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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Inaugural Women's Conference on Sustainability a Success!**

**Jackson, WY**— Over 100 women packed Q Roadhouse Friday at noon to kick off the inaugural Women's Conference on Sustainability. Hosted by the Nature Conservancy and Womumentum of The Equipoise Fund and sponsored by First Interstate Bank, the conference worked to amplify the voices of women working on sustainability and strove to change the paradigm of how conferences are executed.

The organizers knew that they were taking a gamble in completely reinventing the format of a conference. What the organizers had observed was, not only do women talk about sustainability differently than men, they organize their thoughts and actions differently. They therefore took the gamble of an entirely new format in the hopes that this would inspire women. Based on the response, the gamble paid off.

By the end of the two days of events, more than 150 women and girls had participated in one or more of the activities, ranging from a lunch at Q Roadhouse to an after school program at the Jackson Hole Middle School to a daylong series of conversations and workshops.

### **Amplifying Voices for Change**

Keynote speaker and Wyoming's First Lady Nancy Freudenthal gave an inspiring speech to the nearly 70 women at Saturday's conference. In her 20 minute talk, she made seven key points about the importance and value of women's voices in creating sustainable communities in Wyoming:

1. Wyoming needs you
2. Don't wait—don't wait for an invitation, invite yourself to the table
3. Never think that you have nothing to contribute
4. Pick your forum
5. Don't expect it to come cheaply
6. Don't let men do the work for you
7. Women see the invisible

The seven other speakers at Saturday's workshops talked extensively about the power of women's voices. The combined expertise offered by Nancy Freudenthal, Melinda Kramer, Rev Melinda Bobo, Andrea Erickson Quiroz, Paula Hunker, Laura Bell, and

Lyndsay McCandless worked with the forum and the energy of participants to activate a groundswell of ideas and enthusiasm. By Monday morning, conference organizers and participants reported a number of successes and plans already put into motion.

### **What's Next?**

When asked how they planned to capitalize on all of this positive energy, Jen Simon said, "Already, the women who participated have been active—telling their friends, contacting each other, putting plans in motion. We plan to have an online community established by early next week at the website [womensustain.com](http://womensustain.com). That forum will allow participants to continue to share their energies and accomplishments and it will contain video clips from the conference.

"In addition, the first follow up event is already scheduled for June 12 at 5:30. All the women who participated are invited to join us for a free event and are encouraged to bring someone new to increase the impact."

For more information on the conference or upcoming events, please call Womentum Coordinator Annie Jack at 733-9225 or The Nature Conservancy's Jen Simon at 733-8890.

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*The mission of The Nature Conservancy is to preserve the plants, animals and natural communities that represent the diversity of life on earth by protecting the lands and waters they need to survive.*

For more information visit [www.nature.org/wyoming](http://www.nature.org/wyoming).

*Womentum is dedicated to harnessing women's intellectual, creative and charitable spirit to effectuate meaningful social change for women.*

For more information visit [www.womentumwyo.org](http://www.womentumwyo.org).