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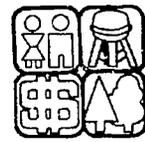
ABSTRACT

The four Regional Rural Development Centers are linked to the land-grant institutions and engage in activities and projects that seek to improve the social and economic well-being of rural people. This combined report of the four Centers begins with a highlighted project from each Center. The projects are presented in some detail to provide insight into the number and diversity of persons involved in the development of Center projects, linkages to other organizations and institutions, integration of research and extension functions, relevance to regional or national issues, and actual and potential impacts on the well-being of rural people. The body of the report organizes projects and activities around 5 major themes or goals: (1) improving economic competitiveness and diversification; (2) supporting management and strategic planning for economic investment; (3) creating capacity through leadership; (4) assisting family and community adjustment to stress and change; and (5) promoting constructive use of the environment. Within each of these themes or goals, the Centers' research and extension work is separated into collaborative projects and projects involving only one Center. Many projects involve children, families, rural education, adult education, and higher education. The index references collaborating agencies and states involved in the projects. (KS)

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ED 370 737

1993 Combined Report



Selected Research and Extension Projects of the Four Regional Rural Development Centers

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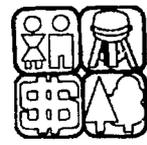
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RC 019632

1993 Combined Report



**Selected Research and Extension
Projects of the Four Regional
Rural Development Centers**

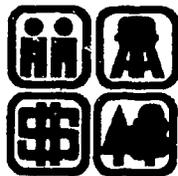
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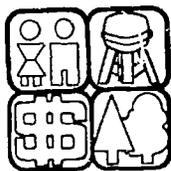
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Dedication



Dr. Peter F. Korsching, who has served as director of the NCRCRD over the last 10 years, will move back into the sociology department full time to resume his research and teaching in social change and rural development. The 1993 Combined Report is dedicated to him.

As colleagues of Pete Korsching, we are saddened that he has chosen to step aside as director of the North Central Regional Center for Rural Development. We will miss his honesty, insight, foresight, wisdom, competence and humor. Conversely, we respect his desire to stop traveling so much, to return to his major interests of research and writing, and to return to the productive, scholastic life of a tenured professor, writer and researcher.

The Northeast, Southern and Western Rural Development Centers have benefitted greatly from Pete's counsel and professional abilities. As director of the North Central Center, he ably selected the rural development issues to receive focus for competitive Center grants; worked with his staff to experiment successfully with publication styles and dissemination strategies (his research and writing styles strengthened these efforts); designed innovative methods and approaches for linking research and extension efforts; and offered his willingness and capability—time and time again—to represent all Centers on national efforts (e.g., Family Community Leadership and the Association of Leadership Educators). We have *borrowed* heavily from all of these attributes that Pete so unselfishly shares.

Pete's significant leadership role in rural development within the region and the nation is often less visible than his impact on colleagues, programming emphasis, funding sources, and residents of small and rural communities. We continually hear examples of these accomplishments from audiences he has touched through the Center. His modesty and accompanying low-profile orientation to the director's role masks his importance *in being on the cutting edge of rural development issues* (e.g., Pete, through the Center, led the research and extension focus on the Farm Income Crisis of the 1980s, and did so well ahead of the curve).

We acknowledge Pete not only for his professional contributions to rural development, but also for his friendship. His contributions as a colleague and a friend are enhanced by his active listening skills. Pete's significant impact on us and the profession will be observed for a long time—regionally, nationally and internationally. He made our role as Center directors less frustrating, more rewarding, and easier just because he is Pete. We are indebted to him for all of these reasons.

Daryl Heasley
Director, NERCRD

Doss Brodnax
Director, SRDC

Russ Youmans
Director, WRDC

Tim Borich
Assistant Director, NCRCRD

Preface



This is a combined report of selected extension and research activities, projects and accomplishments of the four Regional Rural Development Centers. The four Centers are linked to the land-grant institutions and seek to improve the social and economic well-being of rural people. The variety of projects and the diversity of people and organizations involved in the work of the Centers attest to the impact of their work and reveal how this work touches rural people and communities.

The report begins with a highlighted project from each Center. These are projects to which the Centers have devoted considerable resources over the past year and which will have significant program and policy impacts for rural areas. The projects are presented in some detail to provide insight into the number and diversity of persons involved in the development of Center projects, the linkages to other organizations and institutions, the integration of research and extension functions, the relevance to regional or national issues, and the actual and potential impacts on the well-being of rural people.

In the body of the report five major themes or goals are used to organize the Centers' projects and activities:

- To improve economic competitiveness and diversification.
- To support management and strategic planning for economic investment.
- To create capacity through leadership.
- To assist in family and community adjustment to stress and change.
- To promote constructive use of the environment.

Within each of these themes or goals, the Centers' research and extension work is separated into collaborative projects and projects involving only one Center. Collaborative projects are efforts of two or more of the Centers. In most cases, all four have collaborated and the project is national in scope. Even projects involving only one Center, however, are often reproduced or adapted by the other regions or nationally. A recent example is the Farm*A*Syst program coming from

the North Central Center and the Universities of Wisconsin and Minnesota. This rural-residence water quality program is now being adopted and adapted in many states in the nation with the other three Centers facilitating the process.

Although there are also distinctions between research and extension projects, the four Centers work hard at integrating research and extension in the best tradition of the land-grant system. Therefore, these distinctions are not explicitly noted. The research and extension efforts for FY93 of the four Regional Rural Development Centers are on the following pages.

Why Do the Centers Exist?

With one-quarter of the nation's population living in rural areas, there is a need to invest in research and education to assist these people and their communities in finding viable alternatives and opportunities for the future. The land-grant institutions have a long history of applied scholarship and an established presence in rural communities dealing with rural issues. For more than 20 years the Regional Centers have worked across state lines with land-grant faculty to expand this work and make it more readily available.

The Rural Condition

The social and economic health of rural America continues to decline significantly. National and global economic restructuring has produced shifts in local rural economies. Federal budget outlays for economic and regional development fell by 56 percent between 1980 and 1990, and USDA rural development programs decreased by 52 percent. There are increased pressures on local and state governments to provide services for education, health care, youth and families at risk, and infrastructure improvement. Conflicts arise over the use of natural resources. Rural community leaders, largely volunteers, often lack the resources, expertise, and specific leadership skills to deal effectively with these issues. What is to be done to enhance the standard of living in small and rural communities?

Understanding Rural Development

Programs designed for metropolitan areas do not adapt well to rural situations nor do agricultural programs solve the economic problems of rural communities. Neither is economic development the sole answer. The complex social problems in rural areas make it necessary to strengthen the ability of rural leaders to understand the effects of national and international policies and events on local communities and to develop responses reflecting local needs, values and resources. This will require an increased research on rural issues as well as improved education for community leaders.

Role of Regional Rural Development Centers

The four Regional Rural Development Centers support and strengthen individual state efforts in rural areas by developing networks of university research and extension faculty from a variety of disciplines to address rural issues. Strategies for dealing with those issues are developed by leaders across the region and the nation and are shared with rural communities via conferences, publications and other educational activities and materials. Each Center has the flexibility to adapt its program to meet the changing needs within its region. The Centers collaborate with state, regional and national public and private organizations and with each other to leverage support from a variety of sources to supplement their regional and federal funding and to increase program effectiveness. The Centers work in liaison with research and extension faculty; with state, regional and national policy makers; with community decision-makers; and with other rural development professionals.

Rural Development Challenges

The Centers are organized to respond rapidly to rural needs in their regions and to collaborate to provide interregional and national programs on critical rural development issues. Quick response has given the Centers the opportunity to be productive in adjusting to constantly changing conditions. There are, however, several limits and challenges the Centers face:

- More educational materials and programs with proven ability to assist rural people, businesses and communities exist than can be delivered with existing personnel in the land-grant system.
- Increasing research investment on rural community development issues is imperative.
- Sizable increases in investment in the next generation of academic leadership for rural development work is necessary.

Addressing the Challenges

The Centers receive modest funding from the U.S. Department of Agriculture through the Extension Service and Cooperative State Research Service. Increasingly, private foundations are also investing in the work of the Centers. Supplemental funding from these foundations has been very important to effective Center work.

In July 1991, the Regional Rural Development Centers underwent a national review by the Extension Service and the Cooperative State Research Service. The *Report of the Review Panel* strongly endorsed the Centers, saying they "performed an extremely valuable and useful catalytic role in research and Extension program... If the Centers did not exist today, they would have to be invented."

Project Highlights

NORTH CENTRAL REGIONAL CENTER FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT



Plight of the Young Child: Supporting Children and Families through Community-based Research (NCRCRD)

Several states in the North Central region have developed community needs assessment or community-based applied research models that could be adapted to addressing the needs of young children at the community level. A conference held in February 1993 brought teams from states across the nation to study the current programming models as planning began on the new national initiative, Plight of the Young Child. PYC has as its third goal "to strengthen CES and community organizational commitment to address the needs of children and families."

The project directors believe that community-based programs, using applied research methods, are an important part of extension's niche in the future and that opportunities to discuss these program models are critical as Cooperative Extension looks to the future. The presentation of models provided many states with new programming ideas, as well as reinforcement of the value of existing approaches. Liz Tuckermanty, national leader for the PYC Initiative, added the models to the national database on PYC programming. Daryl Hobbs, University of Missouri, was asked to provide critical analysis on the models, and shared valuable information and insight on effective community-based programming processes. Hobbs has since visited specific states to follow-up with them on this theme.

Beth Birnstihl, staff development leader with Nebraska Cooperative Extension Service writes: "I want to express my appreciation for your efforts in organizing the *Plight of Young Children Conference*. It was one of the most stimulating and stretching conferences that I have attended in a long time. The process emphasis of the conference has forced all of us to again rethink our role as extension educators."

The North Central Program Leaders of Extension Home Economics and the NCRCRD sponsored the conference, with additional funding from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, the Farm Foundation, and Home Economics and Human Nutrition at Extension Service-USDA. The North Central states, Washington, New York, California, Texas and Washington, D.C. were represented by the 57 county and campus-based Cooperative Extension faculty that attended the conference.



**Primary and Prenatal Health Care Access
in the Rural Northeast: A Policy Analysis (NERCRD)**

This study, which is a joint effort of West Virginia University and the University of Maine, will provide information aimed at helping to break the cycle of poverty and poor health that is perpetuated when women cannot afford, or do not have access to, adequate prenatal care. Networks previously not possible among health agencies and educators have been impacted, and new sources of funding linkages have been formed.

The first year of study on this project was recently completed and has received positive feedback. Of importance is the development and compilation of additional background materials which were not found or were not accessible at the beginning of the study.

The purpose of the second year of study is to provide information to policy makers and program planners that will assist them in taking effective actions to deal with the lack of adequate perinatal health care in rural areas, particularly West Virginia and Maine. The primary objective is to quantify the effects of demographic characteristics, substance abuse, availability of local health care facilities, prenatal care, infant mortality and the effect of low birth weight on medical costs. A secondary objective is to determine factors contributing to the lack of appropriate perinatal care in rural West Virginia and Maine.

A final objective is to identify and evaluate alternative policies and programs related to the improvement of perinatal care. Issues to be considered will include those related to the availability of health care professionals; the ability of patients to pay for prenatal consultation and care; the role of liability and the effect on health care providers; different types of private and public financial assistance, including direct subsidies from the state for assisting individuals in the payment of health care; recruitment and retention of perinatal health care providers; transportation barriers; and education programs.



Pathways from Poverty (SRDC)

Approximately 200 people representing the 13 Southern states attended the *Pathways from Poverty* workshop. Participants included government officials, elected officials, business leaders, representatives from grassroots organizations and social scientists.

The focus was on three possible pathways from poverty: education and human capital investment, work and income, and health and families. Presentations were given on the status of the South in regards to poverty, and successful case studies were explained. Participants attended as part of a state team, and met during the workshop to create a vision of what might be done in their respective states. Five teams held follow-up meetings within two months of the workshop. Teams reached out to include additional people and organizations in their vision and implementation procedures. Coalitions are still being formed. Some state legislators have been contacted regarding needed legislation. Funding proposals are being written.

Specific actions taken as a result of the *Pathways from Poverty* workshop include the Florida team, which met via conference call and formulated an outline for a W.K. Kellogg Foundation proposal. The proposal requests funding for a state conference for teams from 12 Florida counties identified as "highest poverty." The proposed conference will focus on Community Choices Public Policy Programming, which includes the Human Resources, Economic Development and Decisions for Health Initiatives.

Kentucky plans for a day-long meeting of the expanded state task force group that is broadly representative of the constituent areas and geographic areas. The meeting will include an overview of the research, update on various in-state economic development initiatives currently underway, consideration of various alternative roles the state task force could productively plan, and consideration of a piece of model legislation recently passed in North Carolina that might be prepared for introduction in the upcoming legislative session.

The Pathways from Poverty Workshop was a collaborative effort between the Southern Rural Development Center, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, the Farm Foundation, the Rural Sociological Society, and the Ford Foundation.



Tourism for Rural Community Development? (WRDC)

A pilot project in Choteau, Montana, tested a 14-step tourism assessment process. The process does not start with the assumption that tourism will be a good strategy for every community. It stresses the need for, and guides a community through, a series of assessments (social, economic, environmental) to better understand the potential costs and benefits of tourism development. This knowledge will help a community make a more informed decision as to whether tourism is really a strategy it wants to pursue or not. The process and materials used with the pilot community were developed by a group of regional extension faculty with input from the Montana Division of Tourism and USFS Forest Service R-1.

The model is being further tested during 1994 in three other Montana communities. It is also being integrated into the USDA-Extension Service's national tourism initiative as a community assessment piece of the OuR-Town program. A self-help Community Tourism Assessment handbook written for community leaders is under development to help meet the increasing interest within rural communities in the Western region and throughout the nation in exploring tourism as an economic diversification strategy. The handbook guides communities to the variety of agencies and institutions that can provide them with information as they move through the decision-making process.

A regional training will be held in Spring 1994 to introduce extension staff to the tourism assessment process and the specific methodologies involved. Future workshops are planned, bringing together multi-agency state teams that will work together in assisting rural communities going through this development decision-making process.

GOAL 1:

To Improve Economic Competitiveness and Diversification

COLLABORATIVE



Communities in Economic Transition (NCRCD, NERCD, SRDC, WRDC)

The Communities in Economic Transition national extension initiative aims to aid communities in strategic planning for economic development. Central to this process is to train and empower leadership in communities and develop effective and responsive collaborative networks. The four regional rural development centers have participated in the planning process for this initiative, in particular to help determine how it might play out at the regional level from orientations through actual program implementation. Activities to achieve the stated objectives of the CET initiative will draw upon other programs the Centers already support, such as BR&E and strategic planning.

USDA Training Conference (NCRCD, NERCD, SRDC, WRDC)

Rural development has gained impetus in recent years. The establishment of the State Rural Development Councils, along with rural development responsibilities mandated for several federal agencies, provide new resources and opportunities. One of the problems, however, is that the field staff of these agencies do not have the training in rural development to effectively implement the mandates they have been given. The four regional rural development centers are working with several USDA agencies to develop a rural development training program for field staff.

In December 1992, 35 people from various USDA agencies met in Orlando, Florida, to develop specifications for this training program. Three areas of need were specified: program planning and analysis, skills for community-based development, and understanding public policy principles. Based on the exercises of the conference, it was apparent that the broad comprehensive role for USDA personnel must be implemented in a collaborative fashion that involves a multi-agency team of professional personnel taking advantage of individual strengths.

WYO-MON-DAK Conference (NCRCRD, WRDC)

Some 150 community leaders, volunteers and professionals from Wyoming, Montana, North Dakota and South Dakota met in Bowman, North Dakota, to learn from one another about successful community-based development projects that they might try in their own community. The conference featured 12 topics: solid waste management, community and area planning, home-based business, branch-plant operation, tourism, health care, leadership, rural manufacturing, value-added enterprise, community infrastructure, community organization motivation, and financing economic development. Some of the success stories shared during these sessions related to other programs supported by the Centers, including WRDC's strategic planning training. Participants left with numerous new ideas as well as many hand-outs and new personal contacts to help them pursue activities when they returned home. The participants' response was so positive that a second four-state workshop is planned for March 1994 in Sundance, Wyoming, to continue this grassroots-level, shared-learning process.

Heartland and QUINState Community Development Conferences (NCRCRD, SRDC)

The annual Heartland Conference was organized in 1987 for community leaders, volunteers and professionals from Arkansas, Kansas, Missouri and Oklahoma. Participants learn from one another about successful community-based development projects that they might try in their own community. Designed for rural communities, the workshop emphasizes the process communities follow to obtain their accomplishments. The annual QUINState Conference follows this same format, and covers Arkansas, Illinois, Kentucky, Missouri and Tennessee. The NCRCRD and the SRDC began contributing funds to the QUINState Conference in 1987.

NORTH CENTRAL REGIONAL CENTER FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT



Accomplishments of North Central Region Business Retention and Expansion Programs by Community and Business Type (NCRCRD)

The intent of this research project is to improve our understanding of Business Retention and Expansion program methods. Special attention will be given to variables that extension and community leaders can use to facilitate progress toward locally-recognized economic development goals. Specific objectives include differentiation of economic and social characteristics of participating communities and targeted businesses, development of recommendations, appraisal of results by participating community and business leaders, and description of collaboration with allied agencies and organizations.

**National Tourism Satellite Conference
Question and Answer Publication (NCRCRD)**

Forty-five of the most commonly asked questions about rural tourism development will be answered in a publication that serves as a follow-up to the national rural tourism satellite conference held in November 1991. Frequently mentioned and widely applicable questions were forwarded to appropriate experts for a response, including tele-conference panelists, faculty from the Tourism Center or project national planning committee, government officials and policy makers, trade association representatives, State Offices of Tourism, and community leaders. The publication will soon be available through the University of Minnesota Tourism Center. Funding agencies include the NCRCRD, EDA and the Tourism Center.

**Assisting Small Apparel Manufacturers and Retailers:
Forming a Three-State Consortium for Improved
Resource Development and Service
to Apparel Manufacturers and Retailers (NCRCRD)**

The purpose of this project is to examine the potential for developing a delivery system to provide marketing and management expertise to small, independent, locally-owned apparel manufacturers and retailers in rural areas of Missouri, Iowa and Oklahoma. Faculty and staff in this three state area will outline the way in which such a delivery system would work; will explore and seek support for cooperative research projects that would assist in building the knowledge base in the area of marketing and management; will determine resources that should be developed or acquired to better assist these small businesses; and will strive to ultimately provide a positive impact on the economies of these states by improving apparel manufacturers' and retailers' competitive position.

**Exploring Tourism: An Economic Diversification
Conference for North Central Nebraska
and South Central South Dakota (NCRCRD)**

The purpose of this conference was to encourage, enhance and expand economic development in ranch, farm and recreational areas of North Central Nebraska and South Central South Dakota. Community citizens and leaders in the area were provided with an educational outlet to explore the ramifications of tourism as a proactive means for small rural communities; exposed to nationally renown speakers, agencies, governmental and volunteer organizations to present a wide variety of options, resources, ideas and theories; and encouraged to network between communities to work towards a united effort in economic diversification. *Exploring Tourism* was held in Valentine, Nebraska, in April 1993.

**Work and Family Policies in the Midwest:
People, Business and Economic Development (NCRCRD)**

A collaborative regional research and educational initiative is outlined that will address work-family concerns. Phase One of the project will be development, testing and application of an instrument to collect information on work-family issues, needs and solutions from employers, employees and the community. In Phase Two, recommendations for employers regarding work-family programs will be developed. A training module will be created for all levels of management and another for employees focusing on identified work-family interference variables.

**Tourism and Craft Marketing:
Producers, Retailers and Consumers (NCRCRD)**

Faculty from Minnesota, Nebraska and Iowa conducted research to identify strategies for marketing crafts to tourists and educational programming needed to increase income opportunities for rural craft producers and retailers. Two educational videotapes have been produced from the results, and the principal investigators have worked with tourism groups within their own states and other states to develop strategies for promoting economic development through tourism.

**Midstates, Tri-State and Tri-OTA
Community Development Conferences (NCRCRD)**

The concept was simple: Bring people together from adjoining areas of several states to discuss common problems and share solutions. The response was enthusiastic, and has resulted in three annual multi-state community development conferences sponsored by the Center. Each session features a presentation by a professional and a practitioner—a blending of both theory and experience. An emphasis is placed on real people sharing their successes and experiences in an educational format.

The Midstates Conference began in 1987 for participants from adjoining areas of Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska and South Dakota. The Tri-State Conference was organized in 1990 to include participants from bordering areas of Iowa, Minnesota and Wisconsin. The Tri-OTA Conference held its first meeting in 1991 for participants from adjoining areas of Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota. These multistate community development conferences are based on the Mid-America Conference, which began in the North Central region in 1977 and ran for 15 years.

GIS Technology: A New Approach to Modeling Rural Retail Trade Area Capture (NCRCRD)

This research proposes that geographic information systems (GIS) technology affords the opportunity to associate and analyze rural blocks of population with the most likely rural retail trade center. Through data overlays of social, economic and demographic data, inferences will be made about the character of these rural populations and their retail configurations. Results from this type of research could aid retailers in rural trade centers to better target and understand their markets.

NORTHEAST REGIONAL CENTER FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT



An Economic Analysis of Alternative Sources of Household Income for Farm Families (NERCRD)

The main purpose of this study is to develop socioeconomic information on levels and sources of off-farm income of farm families. It is also the purpose of this study to identify measures of off-farm participation and supply as well as the existence of underemployed family labor resources. The results will be useful to research and extension programs devoted to improving skills and identifying sources of off-farm income for part-time families.

The Impact of Service Employment on Nonmetropolitan Households (NERCRD)

The purpose of this research is to identify the role of the service sector on the economic well-being of nonmetropolitan households. Specifically, we will examine the capacity of employment in various service industries to maintain the level of income of different types of nonmetropolitan households, as well as to provide benefits such as health insurance to household members.

Northeast Farmers' Markets as Business Incubators (NERCRD)

Part I of this project, which is nearing completion, will support the purpose of helping rural communities harness the economic development potential of farmers' markets in the Northeast for creating and sustaining rural enterprises, including food and fiber production, processing, and cottage industries. Part II, which is underway, will build on the data received and attempt to distribute this information to extension personnel and their related programs. Resulting publications will target economic development officials, cooperative extension staff, and other local community educators with the hopes of broadening their efforts to create jobs, increase household income, generate tax revenues, and improve the quality of life for rural residents.

Consumer Education Network Systems - CENTS\$ (NERCRD)

Through the Consumer Education Network System, an integrated consumer education delivery method was developed to provide access in rural communities to the cooperative extension resource base. This pilot project was developed in one selected county each in New York and Pennsylvania. The results will be disseminated to each state in the Northeast region for adaptation and implementation.

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA): Economic Alternative for Strengthening Farms and Communities (NERCRD)

The purpose of this research is to contribute to the strength, independence, and viability of Northeast communities and agriculture by examining and documenting the net benefit of Northeast CSAs and establishing a baseline for a long-range Northeast CSA study.

United States-European Collaboration on Rural Development (NERCRD)

The purpose of this project is to develop an annual series of workshops and lectures to increase dialogue between researchers and policy makers in both the United States and Europe. This project will contribute to the sharing of rural development knowledge and other information. It is hoped that this scholarly exchange will also facilitate redesign of several graduate courses currently focused on rural development and economic restructuring.

SOUTHERN RURAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER



National Rural Studies Associate Seminar (SRDC)

The SRDC hosted a seminar featuring Janet M. Fitchen, 1992-93 National Rural Studies Associate and chair of the Anthropology Department, Ithaca College, New York. The researcher focused on experiences during her two decades of rural research and outlined major transformations in rural America. In her year as an associate, Fitchen is conducting field research and analysis in 10 states, including Mississippi.

Communities in Economic Transition (SRDC)

A regional meeting addressing issues of the National Extension Service Initiative Communities in Economic Transition, was held in Atlanta. General sessions concentrated on the focus areas of the initiative: strategic planning for economic development, enterprise development and business assistance, and competitiveness and marketing skills. State team sessions discussed the Initiative and its future impact on individual states. The conference was co-sponsored by the SRDC, ES-USDA and Farm Foundation. Proceedings were published by the SRDC.

**Linking of 1890 and Tuskegee Extension and Research
for Sustainable Alternative Agriculture
for Small and Limited Resource Farmers (SRDC)**

This project interconnected resources of the 1890 land-grant institutions to develop useful sustainable agricultural alternatives for small, part-time and limited resource farmers and farm families. The conference, titled *Challenging the Past to Build the Future*, brought together 1890 researchers, extension specialists, agency personnel and farmers to interact and brainstorm ways to foster greater cooperation among themselves to the common good of all. The group presented, reviewed, discussed and critiqued past and current extension and research programs. The proceedings were published by the SRDC.

Improving Rural Tourism Extension and Research in the South (SRDC)

The project team compiled a book titled *Hometown Discovery: A Development Process for Tourism*, to help localities decide whether or not to pursue tourists and their dollars. If that decision is positive, then readers are provided with details on how to promote awareness of both potential benefits and potential costs of tourism development to the community, how to provide the basic structure for doing so, and how to assist in promoting local communities. The book is directed primarily toward small towns and rural areas, and is meant to be an introductory planning guide or tourism primer.

**Marketing Channels and Margins
for Slaughter Goats of Southern Origin (SRDC)**

Meat goats are marketed through many different channels. "How much is a meat goat worth?" is a question presented to extension personnel by goat producers and entrepreneurs. Also, the trends of meat goat trading have not been documented in an organized manner and are worth studying if recommendations to goat producers will have any impact in the whole goat industry. This study looks into the mystery of meat goat marketing. Statistical data on ethnic demography, goat production by state, and goat kill through USDA approved slaughter plants were collected and analyzed.

Global Entrepreneurship Management Support - GEMS (SRDC)

GEMS provides resource materials on international marketing to the Cooperative Extension System and selected cooperators so they can assist agricultural and rural businesses in developing the necessary expertise to compete in the global marketplace. A team of international marketing experts developed the materials. In addition to the book *International Marketing for Agribusiness: Concepts and Applications*, there is an instructional videotape; a database containing information on potential suppliers of foods, agricultural products, live animals, and port and shipping facilities; and an instructional guide for teaching.

Evaluating the State of Human Capital in the South (SRDC)

A county-level database on education, income and other economic variables was created using 1980 and 1990 Census data. From this database, changes over time can be calculated to assess the dynamic nature of human capital development in the region. In addition to the numerical indicators of human capital for each county in the South, a computer-based 35mm color cartography slide set was developed that illustrates the dynamics of human capital development on a county-level basis for each Southern state and for the entire region. Examples of variables illustrated include changes over the 1980 to 1990 decade in median educational levels, percentage of persons 25 years and older with a high school education, per-capita real income growth, and occupational and employment categories.

WESTERN RURAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER



Farm Labor Contractors and Immigration Reform (WRDC)

The WRDC provided support for the research activities of a regional committee that seeks to investigate the impacts of immigration on the demand for and supply of seasonal agricultural labor, and the operation of the farm labor market; the poverty and related social issues associated with settlement of immigrant workers in rural areas; the effects of changing demographic and ethnic patterns on rural communities; and the impact on farm labor of the realignment of trading patterns.

In March 1993 a national forum was held in Washington, D.C. for researchers from a variety of disciplines to help identify the Immigration Reform Control Act's effects on U.S. agriculture in order to help formulate new and effective immigration policies for the future. Regional research focusing on the rural poverty associated with immigration will continue and additional regional conferences are being planned to further explore the affects of IRCA on rural communities. A recently-published book, *Immigration Reform and U.S. Agriculture*, edited by Philip L. Martin et al., contains information from the research program.

Communities in Economic Transition (WRDC)

The WRDC is assisting in the design of a six-state (Utah, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, Oklahoma, Texas) CET pilot project. The pilot intends to demonstrate extension's ability and capacity to work in partnership with community leaders and government organizations at all levels to assist families, communities and businesses in retaining and increasing jobs and income. The pilot will provide an outcome-focused, community-based and collaborative model for future national implementation of the CET initiative.

Japanese Investment in U.S. Food and Agriculture (WRDC)

The effect of Japanese direct investment in U.S. food processing, not in actual crop production land, has been significant in Washington and California. The study found that the Japanese have exercised three investment strategies in the U.S. food system. They have invested in food processing facilities to meet the demand for Japanese specialty foods, in production of foods for export to the Japanese market, and in operations like wineries that can enhance Japanese expertise in new areas. Consequently, measures being pursued by the U.S. government to open new markets to domestic producers will in many cases lead to increased profits for Japanese-owned firms. This phenomena in one industry is discussed by Madeline Lawrence and Martin Kenney in a paper titled *Sake Manufacturing in the U.S.: A Traditional Industry Operating in a Global Economy*.

State Fiscal Crises and Rural Communities (WRDC)

A preliminary planning meeting of agricultural economists from four states was convened in April 1993 to identify common interests in local public finance across Western states. A specialization of labor has developed in local public finance research and education in the West between agricultural economists and political scientists, yet common interests do exist. Both disciplines want to find out ways they can provide information and leadership in their state in response to public finance issues. In early 1994, six agricultural economists and six political scientists from California, Idaho, Montana, Nevada and Oregon will gather to share past experiences from various public finance programs, initiatives, and projects across the Western states and to discuss the role(s) university personnel can or should play in state fiscal crises. Proceedings will be published and a follow-up, two-day, multistate conference for academics, government officials, and active community leaders and volunteers will be planned. This project expands upon and uses the findings of a recent WRDC-supported project titled *Effective Local Government Practices*.

The Reindustrialization of Rural Areas (WRDC)

Economic Adaptation: Alternatives for Nonmetropolitan Areas, edited by David Barkley and published by Westview Press in 1993, provides insight into the changing economic environment and the appropriateness of various development strategies for nonmetropolitan communities within the new national and international economic climate. Fifteen nationally known economists, geographers and sociologists contributed to the volume. Practitioners as well as researchers and educators will find useful the comprehensive examination of economic development strategies along with critical evaluations that help sort out the ineffective from the promising.

Business Retention and Expansion (WRDC)

Business Retention and Expansion is increasingly acknowledged as one of the most viable strategies for rural communities to sustain their local economy and employment. Approximately 60 percent of new jobs in the Northwest are created by existing businesses. Participants at the WRDC's regional training and their colleagues continue to be active in conducting BR&E projects with communities in several states, including Alaska, New Mexico, Arizona, Montana, Utah and Wyoming. BR&E has helped Montana communities keep more than 1,200 jobs to date and more programs are underway. The Center recently supported a Montana extension specialist to help Sitka, Alaska, initiate a BR&E program in response to the impending closure of a mill, the major local employer. That program is fully underway under the leadership of the local extension agent and active local volunteers.

Western faculty continue to fine tune the BR&E process and materials to best fit our regional needs and uniqueness. To expose more communities to the potential benefits of BR&E, a video that provides an overview of the process was produced and distributed around the region in 1993. A second video, containing regionwide footage, will be available in early 1994 to help train key people for key roles in the BR&E process. The videos, scripted by regional faculty, were produced at Utah State University with funding from the US West Foundation.

Trade Area Analysis Updates (WRDC)

Trade area capture and pull factor analyses were generated for all counties in the 13 Western states from 1985 through 1990. These reports, extending earlier ones generated with WRDC support, provide information to estimate a local economy's commercial sector potential. The easy-to-read graphs and tables in these updates are produced using the IMPLAN model. The analysis of what types of merchandise are purchased in a given locality and what portions are purchased by residents and nonresidents, can stimulate ideas for appropriate economic development strategies. Extension specialists can use these reports, for example, to help counties see what items are imported and could be considered for local production. Such a strategy could result in new businesses altogether or value-added components to increase profits from and employment in existing local industries.

GOAL 2:

To Support Management and Strategic Planning for Economic Investment

COLLABORATIVE: _____



ISTEA (NCRCD, NERCD, SRDC, WRDC)

The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991, commonly referred to as ISTEA, provides new opportunities for rural and small urban areas seeking to remain economically competitive. This legislation delegates the primary responsibility for planning, building and operating the surface transportation system to the states, while requiring public input throughout the planning and development process. Regional workshops were designed to inform rural and small urban officials of the impact of ISTEA.

The regional rural development centers organized and facilitated eight workshops early in 1993, to increase understanding of the law among local and state officials. The workshops were sponsored by the RRDCs, USDA-Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA-Forest Service, USDOT-Federal Transit Administration, the National Association of Counties, and the National Association of County Engineers. Approximately 1,000 people attended.

Linking Higher Education to State Rural Development Councils (NCRCD, NERCD, SRDC, WRDC)

The four rural development centers will use their regional networks to identify at least one rural researcher per state that will help the State Rural Development Councils access higher education resources relevant to their priority issues. This will bring higher education into the National Initiative on Rural America as a partner and resource to assist the SRDCs. A forum will be created in each region to identify innovative research-based activities that would aid the SRDCs in their design and pursuit of rural development strategies. A bonus of this process will be an intelligence feedback system informing academic institutions about current rural information and knowledge needs, thus impacting research and scholarship of both applied and classroom work.



Evaluating Strategic Planning and Visioning Practices in Rural Communities (NCRCRD)

Many states, particularly in the Midwest, have programs to assist community residents in setting and implementing an action agenda for community development. This project evaluates planning and visioning programs through a network of cooperative extension and other university educators who are involved in such programs. The evaluation considers both outcomes of the programs and the elements of the process.

Multistate Coalition for Rural Development Through Citizen Understanding and Participation on Public Issues (NCRCRD)

The project's overall goal is to foster community leader and citizen understanding and participation in resolving the highest priority structural issues facing Midwestern rural communities in the current economic and policy environment. The approach is to organize a multi-state coalition capable of transferring concepts and successful projects to other states. A model proposal will be developed and each state will take the model proposal, adjust it to fit home-state institutional constraints, and submit its proposal for funding.

A Research Agenda for Studying Rural Public Service Delivery Alternatives in the North Central Region (NCRCRD)

The purpose of this monograph, written by rural social scientists in the North Central region, is to develop a research agenda to study ways to improve the availability and access to public services for individuals living in rural areas. The discussion focuses on general conceptual and methodological issues pertaining to research on services. Nonetheless, it should be applicable to a wide range of specific service areas such as health, education and income maintenance, as well as consumer groceries and dry goods. This report will be published by the NCRCRD.

Population Growth Management Policy (NCRCRD)

The intent of this research is to better understand the forces that impact population change, employment and wage levels in rural areas. Not all of these forces occur in the rural areas themselves, nor are they all subject to rural control. An irrational urban growth pattern that ignores congestion cost will serve neither urban nor rural people. These research results could shed light on the controversial issue of how and where to direct growth for a better quality of life for more people.

**Financial Management in Rural Counties:
An Examination of Current Practice
and the Role of Education in Improving Methods Used (NCRCRD)**

This project will gather information on financial management practices of elected and appointed government officials in three or four rural counties in Illinois, Iowa, Indiana and Michigan. The purpose of the research project is to define both the process and the key individuals as the basis for determining how education programs can build on the knowledge and skill base.

**A Regional Conference on Multicommunity
Collaboration for Economic Development:
1993 Research and Applications (NCRCRD)**

The purpose of this conference was to facilitate the exchange of information and knowledge among economic development professionals, including those working in the allied areas of community development and rural development. It was a deliberate follow-up to the November 1991 NCRCRD conference titled *Multicommunity Collaboration: An Evolving Rural Revitalization Strategy*. This conference's primary intent was to further understanding of the complex dimensions of multicommunity cooperation in order to promote sound collaborative efforts in economic development. Michigan provided leadership for this project and will be publishing a conference proceedings. These materials should be informative and beneficial to research, extension, agency and private sector professionals seeking to advance rural economic development through collaborative means.

Location Incentives in the North Central Region (NCRCRD)

Rural development policy has shifted from federal farm income stabilization programs to the encouragement of economic diversification through manufacturing growth. In their efforts to achieve this, communities offer both financial and nonfinancial incentives to businesses. While the use of these incentives is widespread, they are poorly understood. State and local decision makers need more information about what types of incentives exist and their costs and benefits. This project will document the types and levels of incentives offered or allowed by states in the North Central region.

**National Symposium on Retailing and Access to Goods
and Services for Rural America (NCRCRD)**

Availability of goods and services is a major concern for the residents of rural communities. The symposium provided a forum for envisioning a retail scenario for the year 2020 for rural communities through consideration of extant multidisciplinary research and the identification of future research needs.



**Structure of the Industrial Economy of a Two-State Region:
Large Firm-Small Firm Interdependencies
and the Supplier Relationship (NERCRD)**

This project analyzes the relations between core industries and their suppliers to determine the extent to which rural and urban areas are dominated by such networks. The entrepreneurship process—how firms originate, where they get ideas, where they get help for start-up, where they get technological help, how they develop a market niche, and whether they are related to core firms—is also being investigated. A study of the relationships of large firms to small firms and to the general economy will be made available to entrepreneurs, developers and extension personnel.

A User's Guide to the 1990 Census (NERCRD)

The purpose of this project was to develop a videotape presentation that will illustrate how research and extension faculty can use products from the 1990 Census in applied research and thus contribute to the development of ideas for regional research and extension projects. Upon completion of the project, videotapes will be distributed initially to all members of NEC-24 and 87 and to the State Rural Development Councils within the Northeast Region. National dissemination to all SRDCs will follow.

**Application of Economic Development Concepts
in Small Communities (NERCRD)**

This project will investigate the acquisition of expertise and information by officials in a selected group of small communities in three states in the Northeast. Basic economic development concepts will be defined and sources of data specified in advance of an empirical study. The study will be conducted in at least nine towns in three states. The results of the case studies will be summarized and a set of protocols for economic development strategic planning in rural communities will be developed.



Tech-Prep Syllabus for Rural Development in Poor Rural Communities (SRDC)

Sensitizing high school students to a variety of local development opportunities and fostering a greater community appreciation for its schools is the basic goal of this project. One way of accomplishing this is by capitalizing on community-based, tech-prep application of emerging information resource management technologies, or Geographic Information Systems. A GIS fundamentals and rural development curriculum workshop for tech-prep teachers in rural schools was developed. Also developed was on-site research and design of a community-based, tech-prep syllabus to teach rural development application of GIS in secondary schools. Finally, on-site research and design of a community-based, tech-prep syllabus will be developed in pilot labs in at least two of the schools in the 1993-94 school year.

Economic Impact of Attracting Retirees on Ozark Mountain Communities (SRDC)

A study was conducted in the Ozark region of Arkansas, Oklahoma and Texas to identify economic and sociopolitical impacts of in-migrating retiree on local communities. Findings from the study will help local communities evaluate the potential economic impact of attracting retirees and indicate important factors of retirees in deciding where to relocate. Reports were published for each of the study areas and the data are presented in one final report. A symposium on the economic and social impact of retirees was held at the Southern Agricultural Economics Association meetings and funding was obtained for a complementary project to evaluate the economic and fiscal impact of four planned recreation/retirement communities in Arkansas, South Carolina and Tennessee.

Relationship Between Rural Education and Economic Development: Appraisal of Current Research and Initiation of a Program of New Analysis (SRDC)

Increased public concern with rural economic development and the low level of income of rural residents has brought a new interest in the role of education and human capital formation. This study records the economic role of education in rural areas and the policy conclusions researchers and policy makers have reached. It models different ways public and private roles in public education have been conceived and specifies policy implications. An annotated bibliography was prepared for use by laymen and rural development workers and extension fact sheets review educational issues.

Task Force on Alternatives to Financing Infrastructure (SRDC)

The last of seven projects outlined in 1988 by the task force was completed this year. Position papers were written and published in SRDC publication #171, *Rural Infrastructure Issues: State and Local Financing, Transportation, Health, Solid Waste*. It contains an in-depth report on the nature of state and local government and the types of state and local expenditures, with special emphasis on infrastructure investments with policy ideas and implications.

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Mining Budget Generator (WRDC)

For many Western rural counties, the mining industry is the primary export sector. But mining industries are characterized as "boom-bust" industries whose level of economic activity is often dictated by international prices and availability of ores, as well as changes in federal royalty payments, environmental quality standards and reclamation laws. This project looked into ways that researchers and extension personnel can use MicroIMPLAN and the U.S. Bureau of Mines cost generator to better respond to mining impact requests, to estimate differential impacts from alternative mining technologies, and to identify both backward and forward economic linkages for economic development programs. Successful development and application of the cost generator would also enhance the response of university personnel to questions concerning changes in federal land royalty payments and environmental quality standards. A microcomputer mineral industry cost budget generator is currently being developed by the Bureau of Mines.

Otter Rock Survey (WRDC)

In 1976, a group of agents from community development, home economics, and agriculture participated in a public policy education training that was designed to increase the receptivity and capability of extension staff who deal with controversial public policy issues and polarized groups. Thirty-four of the original 49 participants were located this past year and surveyed about the long-term rewards of the training. All respondents reported finding opportunities for policy education and becoming involved in the process. The majority replied that their understanding of issues, community decision-making processes, and educational methods improved greatly. They also reported increased motivation to be involved and greater confidence in their professional abilities as educators.

Facilitating the Strategic Management of Change (WRDC)

In 1992, WRDC sponsored a regional training program to present elements of sustained community and leadership development that are necessary to construct and bring a solid community strategic plan to fruition. The training manual was revised, incorporating suggestions from faculty and workshop participants, and published this year. States from throughout the region, including Oregon, Hawaii, Utah, New Mexico, Idaho, Washington, Colorado and Alaska, have already purchased the manual for their strategic planning extension programs.

Participants at the workshop continue to apply the techniques learned in states around the region. Montana adapted the process into a how-to pamphlet titled *Facilitating Strategic Planning*, used to develop facilitators who can assist local organizations and governments. More than 100 Montana organizations have used abbreviated versions of the process, and local extension agents use it extensively with communities. One agent even presented it at the WYO-MON-DAK conference. One Oregon extension specialist has used parts or all of the process with diverse groups such as the Bend Recycling team, Lake County Stock growers, and the Redmond community task force. In Redmond, the process' success in involving widespread stakeholders led to the task force being asked to become a local United Way organization. This stable funding source has allowed the group to implement staffed and housed programs at one of the local schools.

IMPLAN: Multiregional Rural/Urban Input-output Models in the Western U.S. (WRDC)

This year, the IMPLAN project used the multiregional input-output model of the Portland, Oregon, trade area to analyze the economic impact of timber harvest reductions due to protection of the spotted owl. Economic impacts were estimated for both the directly impacted rural region as well as the indirectly impacted Portland metropolitan area. The results are published in a paper titled *Interregional Effects of Reduced Timber Harvests: The Impact of the Northern Spotted Owl Listing in Rural and Urban Oregon*, which has already been distributed to the government agencies involved in the timber harvesting issue.

The focus of current and future work on this project is to develop procedures and methodology that will permit the input-output accounts developed with IMPLAN to be used as the foundation of regional computable general equilibrium models. The advantage of these models is increased realism, which is demanded by rural communities when they are presented with IMPLAN information to assist them in their community economic development decision-making processes. For example, IMPLAN-generated information was presented to the tourism task force in Choteau, Montana, to give them a clear picture of the

current composition of the local economy. That information needed to match fairly closely with their perception of their economy to avert skepticism over the data. The use of more realistic models for analysis will also increase accuracy, and therefore credibility, at the rural development policy-making level.

GOAL 3:

To Create Capacity Through Leadership

COLLABORATIVE



The Power of Collaborating: Leadership, Vision, Commitment, Action (NCRCRD, NERCRD, SRDC, WRDC)

The USDA Forest Service has taken on increased responsibility in the area of rural community assistance. Field staff need stronger leadership skills to be most effective in working with communities as they strive to improve living conditions, provide employment opportunities, enrich the cultural life, and enhance the environment. Staff from all four regional rural development centers are working with extension specialists from around the country to develop a leadership program to promote an action attitude towards rural development issues and opportunities; create an increased working knowledge of the nature of leadership and its value to rural development; develop key leadership skills for working with communities; and strengthen linkages among rural development service agencies and their professional staff.

Participants in the 1994 winter and spring sessions will be from the Southern region's Forest Service, Extension Service and RC&Ds. The curriculum development process is an example of the National Design Team's concept of the CET initiative. The training program is expected to be used nationwide.

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Enhancing Ethical Leadership (NCRCRD)

Enhancing Ethical Leadership is a new curriculum developed by the Minnesota Extension Service for the Family Community Leadership Program. A curriculum development grant was provided by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation; the NCRCRD has provided funds for a dissemination workshop in the North Central region. Participants will learn decision making models for ethical dilemmas; discuss adult ethical development and the role of education; and current events and helpful strategies looking at ethics of school age youth, families and volunteers.

**Leadership: Sustaining Action
on Community and Organizational Issues (NCRCRD)**

Leadership: Sustaining Action on Community and Organizational Issues is a tool developed for use by extension educators to help determine why communities and organizations go adrift in their efforts to move ahead. Extension educators will use the Human Action Model developed by Dr. Robert Terry, an Analytical Tool and other strategies to lead the community or organization through a process of self-discovery, understanding and resolution. Two regional conferences were held in November 1993 to introduce the materials.

**Partners in Community Leadership: Youth and Adults
Working Together for Better Communities (NCRCRD)**

Partners in Community Leadership, an educational program for rural communities, provides opportunities for youth (ages 15-18) and adults to work as partners in the process of community decision-making for rural revitalization. The *Partners* program includes structured learning experiences designed to help youth and adults learn about their community and anticipate their future in that community. Participants also select, plan and conduct a community project to learn the process of making their community a better place to live.

**Rural Community Transportation Leadership:
A Community Approach to Transportation (NCRCRD)**

As a follow-up on the national conference on Rural Intercity Passenger Transportation, the NCRCRD is working with USDA's Office of Transportation on a rural transportation leadership initiative. The program would provide local leaders with tools to make cost-effective, strategic transportation decisions to meet long-range, community-defined needs. In light of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act and its planning requirements, this project has become even more relevant to rural transportation needs as states assume responsibility for implementing the national transportation program.

**Network for Development of a Proposal for Funding
of a Native American Family Community Leadership
Curriculum Development Project (NCRCRD)**

FCL curriculum and delivery methods will be adapted for use by Native American groups. Through participation by Native Americans, guiding principles will be identified and the overall design for the proposed curriculum will guide proposal development activities. A preproposal will be developed and submitted to the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. If the preproposal is given a favorable reception by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, a proposal will be developed. The Center is providing seed money funding for the project.



Develop Curriculum for Training Volunteers for Leadership Roles in Public Policy Meetings (NERCRD)

A curriculum designed to educate volunteers for major leadership positions in CES public policy meetings will be developed, piloted and shared. A program manual has been produced and shared with other states. This project is currently receiving positive feedback and continues to generate a curriculum aimed at researching and evaluating existing facilitator training methods, developing a curriculum to train volunteers to facilitate problem solving, and evaluating the planned training process and the content and activities in the curriculum through pilot training sessions. The program has been implemented in Connecticut and is underway in Vermont.

Approaches to Community Decision-Making: An Empirical Study (NERCRD)

This project will extend a pilot study of leaders and officials to include a representative sample of citizens in State College, Pennsylvania, the second smallest *metropolitan* area in the U.S. It will compare data derived from using the reputational, social participation, event analysis, and positional approaches to identifying power structures in a single study. It will examine whether an elitist or pluralist structure is identified in the target community and whether the different methods are complementary or tend to portray different power structures.

New England Futures Training Conference (NERCRD)

A two-day Futures Training conference was held for research and extension faculty in the New England region. Existing human and published data, along with community case studies, will be used to offer a particular focus to training in futures techniques.

Information to Develop Extension Programs for Community Youth Leadership (NERCRD)

This project will provide information for extension educators in the Northeast region and elsewhere, about how to assist in involving youth in community public policy-making. The objectives are to develop for publication four kinds of information: 1) an annotated inventory of youth-in-community programs and processes; 2) a set of selected case studies to demonstrate what experiences communities have had involving youth policy-making; 3) a brief description of potential funding sources to help create youth-in-community experiences; and 4) a set of ideas about the opportunities and challenges of developing extension programs to help reduce youth isolation.

Leadership Development for Advanced Practitioners (NERCRD)

This project is designed to strengthen and expand development of the leadership education efforts and accomplishments of the Cooperative Extension System in the six New England States. Using a "think-tank" approach, 25 participants will receive instruction in think-tank design and process, and practice think-tank methodology as they focus on advanced leadership topics, issues, assumptions and questions. This project is nearing completion, and has received positive feedback. At this point in the study, information is being distributed to extension agents and appropriate others.

Leadership Development: Building Strong Leadership in Soil Conservation Districts (NERCRD)

The purpose of this project is to plan, develop and implement a three-phase leadership development program for Maryland, Delaware and the District of Columbia *Soil Conservation District* personnel. The three phases—grantsmanship, leadership development and legislative networking—focus on the needs identified by the districts through their strategic planning process. Materials developed will be shared nationally.

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Building a Foundation for Community Leadership (SRDC)

A critical component in the ability of communities to respond to problems and needs is local leadership and citizen involvement. Few communities plan to build the foundation for their young people to develop into the next generation of leaders. Involving students in school-based community needs assessment projects is one way to provide youth with experiences fundamental to citizenship and leadership.

This project develops and refines a program for use by extension professionals, community leaders and school teachers/administrators for implementing student-supported community needs assessments. A handbook is being developed containing recommended procedures, samples forms, handouts and overheads to be used in teaching students and adult volunteers. The handbook will contain modules on detailing the needs assessment process and telephone survey methods, conducting telephone interviews, designing the questionnaire, selecting a sample, conducting pre-survey promotion to build public awareness, analyzing the data, presenting the results and initiating follow-up community action. The modules are being developed to mesh with the school social studies curriculum.

Moving the Extension Vision Forward (SRDC)

The Joint Southern Region Program Leadership Committee Meeting was sponsored by the SRDC and the Farm Foundation. Objectives of the conference were to increase communication and planning among extension program leaders in the South; to develop a common understanding among program leaders of the program planning environment in the South; to improve extension programs through sharing ideas, resources and planning regional actions; and to identify new issues of importance to the South and implications for current and future programs.

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Effective Local Government Practices (WRDC)

Rural communities across the Western region are faced with a host of new challenges, opportunities and dilemmas that result in a need to find new ways of managing the everyday requirements of government. A survey of nonmetropolitan local governments in Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Montana was conducted to identify what innovative programs and practices they were implementing. They were also queried as to their willingness to undertake one or more of 21 innovative programs listed on the survey.

Most of the cities and counties indicated a low to medium willingness to undertake the programs. Two main reasons for low willingness levels were severe budget constraints and small or declining population bases. WRDC's ongoing State Fiscal Crises and Rural Communities project listed above hopes to find ways to overcome the former of these major barriers to innovation. A copy of the study written by Nicholas Lovrich, *Innovative Programs and Management Practices in Rural and Smaller Local Governments*, is available from Washington State University's Program for Local Government Education.

CrossReach (formerly In-Reach) (WRDC)

This cross-cultural training and partnership-building process was developed by regional extension faculty in conjunction with members of indigenous populations from Montana, Alaska, Hawaii and Guam. The workshop's primary purpose is to open communication, develop trust, and build working relationships between public agency personnel and indigenous groups. A two-volume manual, published in 1993, provides general background information, guidelines for choosing among three different workshop formats, detailed schedules and activities for each format, and lists of persons available around the region to assist new groups in undertaking CrossReach. This past year, CrossReach was used with area extension agents, USDA staff and Indian Cultural Guides for the Project Wild program in Montana.

4 Corners Collaboration (WRDC)

The WRDC assisted a multi-agency group design a collaborative project for the Four Corners Region of Colorado, Utah, New Mexico and Arizona. This effort is an outgrowth of the Strengthening Partnerships for Active Rural Communities (SPARCS), implemented last year to train USDA professionals to be more effective facilitators of the community development process. SPARCS examines the importance of collaboration in addressing national and global challenges facing rural leadership today. The USDA Extension Service, Forest Service, Soil Conservation Service and Rural Development Administration are working together in this 4 Corners project, which also involves other higher education institutions, State Rural Development Councils, the Bureau of Land Management, local rural and economic development groups, community leaders, and elected and appointed government and agency personnel at all levels.

In June 1993 a meeting was held to develop strategies that will facilitate multi-agency collaboration in rural development planning; foster an entrepreneurial approach to rural development among agency professionals; identify, assess and respond to organizational barriers affecting implementation of high impact programming in rural development; and develop user-friendly alliances among federal agencies to respond to locally-driven development agendas. Participants formed working groups to begin action planning. The first follow-up action was a collaboration training program for USDA and other interested agencies, as well as citizen-leaders, that took place in Farmington, New Mexico, in December 1993.

GOAL 4:

To Assist in Family and Community Adjustments to Stress and Change

COLLABORATIVE



The Demography of Rural Life (NCRCD, NERCD, SRDC, WRDC)

Based on a symposium held at Cornell University, this volume edited by David Brown, James Zuiches and Donald Field, highlights current knowledge and future directions for demographic research. The four papers discussed are: (1) *Migration, Population, Redistribution, and the New Spatial Inequality* by Daniel T. Lichter of Pennsylvania State University; (2) *The Small Town in Urbanized Society* by Harley E. Johansen, University of Idaho; (3) *The Demography of Agriculture* by Calvin Beale, USDA-ERS; and (4) *Applied Demography* by Paul Voss and Donald Field, University of Wisconsin. Publication of the material was funded by the four regional rural development centers and Cornell University.

National Rural Studies Committee (NCRCD, NERCD, SRDC, WRDC)

The National Rural Studies Committee has supported the development of a small cadre of scholars who are working on rural issues. Last year's Center associate explored issues of rural poverty nationwide; the current associate is researching implications of solid waste management for rural communities. Last Summer the NRSC held a training institute for young scholars to further its overall objective of motivating more researchers from diverse fields to consider rural issues. The NRSC is producing a book on rural America, *The American Countryside: Rural People and Place*, to be published by the University of Kansas Press in 1994. Twenty-six papers prepared by Committee members and invited experts address topics in the following categories: literature and the countryside, change in the countryside, money and jobs, distress and poverty, regional and ethnic diversity, and the social and institutional context for group decision making in the countryside. An introduction and concluding summary will be furnished by Emery Castle, chair of the NRSC.

Decisions for Health National Extension Initiative
(NCRCRD, NERCRD, SRDC, WRDC)

The Initiative was introduced at two workshops sponsored by the four regional rural development centers, Farm Foundation and W.K. Kellogg Foundation. The workshops were designed to increase participants' awareness and understanding of the Decisions for Health National Extension Initiative. The program included an overview of the Initiative, an in-depth look at issues and options under consideration for national health care reform, and the principles of public issues education programming.

Task Force on Persistent Rural Poverty (NCRCRD, NERCRD, SRDC, WRDC)

The recent publication of two books focusing on poverty in rural America can be attributed to the Rural Sociological Society Task Force on Persistent Rural Poverty. *Persistent Poverty in Rural America: Rural Sociological Society Task Force on Persistent Rural Poverty*, is the final report of the Task Force. *Forgotten Places: Uneven Development in Rural America* is a compilation of case studies commissioned by members of the Working Group on Spatial Location of Economic Activities. The W.K. Kellogg Foundation and the four regional rural development centers provided financial assistance for both publications. *Persistent Poverty* is the culmination of Phase I of the RSS Task Force on Persistent Rural Poverty. Phase II will focus on policy education activities, including a Washington, D.C. conference, several regional conferences, a rural poverty policy guideline book, and university curriculum materials.

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**Poverty Among Rural Children and Youth of the Midwest:
A Three State, Collaborative Program
of Research-Outreach Integration** (NCRCRD)

The negative after effects of child and growth poverty have been particularly pronounced in several Midwestern states due to the dramatic increase in child poverty rates over the last 10 years. In Michigan, the rate of increase in child poverty from 1979 to 1990 was 49 percent—the largest increase of any state in the nation. Colleagues from three land-grant universities in the North Central region have joined forces to address this issue. They plan to design a synthetic program of research and outreach that will enhance understanding of, and service to, the rural youth of Iowa, Michigan and Nebraska who are currently suffering, or are at risk to suffer, the pernicious outcomes of persistent and pervasive poverty. It is their hope that this broad regional collaboration will have a presence and potential visibility sufficient to attract the attention of the public, of policy analysts, and of policy makers.

ECHO Housing Demonstration (NCRCRD)

This project proposes to create some "living laboratories" where Elder Cottage Housing Opportunity (ECHO) units will be placed in the backyards of families with an aging parent. These ECHO demonstration families will test and use the technology, and their experiences will be shared with others in Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska and Iowa through ECHO Observation Teams that will be coordinated by land-grant university faculty in the respective states. Extension "adoption of practices" methodology will serve as the framework for the entire project.

North Central Regional Network for Prepared and Perishable Food Rescue Programs (NCRCRD)

This proposal lays the groundwork for helping rural communities address the problem of hunger in their areas using the concept of PPFRRPs (Prepared and Perishable Food Rescue Programs). The project will build on the work of existing PPFRRP organizations by providing information and support specific to states and communities in the North Central region, with special emphasis on the problems and possibilities inherent in rural areas.

Rural Community Response to Plant Closings: A Socioeconomic Analysis (NCRCRD)

A multidisciplinary, multistate research team of 12 rural analysts received a planning grant from the NCRCRD to conduct exploratory research and develop further proposals on rural community response to plant closings. Goals of the proposed research are: (1) to better understand the extent and consequences of rural plant closings; (2) to provide policy makers and nonurban leaders with suggestions on how to mitigate the economic and social impacts of shutdowns; and (3) to assemble information on proactive development strategies that would help rural communities sustain their economic base.

Economic Survival Kit for Unemployed and Underemployed Families (NCRCRD)

Individuals and families underemployed or without work must find ways to survive. The basics of life, food and shelter must be met. Cooperative Extension led the way during the farm crisis by providing a myriad of programs and informational materials to help farm and ranch families deal with every aspect of economic hardship. Today's unemployed and underemployed rural families need similar kinds of assistance. The purpose of the proposed project is to provide county extension agents with materials designed to meet the specific need of the rural unemployed and underemployed, and that these materials be readily accessible on computer diskettes.



**Public Policy Education Related to Children,
Youth and Families: Development of a Model
for Cooperative Extension Programming (NERCRD)**

The status for youth-at-risk public policy research and education in the Northeast was identified using formal survey methods. The results of the survey were disseminated to the Northeast Cooperative Extension System. From the data, a model for public policy education programming was initiated and disseminated nationwide. The main objective of this project was to develop a model for Cooperative Extension System public policy education related to issues of children, youth and families (CYF). What resulted from the literature review and responses to survey questions and interviews is knowledge of the enormous diversity of CYF public policy education opportunities and the environments in which they could be implemented.

**Youth-At-Risk: The Research and Practice
Interface—A Workshop (NERCRD)**

An updated perspective on research and policy directed toward youth-at-risk was presented at a two-day workshop. A regional agenda for research and programming on youth-at-risk in the Northeast was developed. Linkages with other Northeast Cooperative Extension projects and Center projects are ongoing. This project is currently proceeding as planned and receiving positive feedback. Workshops were held throughout 1992 and 1993, and future plans for the program are being developed. Various papers and publications have recently been produced from this study.

Northeast Work-Family Instructional Units (NERCRD)

Using the existing Northeast Extension child care network, this project provided each county with camera-ready newsletter copies that focus on information and skills helpful in resolving work and family-related issues. Unsolicited feedback from extension faculty and community agencies and families has been unanimously positive.

**Training of Meals on Wheels Volunteers
in Safe Food Handling (NERCRD)**

The goal of this project is to develop an increased understanding of appropriate food handling techniques. With the assistance of the newsletters, volunteers will help senior citizens adopt proper food handling practices. Specifically, as a result of this training, volunteers and senior citizens will adopt practices that will decrease the chances of illness or injury.

Faculty Development for Senior Series Programming (NERCRD)

Through this project, a *Senior Series* training program was developed in West Virginia. A series of workshops were organized to familiarize faculty members with the *Senior Series* program. The intent was to expose them to the issues and opportunities of programming for seniors from which they can make an assessment of needs and opportunities within their counties. This project is nearing completion and has been used in 11 counties. Accomplishments include enhancing self-care, nutritional education, intergenerational programs, and senior outreach programs. Many papers, lectures, workshops and other programs have developed out of this study as well.

Volunteers Empower Seniors for Health and Wellness (NERCRD)

This project will develop, implement and evaluate a model educational program designed to create an awareness and empower seniors to take control of their health and wellness through proactive self-care. A multifaceted approach, widespread promotion, coalition building, peer facilitator training, individual consultation, and seminars involving expert lecturers followed by small group experimental learning will be used. This project is nearing completion and has received positive feedback. Information is being distributed to extension personnel and other related parties.

Teen Assessment Project (NERCRD)

This project is based on the Wisconsin Teen Assessment Project model and will function as a highly-effective community development process by assessing youth issues before program development. Educators from Maine, Vermont and New Hampshire are working collaboratively with youth, school and community leaders to survey junior and senior high school students in five targeted school districts. Five educational newsletters focused on the identified youth priority issues will be used to increase parent awareness of teen concerns and will measure declines in substance abuse, school dropout rates and teen suicides.

The Relationship of Nurses' Attitudes About AIDS and their Experience of Jobstress to the Delivery of Nursing Care to People with AIDS in Rural and Urban Acute Care Settings (NERCRD)

This project is aimed at describing nurses' personal characteristics, attitudes about AIDS, experience of jobstress, willingness to care for PWAs, and practice of Universal Precautions in rural and urban care settings. It will also examine the rural-urban differences in the relationship of nurses' attitudes about AIDS and their experiences with jobstress.

The Northeast States Regional Conference on Science Education and Non-Formal Educational Settings (NERCRD)

This project will develop and implement a three day conference focusing on science education and non-formal educational environments. The program will include three components. General sessions will focus on current issues of common interest such as community coalition building, educational methodologies for non-formal environments, and other topics. In addition, concurrent sessions will be offered to introduce specific science curriculums in a hands-on non-formal environment. Finally, table top displays will provide an opportunity to promote awareness of resources and encourage informal discussions among participants, speakers and commercial organizations.

SOUTHERN RURAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER



Community Leadership and Affordable Housing in Rural Communities (SRDC)

Financial support provided by SRDC allowed this regional research project to be completed in several states. The project was conducted by a regional committee. The conclusion of the data gathering effort by the researchers working in each state was development of a state data set and a regional data set that were the subject of numerous statistical efforts, looking at several key elements of housing at the community level in the rural South. Using the data sets, research presentations were developed and presented at a regional housing workshop. Proceedings were published by the SRDC.

Developing Partnership for Health (SRDC)

The Rural Health Task Force was funded to develop a regional conference addressing rural health issues in the region. Sponsors were SRDC, U.S. Public Health Services: Federal Office of Rural Health Policy and Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Farm Foundation and Extension Service-USDA. The conference was designed to facilitate interaction between state rural health agencies, to share experiences and approaches of strategic decisions for health programming, to develop partnerships and strategies to facilitate decisions for health and to facilitate the design of implementation plans for state teams.

Southern Extension/Research Activity-Task Force 5 (SRDC)

At the request of Southern directors, SRDC expanded the activities of its regional health task force into a Rural Health and Safety SERA. After adding members appointed by directors and administrators, SRDC coordinated a May meeting of the group. Four activities were

selected in answer to rural health and safety needs in the Southern region: (1) a resource directory will be developed to contain people, program materials, data bases and partners; (2) a position paper addressed research and extension needs with recommendations; (3) a curriculum was developed to plan training materials as needed; (4) and an exchange group was established to explore possibilities.

Environmental Assessment and Development of Strategies for Enhancing the Independence of the Rural Elderly and Their Ability to Age in Place (SRDC)

Four rural parish areas in Louisiana with diverse economic bases were chosen for this study. The study addresses the problem of how to enhance the ability of the rural elderly to remain in their own homes as long as possible. The project evaluates the housing environment, develops recommendations for changing the environment, and suggests policy priorities that will enhance community opportunities to assist the elderly and increases interdisciplinary cooperation with other established regional researchers for knowledge and technology transfer. The final report will be published by the SRDC.

Black Belt of the Rural South (SRDC)

The South is the nation's largest rural region and is known for its persistently high levels of poverty, unemployment and underemployment, low incomes, low educational levels, poor health status, and inferior quality of life. The needs of the Black Belt have never been systematically addressed by research and policy efforts. This project provides a limited assessment across a historically distinct region and population. It examines by race the extent of dependency and its relationship to patterns of education, poverty and employment. It examines changes in these patterns and raises policy questions and implications of these conditions in a document for widespread distribution.

WESTERN RURAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER



Energy-Related Boom Communities After the Boom (WRDC)

Although a number of in-depth analyses of modern-day boom towns were conducted during the 1970s and 1980s, there have been virtually no systematic follow-ups to any of the earlier studies. As a result, we know very little about how these communities may have been impacted by post-boom periods of relative stability or even sharp decline. A multistate team of social scientists plan to investigate patterns of long-term change and adaptation in a number of previously-studied boom towns. The Center is helping underwrite proposal development efforts for this research which will bring increased understanding of rural community change.

Second Conference on Rural Poverty (WRDC)

Janet Fitchen, chair of the anthropology department at Ithaca College and National Rural Studies Committee Center Associate for 1992-93, organized two conferences on rural poverty during her tenure with the Center. The second of these, held in April 1993, was attended by rural development scholars and practitioners from around Oregon who wanted to learn from one another about reasons for rural poverty and to discuss responses that could be taken. The conference was an effective vehicle to increase interaction among researchers, among practitioners, and between the two with the overall goal of increasing research on rural poverty and stimulating effective policy and programs.

Hard Times: Communities in Transition (WRDC)

Small towns, with their limited resources, are particularly vulnerable to the effects of economic slowdown. The Hard Times program, designed by a multidisciplinary team of extension educators from six western states, provides teams of citizens with the knowledge and skills to apply a community-based problem-solving process to local situations. It also increases their knowledge of resources for coping with consequences of decline. This past year a team from Skamania, Washington, realized concrete results from attending the Hard Times training back in 1984, with the opening of the Skamania Lodge and Conference Center. The Hard Times materials are still available to help communities who are experiencing change in their primary industries and resultant unemployment, to more effectively deal with the change.

Coping with Change — formerly Coping with Growth (WRDC)

A popular WRDC training from the late 1970s called *Coping with Growth*, resulted in a series of 14 publications whose subject matter has never become irrelevant. The issues and strategies have been found to be just as successful whether a community is growing rapidly or suffering economic decline. Destruction of WRDC's publication inventory by fire in 1992 provided an opportunity to revise and reprint this popular series in a fresh format, more appropriately titled *Coping with Change*. The first two revisions, Public Policy Education and Population Change, are now available.

GOAL 5:

To Promote Constructive Use of the Environment

COLLABORATIVE



Farm*A*Syst (NCRCRD, NERCRD, SRDC, WRDC)

Farm*A*Syst was developed in Wisconsin and Minnesota, with partial funding from the NCRCRD, to help farmers voluntarily assess and reduce groundwater contamination risks from farmstead activities. Using easy, step-by-step worksheets, each activity or structure that could cause contamination is ranked. Other variables such as soil, geologic and hydrologic features are also rated and used to identify specific actions to protect drinking water. The system can be used by farmers on their own or in consultation with local experts.

Developed and tested by Wisconsin and Minnesota Extension Services and by Region V of the Environmental Protection Agency, Farm*A*Syst is now a national program supported by USDA-ES, SCS and US-EPA. The four regional rural development centers have been instrumental in hosting workshops around the nation. More than 40 states are involved in the Farm*A*Syst process; 12 of those states have completed the process and are implementing the system. An accompanying Home*A*Syst program is also being developed. It is intended to prevent pollution by helping individuals identify high risks in their rural home and actions to reduce those risks. Workshops scheduled for early 1994 will aid in designing effective programs and materials.

NORTHEAST REGIONAL CENTER FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT



Forest Stewardship Education Modules: Increasing Knowledge—Reducing Conflict (NERCRD)

This project will focus on the development of educational modules for informing nonindustrial private forest owners, the general public, and public officials about how forest stewardship can sustain forest-based industries and satisfy expanding demand for amenity values.

Agriculture and Development Planning on the Rural/Urban Fringe (NERCRD)

Using focus groups and a survey, planners, extension community development specialists and other rural development experts are being encouraged to participate in objective discourse about the future of agriculture on the rural/urban fringe areas of the Northeast. The promotion of a regionwide response to this issue is also being studied. The data will be analyzed and then presented at a conference targeted at planners and educators.

Developing Employment Opportunities in Community Forestry (NERCRD)

This project focuses on the education and training of community planners, supervisors and workers in the techniques necessary to plan, establish and maintain their urban and community forests. A series of training workshops are being developed to bridge the gap between municipal officials and community tree-care service providers. The project is currently nearing completion. Information is being distributed to extension agents and related personnel, and future conferences and workshops are also being discussed.

Northeast Youth and Citizen Watershed Monitoring Program (NERCRD)

In this program, guidelines were developed for consistent water quality monitoring to train teams of youth leaders from the northeastern states. The program includes techniques for chemical, physical and biological monitoring of surface waters. Additionally, the linkage between water supply protection and land use in the surrounding watershed was highlighted by training participants in use of remote sensing imagery for land use analysis. Youth presented their findings to planners, local agency and governmental officials, and community organizations. Plans are progressing to secure funding for a continuation of this project and an advanced course for youths and adults.

Green River Watershed Management Plan (NERCRD)

Using the Geographic Information System, this project will assist Massachusetts and Vermont communities in developing management strategies for the Green River Watershed. The primary goal of maintaining and enhancing water quality will be supplemented by other important community goals such as economic development, recreation, and protection of the rural values in the watershed. An advisory group of planners, local officials, citizens, and university research/extension practitioners worked together on this project to help assure "on target" issues were addressed and life-beyond-the-seed-momies. Project results are ready for dissemination.

**The Impact of Hazardous Waste Transportation
on Rural Society in Pennsylvania and Vermont (NERCRD)**

This study will analyze the impact that hazardous waste transportation has on rural communities in Pennsylvania and Vermont. The movement of these wastes will be analyzed and will lead to the selection of two sites for case studies. These sites will then be analyzed to determine impacts of hazardous waste transport. This study will provide rural and small-town officials in these states with the information necessary to make decisions pertaining to this issue.

**Coalitions for Agriculture and the Environment
in Urbanizing Areas (NERCRD)**

The goal of this study is to establish an information base and educational model that will support agriculture and rural viability in urbanizing areas of the Northeast. Study objectives include documenting and analyzing focal group differences in perceptions regarding agriculture, its impact upon the environment and quality of life, and related socioeconomic and political issues in urbanized areas.

**Scenic Byways and Rural Development:
A Holistic Approach for Northern New England (NERCRD)**

This study will provide a preliminary description of present and future research needs associated with the development and management of regional scenic byways, and a discussion of problems facing rural New England river communities. This project will also provide a listing of current local, state and federal policies and programs associated with scenic byways and rural development. Finally, an identification of potential regional scenic byways in northern New England, to include a description of the rural communities adjacent to these routes, will be provided.

SOUTHERN RURAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER



Guidebook for Evaluation of Solid Waste Collection (SRDC)

This guidebook offers information useful to decision-makers in evaluating the economic feasibility of various alternative solid waste management systems in small communities in the South. Data for the publication were gathered from national and regional sources; specific data for solid waste systems in Oklahoma and Mississippi are provided as well. The authors worked with numerous systems within the two states to collect solid waste generation data and capital and operating (cost) data. Included in the guidebook is a procedure to evaluate various solid waste management options that can be used in rural locations throughout the South. *A Guidebook for Rural Solid Waste Management Services* is available from the SRDC.

Institutional Structure Influences on Progress in Water Quality Management Across Southern States (SRDC)

For almost two decades state and local government have been involved in water pollution control activities as they implemented federal programs to control point sources of pollution to surface waters. In the case of nonpoint pollution control and groundwater protection, states are being asked to develop management programs rather than implement federal programs. States are hampered in these activities by lack of data, uncertainty concerning causes and extent of nonpoint source surface and groundwater contamination, and existing state institutional structures that address point source water pollution control programs but are less amenable to programs for control of nonpoint source pollution or protection of groundwater. This project reviews selected state institutional structures for environmental management, and evaluates the impacts of structure on conduct of water quality management programs. The final report will be published by the SRDC.

Solid Waste Management Task Force (SRDC)

The task force is identifying decision aids and developing an annotated bibliography for research and extension personnel and others providing technical assistance and education in the area of solid waste management. Some decision aids are being reviewed and field tested. Recommendations regarding needed research projects or extension programs will be developed. The final report will be published by the SRDC.

WESTERN RURAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER



Environmental Conflict Resolution (WRDC)

Participants in the WRDC's 1992 regional workshop *Environmental Conflict Resolution* continue to apply what they learned to help resolve conflicts and to train others in the process. For example, two Oregon extension specialists trained volunteers from three states about how to deal with controversial subjects in their dealings with the public at aquariums, museums and other public education facilities. Another Oregon specialist has applied the methodologies in his work conducting comprehensive management studies, and reports achieving significantly better results since attending the workshop. Other contexts in which learning from the workshop has enhanced ongoing efforts is with public lands planning and management in Idaho, Superfund remediation in Montana, wildlife management in two areas of Colorado, and resource allocation issues in Utah. Further extension of the training has occurred within CES in Colorado and Montana, and with public lands managers in Idaho.

Northwest Service Academy (WRDC)

The WRDC will administer a National Service Corps program in Washington and Oregon through a grant from the Commission on National and Community Service Subtitle D. Collaborators on the project include the US Forest Service, Educational Service Districts, school districts, community colleges, local communities, and state and local agencies. The program will target 100 young adults (ages 18 and over) from two service areas (one rural and one urban), for a year-long program of service, education and leadership training. The goal is to form a corps of informed, active young adults trained and committed to addressing environmental and community concerns of a regional and/or national nature.

The service learning opportunities will primarily be environmental projects on Forest Service land and within local communities that cannot currently be addressed without a significant expansion of volunteer efforts. Through working on these environmental projects, the Academy members will not only help improve Forest Service facilities and community areas, but will also learn about conservation and hopefully be instilled with values leading to sustainable use of natural resources. The program will demonstrate a means for states, local government, private non-profit organizations, business and the federal government to collaborate to improve the life opportunities of a diverse population of rural and urban adults. The Academy will create new leaders and role models engaged in life-long service projects within Columbia Gorge communities and will enable members to expand their career options.

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