant on the USCS for in-country assistance. Should these bills move forward, the Montana DEC will consider taking further action.

- [H.R.7408 - Foreign Trade Modernization Act of 2020](#)
- [H.R.7549 - Foreign Trade Modernization Act of 2020](#)

ATTACHMENT 1

RAISE Information



WHAT'S YOUR RESEARCH NEED?

Inform your export process with RAISE research



WORLDWIDE MATRIX

- Find a market
- Form a strategy
- Compare markets

“ We developed a plan for systematically approaching the markets. It saved us a lot of time and money. ”

- Jon Engelstad, Superior Manufacturing, Kindred, ND



COUNTRY RESEARCH

- Identify industry trends
- Evaluate trade shows
- Understand countries

“ We chose a trade show over an expensive marketing push. Our international business has now grown by leaps and bounds. ”

- Roger Brazier, Mattracks, Karlstad, MN



POTENTIAL PARTNER LIST

- ID potential partners
- Maximize travel time
- Build a network

“ We connected with prospective partners in advance of our travel and got down to business during our visit. ”

- Teri Zimmerman, Botlink, Fargo, ND

WHAT'S UNIQUE ABOUT RAISE?

- Over \$1 million in databases and resources
- Thousands of potential partners identified
- Actionable research focused on bottom-line results
- 10+ years of empowering companies



Sign Up Now: ● 701-239-5080 ● Heather.Ranck@trade.gov ● www.export.gov/rural/raise