The Western Rural Development Center (WRDC) is one of four regional centers funded by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) to strengthen the capacity of local citizens to guide the future of their rural communities. Each Center links the research and Extension capacity of regional land-grant universities with local decision-makers to address a wide range of rural development issues.

The Western Rural Development Center is hosted by Utah State University and receives support from Utah State University Extension and the Utah Agricultural Experiment Station.

Any opinions, findings, conclusions or recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. Department of Agriculture or other funders.

The Western Rural Development Center does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability or veteran status.
The Western Rural Development Center enjoyed an extremely busy and productive 2013. Throughout the year, we worked on important projects intended to benefit the communities and residents of the Rural West. We also received help for our tight budget as several of our projects were funded. Specifically, the Regional Rural Development Centers received funding for CAPE (Community Assessment and Education to Promote Behavioral Health Planning and Evaluation). CAPE is funded by the Department of Health and Human Services’ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and facilitated by USDA NIFA. Additionally, our ASAP (Area Sector Analysis Process) received funding from USDA AFRI.

Several of our most significant projects are highlighted in this report. In October we sponsored the Extension Sustainability Summit in Park City, Utah, under the leadership of Dr. Roslyn Brain of Utah State University. The program was extremely well received and will be repeated in 2015. Other workshops and training programs are also in the planning process.

Through our policy research center (NARDeP), a number of policy briefs were released that were written by top experts in their respective fields from throughout the country on issues of great significance to rural areas including jobs, inequality, energy development, water, and sage-grouse. We continued to work with our USDA Rural Development and FEMA partners on Stronger Economies Together (SET) and Ready Community, and continue to search for additional ways to partner. Betsy also released more excellent issues of our publication Rural Connections.

I am very indebted to the many talented individuals with whom I have the privilege of working. It is an honor to work with such talented and committed individuals. Their efforts made possible the success we were able to achieve. Most significantly, I appreciate the WRDC staff (Betsy Newman and Amy Wengert). In 2013, Betsy received the well-deserved promotion to WRDC Assistant Director. Betsy has wide-ranging talents and has played an indispensable role in the success of the WRDC. We are also most privileged to have Amy Wengert join our staff on a part-time basis. Her enthusiasm and talent are greatly valued. I also wish to express appreciation to the members of the WRDC Board of Directors for their insight and direction, and to Vice President Ken White and Utah State University Extension and the Utah Agricultural Experiment Station for their continued support. Similarly, it has been a pleasure to work with the directors and staff members of the other Regional Rural Development Centers and Brent Elrod and his colleagues at the National Institute of Food and Agriculture.

I am very optimistic about the future of the Western Rural Development and I am convinced that by continuing to work with our partners we can address many of the vexing problems confronting Rural America.
The Rural West is at an economic, demographic, and ecologic crossroads. Many of the traditional sources of employment for rural residents, such as agriculture and the natural resource extraction industries of forestry and mining have been declining for several decades. In addition, the steady decline of manufacturing makes it increasingly unlikely that communities will be able to attract industry to offset declining resource-based employment. The skills developed by rural workers for employment in the resource-based and manufacturing industries do not translate easily into 21st century jobs. Yet at the same time, there are numerous opportunities for rural communities that simply did not exist in years past.

The overarching goal of the Western Rural Development Center is to help rural communities prosper, thrive economically, and become self-sustaining.

In order to more effectively address these issues and the emerging concerns facing the residents of the rural West, the Western Rural Development Center (WRDC) focuses its efforts on three priority areas:

1. Enhance Human Capacity through People-Based Development
2. Create Vibrant Rural Economies through Place-Based Development
3. Promote New Job Creation through Sustainable Natural Resource Development

The WRDC collaborates with western land-grant universities and public and private sector partners to promote excellence in research, education, and Extension for the prosperity of western rural communities.

The WRDC works as a regional catalyst to strengthen rural communities by sharing scientific discovery and application of sustainable practices with researchers, Extension educators, and community development practitioners.
The Western Rural Development Center’s Area Sector Analysis Process (formerly known as the Community Business Matching Model) team offered a pilot training to Extension Specialists and Agents at the ASAP Training in Las Vegas, Nevada, in April 2103. The ASAP Team has since been awarded an AFRI grant to develop its Extension curriculum and work on that project will run through 2016.

The Area Sector Analysis Process was designed by Extension Specialists and Agents for Extension to use in collaboration with community leaders in targeted, sustainable economic development and has already been successfully applied to several communities across the region in Arizona, Nevada, and Montana.

ASAP assists communities in targeted, sustainable economic development by identifying:

1. Community goals and priorities for economic development.
2. Community assets that will help achieve the community’s goals and priorities.
3. Industry needs and factors important for locating their operations in a community.
4. Businesses that are consistent with the community’s goals and priorities.

**ASAP TEAM**
- **Barbara Andreozzi** (Retired)
  Montana State University Cooperative Extension
- **Buddy Borden**
  University of Nevada Cooperative Extension
- **Linda Cox**
  University of Hawaii Cooperative Extension
- **Thomas Harris**
  University of Nevada-Reno
- **Malieka Landis**
  University of Nevada-Reno
- **Phil Watson**
  University of Idaho

The ASAP Team applied for and has been awarded an Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) grant from the USDA’s National Institute of Food and Agriculture.

ASAP Team members have been presenting to communities on the benefits of launching ASAP in their region.
The Western Rural Development Center, in collaboration with Utah State University Extension Sustainability Specialist Roslynn Brain, developed the Extension Sustainability Summit (ESS) for Extension educators to assess what major environmental sustainability programs are currently being delivered through Cooperative Extension in the West, and to envision the future direction.

Environmental Sustainability is envisioned to encompass five thematic areas: Land, Air, Water, Food, and Energy. The Summit included sessions on each of these areas plus a general session on Sustainability.

The 2013 Summit was deemed a success by attendees and they requested the WRDC organize a regional Summit every other year. So watch for ESS 2015!

ESS PLANNING COMMITTEE
Mark Apel
University of Arizona Extension
Roslynn Brain, Chair
Utah State University Extension
Gregg Garfin
University of Arizona Extension
Milton Geiger
University of Wyoming Extension
Rose Hayden-Smith
University of California Extension
Bob Simmons
Washington State University Extension

For a complete list of presenters and topics, visit the ESS web page:
wrdc.usu.edu/htm/programs/ess

"[It was] very beneficial to have Extension colleagues from a wide range of differing fields sharing their experiences in promoting sustainability. Much can be gained from seeing programs working toward a similar goal but from a whole different perspective."

35 Presenter Abstracts Submitted
18 Presentations Accepted
14 Exhibits
51 Registered Participants
The purpose of a WRDC Community Development Fellows Program (CDFP) is to advance applied community development at land-grant universities and other organizations and institutions with an interest in the rural areas of the western region.

The WRDC Fellows program is intended to recognize individuals who have demonstrated a strong commitment to the Rural West and who have exhibited excellence in Community Development work.

Fellows are nominated by a Western Extension Director, Western Agricultural Experiment Station Director, Western Tribal College Extension Director, or WRDC Board Member. Nominations are then reviewed and selected by the WRDC Board of Directors.

The next call for nominations will be issued in 2015.

**WRDC FELLOWS**

Nancy Banman  
Colorado State University Cooperative Extension

Marion Bentley  
Utah State University Cooperative Extension

Buddy Borden  
University of Nevada Cooperative Extension

Steve Daniels  
Utah State University

Kathryn Dodge  
University of Alaska Fairbanks

Jody Gale  
Utah State University Cooperative Extension

Thomas Harris  
University of Nevada, Reno

Mary Martin  
University of Wyoming Cooperative Extension

J. Michael Patrick  
New Mexico State University Cooperative Extension

L. Steven Smutko  
University of Wyoming

Martha Sullins  
Colorado State University

The program engages its Fellows to directly contribute their knowledge and expertise to the Center’s mission of building Extension capacity in the West.

To be considered as a WRDC Fellow, an individual must be engaged in and currently be making significant contributions to Rural and/or Community Development and must have been employed in these activities for at least four years.

Western Rural Development Center  
Hosted by Utah State University
The Western Rural Development Center along with its three sister centers – the Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development, the North Central Regional Center for Rural Development, and the Southern Rural Development Center – received NIFA/AFRI funding to form the National Agricultural and Rural Development Policy Center. Known as NARDeP, the policy center serves to develop and deliver timely policy-relevant information on areas identified by its Advisory Board.

Since its inception and through 2013, NARDeP has funded evidence-based publications including 19 policy briefs, three data briefs, and five working papers. In 2014, NARDeP will be publishing policy brief series on oil and gas development and energy production and climate, along with briefs on sage-grouse, California’s water scarcity, and the jobs outlook in the U.S.

2013 NARDeP DATA AND POLICY BRIEFS
A partial listing. For complete list, visit nardep.info.
Addressing Rural Economic Disadvantage
Natural Gas Extraction
Policy Options for Broadband in Rural Regions
Immigration and Farm Labor in the U.S.
Trends in U.S. Agricultural Conservation Programs
Lessons Learned from the Greater Sage-Grouse
How Rural Areas can Adapt to Declining Rural Latino Immigration
Coordinating U.S. Water Policy
National Trends in Income Inequality
Rural Energy Use and the Challenges for Energy Conservation and Efficiency
Socioeconomic Implications of Nuclear Power
Economic Implications of Unconventional Fossil Fuel Production
Climate Change and Energy Efficiency – Interrelationships and Possible Policy Approaches
Wind and Solar Energy in the U.S. – Policy Recommendations for Rural America
Socioeconomic Issues and Biofuel Energy

Publications are available to view/download at nardep.info

NARDeP’s current signature areas are:
- Energy and the Environment
- Food Systems Development
- Self-Employment and Entrepreneurship

In addition, the Center supports research that cuts across policy issues related to the farm and agricultural sectors; the environment; rural families; households and economies; and consumers, food and nutrition.
The Western Rural Development Center received funding from Utah State University Extension for its project, “Understanding and Coping with the Economic Implications for Rural Communities Potentially Effected by Greater Sage-Grouse Policies.” Historically, several sage-grouse species were distributed widely throughout the western United States and parts of Canada. Through the years, loss and fragmentation of sagebrush landscapes, fire, invasive species, and competing uses of habitat have caused significant declines of grouse populations (Hagan, 2011; Kirol et al., 2012; Connelly et al., 2000).

Consequently, on January 11, 2013, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service declared the Gunnison Sage-Grouse endangered and now the more widely distributed Greater Sage-Grouse is considered a candidate for such a listing. An Endangered Species Act (ESA) listing for the Greater Sage-Grouse would have significant economic implications on numerous rural communities in the West that rely on livestock grazing, energy or mineral development, and/or tourism since these activities could be curtailed or eliminated under an ESA listing.

This project employed a Utah State University graduate student, Lorien Belton, who wrote a report on the establishment of Local Working Groups (LWGs) to bring together a wide range of individuals to seek solutions to sage-grouse concerns at the local level. Ms. Belton also organized a Utah Sage-Grouse working group summit held in Salt Lake City on February 18-19, 2014 and she is planning a region-wide summit for November 2014.

Three policy briefs outlining the various implications of a Greater Sage-Grouse designation have been funded and published. All are available to view/download at nardep.info.

Implications of a Greater Sage-Grouse Listing on Western Energy Development
By Temple Stoellinger, University of Wyoming

Ranching Economics and Sage-Grouse in the West
By John Tanaka, University of Wyoming; Neil R. Rimbe, University of Idaho; and L. Allen Torell, New Mexico State University

Lessons Learned from the Greater Sage-Grouse
By Terry Messmer, Utah State University

“Cattle ranchers who are affected by changing land-use policies have limited options on how to respond, because of the land-ownership patterns in the Western U.S.,” said John Tanaka, a professor of Ecosystem Science and Management at the University of Wyoming and one of the brief’s authors. “Economic impacts felt by individual ranchers will cascade into communities, too, and it’s important to consider these impacts when making policy decisions.”
Rural Connections, the magazine of the Western Rural Development Center, is published to inform the nation on the timely research and activities by the West’s land-grant institutions as it relates to rural development. Contributors include researchers, faculty, Extension researchers, specialists, and agents, practitioners, and professionals from throughout the West with occasional contributions from outside the region.

**DROUGHT AND WILDFIRE IN THE WEST**
This issue included an article by Governors Herbert (UT) and Hickenlooper (CO). Contributors to this issue represented: University of Arizona, University of Wyoming, University of Hawaii at Manoa, USDA Forest Service Pacific Southwest Research Station, US Arm Garrison-Hawaii, University of Oregon, Montana State University, University of Montana, Auburn University, Purdue University, and South Dakota State University.

**OUR ENERGY FUTURE**
This issue includes an introduction by U.S. Department of Energy Senior Policy Advisor LeAnn Oliver and an article by Governor Gary Herbert (UT). Contributors to this issue were drawn from the presenters at the WRDC’s “Our Energy Future Conference” held in 2012 and represented: Utah State University, University of Utah, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service.

**IMMIGRATION**
Contributors to this issue represented: University of Arizona, University of California-Davis, New Mexico State University, Washington State University, Utah State University, University of California-Berkeley, and University of Hawaii at Manoa.

*Rural Connections* is available to view and download at wrdc.usu.edu/htm/rural-connections

“Allowing our energy future to be dependent on resources external to America is completely undesirable,” writes LeAnn Oliver in her article, “The Energy Future of Rural America.”

Oliver continues, “Fortunately, our country is blessed with an advantageously long list of potential energy sources available for development.” --RC June 2013
The Western Rural Development Center’s staff collaborates with its partners throughout the region and nation and represented the Center on regional and national teams including:

- Editorial Board, Rural West Initiative, Stanford University
- Peer Reviewer for Choices, the Journal of Rural Social Sciences, Social Forces and Sociological Spectrum
- Quarterly briefings with Senate Agricultural Legislative Assistants
- Team, Enhancing Rural Capacity, Community of Practice, eXtension
- Participant & Member, Rural Wealth Creation and Livelihoods, National Community of Practice, Ford Foundation and Economic Research Service
- Delegate, Extension Disaster Education Network (EDEN)
- Member, EDEN Social Media Team

The Center’s Director collaborated on published articles including:


WRDC Director Don Albrecht’s latest book, *Rethinking Rural: Global Community and Economic Development in the Small Town West*, was published in April 2014.

“[Rethinking Rural makes] a strong argument for new strategies in the current Global Society era.”
-- Lorie Higgins, Extension Specialist, University of Idaho
The Western Rural Development Center receives its core funding from the USDA's National Institute for Food and Agriculture (NIFA) and leveraged these funds in 2013 to secure grants and sub-contracts with partners for additional funding from these sources:

- Utah State University Cooperative Extension
- Utah Agricultural Experiment Station
- Utah State University Extension Grants Program
- Pennsylvania State University (Sub-contract for NARDeP)
The Western Rural Development Center, established by the Rural Development Act of 1972 “to provide for improving the economy and living conditions in rural America,” works closely with the land-grant colleges and universities throughout its region to promote excellence in research, education, and Extension, and build Extension’s capacity in the West.

### 1862
- American Samoa Community College
- Colorado State University
- Montana State University
- New Mexico State University
- Northern Marianas College
- Oregon State University
- University of Alaska
- University of Arizona
- University of California
- University of Guam
- University of Hawaii
- University of Idaho
- University of Nevada
- University of Wyoming
- Utah State University
- Washington State University

### 1994
- Blackfoot Community College, MT
- Chief Dull Knife College, MT
- Dine College, AZ
- Fort Belknap College, MT
- Fort Peck Community College, MT
- Institute of American Indian Arts, NM
- Little Big Horn College, MT
- Navajo Technical College, NM
- Northwest Indian College, WA
- Salish Kootenai College, MT
- Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute, NM
- Stone Child College, MT
- Tohono O’Odham Community College, AZ

A land-grant college or university is an institution that has been designated by its state legislature or Congress to receive the benefits of the Morrill Acts of 1862 and 1890. There is one land-grant institution in every state and territory of the United States, as well as the District of Columbia. Certain southern states have more than one land-grant institution as a result of the second Morrill Act, and some western and plains states have several, including 1994 land-grant tribal colleges.
The Western Rural Development Center is one of four USDA-funded Regional Rural Development Centers. The Centers work within their respective regions and collectively on national projects.

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Learn more about the Regional Rural Development Centers by visiting [rrdc.info](http://rrdc.info).

Brent Elrod is the USDA-NIFA National Program Leader for the Regional Rural Development Centers.