Seminar Nine started with a discussion about managing conflict and how individuals handle conflict differently facilitated by Marie Hvidsten, RLND Director. It was easy to see ourselves in the various situations shown in the video clips and the discussion amongst classmates helped provide insight into working with people who handle conflict differently than ourselves.

Next panel members shared information about entrepreneurship and economic development with class members. Panel members included Stephanie Hoffart, Vice President Minot Area Development Corporation; Tracie Thompson, rancher from Antler who has diversified into vegetable production and Alan Svangstu, plant manager at United Pulse Trading where they mill and market peas, lentils, and other pulse crops.

Chuck Barney, Director of the Severson Entrepreneurship Academy at Minot State University, spoke to Class V following dinner at 10 North Main Thursday night. He told a great story about how the students in the learning lab have created the “Brew Café” in Minot.

Day two of the seminar shifted focus to the oil boom taking place in the area. Enbridge Community Relations Advisor Katie Haarsager and Quentin Hill, also of Enbridge, explained Enbridge operations in the area including the Enbridge facility at Berthold. Enbridge has worked with the local grain elevator, the Berthold community and the BNSF Railway to minimize negative impacts to the community and enhance the rail movement of grain and oil.

Shane Summers of EOG met RLND Class V at the EOG offices and warehouse in Stanley where he and other EOG employees explained EOGs operations in the area.

Don Longmuir, RLND Class I Alumnus and Mountrail County Emergency Manager met the group at the new Mountrail County Office building and shared some of the downsides of an oil boom that communities in the Bakken region are struggling with; roads, housing, emergency services to name a few. Our next stop was Whiting Oil & Gas Robinson Lake facility where Darius Frick, Area Operations Supervisor, shared history about the failed exploratory wells and how a coin toss decision to try dig one more well led to Whiting’s eventual large operation in the region.

Saturday morning Class V members relived their Brazil trip with small group presentations about their experiences. A great addition to the seminar was visiting with Jeff Topp who explained how the Topp family became interested in Brazilian agriculture and their experiences as they looked into the possibility of farming in Brazil, eventually purchasing land in the state of Bahia where Todd Topp now resides with his family.