Sunshine and the promise of spring beckoned Class VIII members to Watford City for an Economic Development and Leadership seminar. Kathy Tweeten kicked off the seminar with a revisit to Emotional Intelligence (EQ). She asked us to lean into discomfort and to be open and candid. EQ is the core to critical skills. Next, Jodi Bruns engaged us in a discussion on crucial conversations. This discussion had a deeper meaning after the revisit to EQ as we noticed more in the examples with our heightened awareness in EQ. Three elements to crucial conversations are opposing opinions, strong emotions, and high stakes. Practice conversations helped us be cognizant of how to navigate through a crucial conversation.

A drive through the North Unit of Theodore Roosevelt National Park capped off the afternoon, where we spotted bison, whitetail deer, and the elusive bighorn sheep. Jan Dodge, RLND Alumna, joined us as our tour guide. It was a lovely day to enjoy the majesty of the park. The evening ended with a family style meal sponsored by ONEOK at Stonehome Brewing.

**RLND Class VIII participants at the North Unit of Theodore Roosevelt National Park**

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The Long X Trading Post Visitor Center was our first stop on tour day. Daniel Stenberg, RLND Alumnus and Watford City Economic Development Director, told us of some of the history of the area and the impetus behind the Long X Visitor Center. We journeyed to the ONEOK Lonesome Creek Facility southwest of Arnegard where we learned about natural gas and natural gas liquids (NGL). At 160 acres and 200 million cu/ft/day processing, Lonesome Creek is one of the largest plants of its kind.

Our next stop was the Arnegard Fire Department, where Rick Schreiber and Lynn Hovde joined us to talk about the new fire department and its impact in McKenzie County.

In 2011, there were four calls in the district (all grass calls). In 2018, there were 94 calls ranging from structure/vehicle fires to Narcan calls to serious vehicle crashes. The work the fire department is doing is essential to the safety of the area.

An hour to explore downtown Watford City over lunch, and we were headed northeast of Watford City to don FR coveralls, safety glasses, hard hats, and steel toed boots to learn about an Oasis Petroleum Rig. It was an interesting hands-on experience to learn about oil production in a very important oil-producing county. A stop at McKenzie County Healthcare Systems gave us a look inside the medical community in the area. To end the evening, a panel of Watford City leaders at the Leadership Dinner talked about finding the champions in the area to help promote change and growth in the community.

The seminar concluded with a discussion on leading change and discovering biases. We had a short discussion on our international experience in Chile and looked ahead to our next seminar in Grand Forks. We also briefly discussed our RLND projects. The seminar ended with the eastern class members reluctantly heading back to snow and winter conditions.