

*News Release*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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***Alliance Annual Meeting features  
sustainable community development discussion,  
induction of new board members, and a look ahead to 2010***

Sustainability is essentially “giving our grandkids an even break,” an expert in sustainable community development said Wednesday night to a gathering of about 60.

Michael Kinsley, of the Rocky Mountain Institute and a former county commissioner in Pitkin County, Colorado, was in Jackson to discuss growth management at the Jackson Hole Conservation Alliance’s annual meeting, Dec. 2, at Hansen Hall of St. John’s Episcopal Church.

Kinsley, who has worked with many small communities throughout the country, discussed smart growth management strategies, touted the importance of affordable housing policies, and offered ideas for economic opportunities for businesses and communities. He said creative opportunities could work even in a bad economy if people are willing to adjust their mental models and take innovative approaches that don’t rely on physical expansion.

“Physical expansion in a finite space is inherently unsustainable,” Kinsley said. “There’s no more new frontier.”

Instead of physical expansion, Kinsley cited methods of growing local economies through several real life examples of community innovations, such as energy sustainability efforts and buying-local programs that ended up creating jobs, as well as creating thriving small-town economies.

Kinsley’s talk capped off a full evening’s agenda for the Conservation Alliance’s annual membership meeting, which began at 6 p.m. and included election of new board members, announcement of the Outstanding Conservationist of the Year Award (see separate news release), and a look at the organization’s accomplishments from 2009 and goals for 2010.

Members voted to officially induct three involved community members into their first three-year terms on the Conservation Alliance Board – Joe Albright, Beverly Lane and Debbie Reis.

Albright, who was appointed to the Alliance board in February, is a former foreign news correspondent and author, and is co-owner of the Flat Creek Ranch at the base of the Sleeping Indian. Albright calls the Alliance “our bulwark” and says that Jackson Hole’s most pressing challenge is reaching consensus on a growth path that preserves wildlife and community values.

Lane, Trout Unlimited coordinator for volunteer operations, was appointed to the Alliance Board in March, is a former Alliance employee and a third-generation conservationist. “I feel that I’m now living in a place and a time in which the community’s choices are more important than ever, impacting future generations in immeasurable ways. I want to be a part of making sure good choices are made,” she said previously.

Reis is active in the Jackson Hole community as a volunteer for St. John’s Living Center, the National Museum of Wildlife Art, and St. John’s Auxiliary and has been a member of the Alliance’s development committee, recently taking over the role of committee chairperson. She is a longtime conservationist, who has been greatly inspired by both the legacy of and having been able to meet Mardy Murie. “I’ve always admired people who make a difference, and I aspire to be that kind of person,” she said prior to the meeting.

In addition to the new faces, the Alliance members voted to renew the terms of two current board members to their second three-year terms. Those board members are Bill McClure, a retired mechanical contractor and engineer, and Pegi Sobey, a fundraiser.

Alliance Board Chairman Anthony Stevens recognized four board members whose terms are expiring at the end of 2009 – wildlife biologist Joel Berger, retired foundation president Kathe Henry, retired architect Julius Muschaweck, and educator Chuck Schneebeck. Those board members were commended for their accomplishments and dedication.

Interim executive director Cindy Harger then introduced the Alliance’s staff of eight to the audience, and discussed some of the organization’s accomplishments from 2009, including a successful 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration and fundraiser, educational forums to bring outside experts into the community, collaborative victories to obtain federal protection for the Snake River and Wyoming Range, obtaining funding for critical habitat research, and working to ensure the comprehensive planning process provides not only for the community but also saves a place for wildlife.

“This staff’s loyalty, passion and vision for the valley, combined with the vision and passion on the board, the vision and passion in this room and the vision and passion in the community makes it easy to see why the Alliance has been so successful for the past 30 years,” Harger said. “It’s also why I believe there will be many opportunities to mark more accomplishments over the next 30.”

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*The Jackson Hole Conservation Alliance is a nonprofit organization dedicated to responsible land stewardship to ensure that human activities are in harmony with the area's irreplaceable wildlife, scenic and other natural resources. The organization has more than 2,000 members from Jackson Hole and across the nation.*