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.
During the past year, I have had the great privilege of interacting with many County Commissioners, Mayors, and other leaders and residents of rural communities throughout the West. I have been impressed by the commitment of these persons to the economic health and vitality of their community and the skills they exhibit in addressing serious issues and concerns. I am also amazed by the range and severity of problems confronting small towns. I have been in isolated communities where declining school enrollment threatens the capacity of the community to keep their schools open. I have been in communities where high proportions of main street businesses have closed because the major employer has moved away. I have been in high amenity communities that have developed bustling tourism economies but struggle because of low wages and high rates of seasonal jobs generated by the tourism industry. Regardless of circumstances, these communities all desire to retain the benefits of small town living that include being next to nature while avoiding the congestion, pollution, and higher crime rates of urban areas.

The Western Rural Development Center remains committed to assisting the communities of the Rural West with their challenges and concerns. As outlined in this annual report, we are involved with many programs designed to help rural communities address their challenges and concerns. We are involved in programs to assist communities in developing strategic plans (SET and ASAP); programs to help people become more aware of government funding programs from Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) and Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR), and then assist interested individuals in writing proposals that have a greater likelihood of success. We conduct workshops and trainings for Extension professionals and others to help them cope with issues such as wildfire, sustainability, and community development; and we provide publications to more efficiently share cutting edge research, outreach programs, and policy recommendations (Rural Connections and Western Policy Briefs).

We are fortunate to have committed individuals and organizations as partners. Partners include representatives from land-grant universities, the private sector and charitable foundations, as well as representatives from federal, state, and local governments. I express special appreciation for the Center’s staff, Betsy Newman and Amy Wengert. Their talents and skills are most impressive. Perhaps more important, they are great people and working with them makes it enjoyable to go to the office. I appreciate the opportunity to work with the other Regional Rural Development Centers and with Brent Elrod our National Program Leader with USDA NIFA. I express sincere appreciation to the WRDC Board of Directors for their commitment to the Rural West and their insights that help us to be more effective and efficient.

I am excited about the future of the Rural West and thrilled that we at the Western Rural Development Center play a role in determining this future.
**MISSION & GOALS**

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.

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

1. People-Based Development
2. Place-Based Development
3. Sustainable Natural Resource Development

**THE OVERARCHING GOAL OF THE WESTERN RURAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER IS TO HELP RURAL COMMUNITIES PROSPER, THRIVE ECONOMICALLY, AND BECOME SELF-SUSTAINING.**
The purpose of a Western Rural Development Center 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 program engages Fellows to directly contribute their knowledge and expertise to the Center’s mission of building Extension capacity in the West.

FELLOWS CONTRIBUTE TO WRDC PROJECTS
Marion Bentley and Jody Gale - ASAP Delivery in Utah
Buddy Borden, Thomas Harris, Marion Bentley - ASAP Development Team
Mary Martin and Steve Smutko - CDEI 2016 & WRDC Board Meeting
J. Michael Patrick - SET & ASAP in New Mexico

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FELLOWS
Marion Bentley, Utah State University Extension
Buddy Borden, University of Nevada Cooperative Extension
Steve Daniels, Utah State University
Kathryn Dodge, University of Alaska Fairbanks
Jody Gale, Utah State University 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
The Western Rural Development Center’s **Area Sector Analysis Process** (ASAP) team has been busy taking their on-the-ground work and developing train-the-trainer materials for use by Extension.

The team has been developing the ASAP curriculum, while at the same time, piloting it in Wayne County, Utah. Excitingly, additional pilot communities have joined the project and include:

- A six-county collaboration in Wayne, Grand, Juab, Sanpete, Sevier, Millard, and Piute Counties, Utah
- Cibola County, New Mexico
- Valley County, Idaho

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**

Don Albrecht, Western Rural Development Center  
Marion Bentley, Utah State University Extension  
Buddy Borden, University of Nevada Extension  
Thomas Harris, University of Nevada-Reno  
Malieka Landis, University of Nevada-Reno  
Paul Lewin, University of Idaho Extension  
Phil Watson, University of Idaho

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, California, Idaho, Montana, and Nevada.
AMSTA is a cooperative agreement between USDA Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture, and the four Regional Rural Development Centers. Led by our sister center, the Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development.

The Agricultural Marketing Service Technical Assistance Project (AMSTA) shares knowledge through in-person grant writing workshops, as well as additional tools and materials provided through the AMSTA website. Workshops focus on effective grant-writing practices, with an emphasis on USDA’s Farmers Market and Local Food Promotion Programs. This national project relied on the Cooperative Extension network to identify experts for the project who then developed and delivered the training curriculum in all 50 states. For project details, visit amsta.net

**AMSTA OBJECTIVES**

1. Make local foods grant-writing training widely available to interested parties.
2. Reduce the time and effort required to apply for USDA’s Agricultural Marketing Service Farmers Market and Local Food Promotion Program grants.
3. Prepare successful applicants to manage their awards.

**AMSTA OUTCOMES**

- 137 Training Sessions delivered
- 3,000 participants
- At least one training in each of the 50 states, plus Puerto Rico & US Virgin Islands
- 33 percent of participants were minority
- 66 percent were female

**WESTERN EXTENSION AMSTA PROJECT TRAINERS**

- **Alaska**
  - Stephen Brown
- **Arizona**
  - Trent Teegerstrom
- **California**
  - Jennifer Sowerwine
- **Colorado**
  - Dawn Thilmany
- **Hawaii**
  - Stuart Nakamoto
- **Idaho**
  - Cinda Williams
- **Montana**
  - George Haynes
- **Nevada**
  - Carol Bishop
- **New Mexico**
  - J. Michael Patrick
- **Oregon**
  - Maud Powell
- **Utah**
  - Kynda Curtis and Ruby Ward
- **Washington**
  - Marcia Ostrom and Colleen Donovan
- **Wyoming**
  - Jennifer Thompson
The **Local Foods Resource Mapping Project** is designed to improve the understanding of state food system barriers and opportunities in the selected states drawing on a wealth of existing data sources. Led by our sister center the Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development, the project’s main goal is to develop web-enabled directories and maps of food systems in the project’s states. The Western Rural Development Center’s contribution to the project includes coordinating with the two project states in the West: Alaska and Arizona.

**LOCAL FOODS RESOURCE MAPPING PROJECT STATES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alaska</td>
<td>Kentucky</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arkansas</td>
<td>Mississippi</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arizona</td>
<td>North Carolina</td>
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</table>

**LOCAL FOODS RESOURCE MAPPING PROJECT PARTNERS IN THE WEST**

- Alaska – Stephen Brown
- Arizona – Trent Teegerstrom

**DATA FROM THE 2007 AND 2012 AGRICULTURAL CENSUSES SHOW THAT FARMERS WHO MARKET FOOD DIRECTLY TO CONSUMERS HAVE A GREATER CHANCE OF REMAINING IN BUSINESS THAN SIMILARLY SIZED FARMS WHO MARKET THROUGH TRADITIONAL CHANNELS.**

STRONGER ECONOMIES TOGETHER

Stronger Economies Together (SET) enables communities and counties in rural America to work together in developing and implementing an economic development blueprint for their multi-county region that strategically builds on the current and emerging economic strengths of that region. This ongoing program is led by our sister center at the Southern Rural Development Center and funded by USDA Rural Development. Visit the SET website for details: srdc.msstate.edu/set

The Western Rural Development Center is providing SET with:

- Input evaluation data from the SET Phase V regions completed surveys.
- Summary findings from the SET Coaches’ summary reports.
- Ripple Mapping Comparisons
- Quarterly reports of preliminary results from the various SET sessions

WESTERN NEVADA DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT (WNDD)

Through SET, the WNDD project team developed a vision statement that recognizes the importance of individual communities while endorsing a regional approach. After extensive collaboration, the team finalized which economic sectors to target. Those that presented the greatest opportunity were Agribusiness, Connectivity, Energy, and Tourism.
Regional Community Health Specialists is the second phase of the Community Assessment and Education to Promote Behavioral Health Planning and Evaluation. This project is an effort to engage communities to develop and test innovative, low-cost, replicable community-level early warning systems for mental health and substance abuse issues.

The Western Rural Development Center’s Don Albrecht serves as the Regional Specialist for the West and Betsy Newman serves as the project’s web and graphic designer. Albrecht’s role is to oversee and evaluate the community programs that have been funded.

CAPE IS A COLLABORATIVE EFFORT
Brent Elrod, National Program Leader for Community and Rural Development for USDA/NIFA, helped launch the program at the federal level by establishing an interagency agreement with SAMHSA and the four regional rural development centers. “This is truly a collaborative effort. SAMHSA’s investment brings the expertise of the Regional Rural Development Centers, our land-grant university partners, and the Cooperative Extension System to the ongoing effort to improve behavioral health outcomes in communities across America. Helping decision makers understand where to find the relevant data that is also specific to their locale will promote more effective behavioral health policies and programs.”

Visit the website for webinar recordings, resources, and more information: healthbench.info

The Western Rural Development Center has partnered with the three other Regional Rural Development Centers, the USDA, and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration on a national project called Community Assessment and Education to Promote Behavioral Health Planning & Education (CAPE). CAPE was developed to provide resources for local decision makers to get a better understanding of the behavioral health concerns in their region.
The Center’s Western Regional Coordinating Committee, “Addressing the Rural Development Concerns of the Rural West,” is a Western Education and Extension Research Activity that provides an opportunity to bring Extension professionals, faculty, researchers, community leaders, and policy makers together to better understand these issues and develop programs to address them. The committee held their annual meeting in Tucson, Arizona, in February 2015.

WERA REGIONAL COORDINATING COMMITTEE OBJECTIVES
The WERA Regional Coordinating Committee works together to:

1. Develop funding proposals to conduct research to better understand the critical rural development concerns described in the Center’s strategic plan. Research results will be published in professional journals, policy briefs, WRDC publications, and through other means.

2. Initiate appropriate and needed educational and training programs and deliver these programs via direct training, webinars, policy briefs or other means to community residents and leaders, Extension personnel and others.

3. Make informed policy recommendations based on research findings and communication with community leaders.

2015 WERA COMMITTEE MEMBERS
Joyce Alves, Apache County Cooperative Extension
Mark Apel, Cochise County Cooperative Extension
Marion Bentley, Utah State University Extension
Yong Chen, Oregon State University
Roger Coupal, University of Wyoming
Wes Curtis, Southern Utah University
Lorie Higgins, University of Idaho Extension
Ashley Kerna, University of Arizona
Julie Suhr Pierce, U.S. DOI Bureau of Land Management
Preparing for Wildfires: Moving from Crisis to Opportunity was a WRDC-sponsored workshop held in Tucson, Arizona, March 10-12, 2015. The workshop offered 21 sessions and was designed to equip Cooperative Extension Service professionals and other community leaders with the tools needed to successfully face the challenges of living in wildfire-prone environments. Regional leaders in preparing for wildfires explained the new National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy and its goal of developing fire-adapted communities. It attracted 51 participants from throughout the West and included professionals from Cooperative Extension, non-profits, and local and federal agencies. Take a look back at the workshop by visiting the website tucsonfireworkshop.org.

WILDFIRE WORKSHOP PROGRAM AND STEERING COMMITTEES
Doug Cram, Co-Chair, New Mexico State University Extension
Julie Rogers, Co-Chair, Fire-Adapted Communities Specialist
Geoff Babb, Bureau of Land Management
Catia Juliana, Association for Fire Ecology (web design)
Barbara Satink Wolfson, Southwest Fire Science Consortium
Janean Creighton, Oregon Cooperative Extension
Stephen Fitzgerald, Oregon Cooperative Extension
Timothy Ingalsbee, Association for Fire Ecology
Christopher Jones, Arizona Cooperative Extension
Mike Kuhns, Utah Cooperative Extension
Glenn Nader, California Cooperative Extension
Steve Quarles, Institute for Business & Home Safety
Julie Rogers, Fire-Adapted Communities Specialist
JoAnne Skelly, Nevada Cooperative Extension
Ed Smith, Nevada Cooperative Extension
Cori Dolan, University of Arizona

WHAT WILDFIRE WORKSHOP ATTENDEES HAD TO SAY
“Well organized and excellent location. I appreciated the full spectrum of topics discussed and the people I met. This meeting reaffirmed that importance of face-to-face contact in information exchange. The meeting also provided a big picture perspective for the work I am doing with the national Cohesive Strategy in the Southeast region.”

“I am just in awe of the wealth of information shared and finding out about Cooperative Extension and what can be utilized.”
The Center’s staff invested a good deal of effort during 2015 toward developing and coordinating the **2016 Extension Sustainability Summit (ESS)**. Held in Portland, Oregon, April 5-7, 2016, the Summit is designed to engage Extension faculty, agents, and professionals in a robust dialogue about the Extension sustainability outreach efforts currently offered, to identify needed areas of outreach and professional development, and help shape a national strategic plan on sustainability.

The Summit offered over 20 interactive sessions organized around the five themes of sustainability: Air/Climate, Energy, Food, Land, and Water. Detailed information will be provided in the 2016 Annual Report. In the meantime, visit the Extension Sustainability Summit website to view the schedule and presentations - [wrdc.usu.edu/htm/programs/ess2016](http://wrdc.usu.edu/htm/programs/ess2016).

**PUBLICATIONS FROM THE 2014 EXTENSION SUSTAINABILITY SUMMIT**

Available for viewing/download from wrdc.usu.edu

**ESS 2016 PLANNING COMMITTEE**
Roslynn Brain, Chair, Utah State University Extension
Mark Apel, University of Arizona
Gregg Garfin, University of Arizona Extension
Larry Lev, Oregon State University Extension Service
Bob Simmons, Washington State University Extension
Cary Weiner, Colorado State University Extension

**2016 SUMMIT SPONSORS**
Oregon State University Extension Service
Utah State University Extension Sustainability
USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture
Western Rural Development Center
Back by popular demand, the Community Development Extension Institute (CDEI) will be held May 22-25 in Jackson, Wyoming. The Center’s staff was hard at work in 2015 coordinating with the planning committee to develop this packed-full-of-valuable-learning-opportunities training!

The Community Development Extension Institute is designed by Extension professionals for Extension and other agency personnel who find themselves working with communities. The Institute offers Basic and Advanced Skill-Building Sessions, plus Best Practices Sessions on community development programming. All sessions are led by experienced trainers and presenters.

For more details visit wrdc.usu.edu/htm/programs/cdei2016/.

CDEI 2016 PLANNING COMMITTEE
Duane Williams, Chair, University of Wyoming Extension
Sarah Adler, USDA-RD Nevada
Monica Babine, Washington State University Extension
Debra Hansen, Washington State University Extension
Lorie Higgins, University of Idaho Extension
Mary Martin, University of Wyoming Extension
Kathee Tift, University of Idaho Extension

CDEI 2016 SPONSORS
Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics, College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, University of Wyoming
University of Wyoming Extension
Utah State University Extension
Western Rural Development Center
**Rural Connections**, the magazine of the Western Rural Development Center, is published to inform the nation on timely research and activities by the West’s land-grant institutions and regional/national agencies as it relates to rural development issues in the region. Contributors include researchers, faculty, Extension researchers, specialists, and agents, practitioners, and professionals from throughout the West with occasional contributions from outside the region. To view/download past issues visit wrdc.usu.edu.

**EXTENSION IN THE WEST: TEAM BUILDING – JUNE 2015**
Western Extension Agents, Faculty, and Specialists share exceptional programs on significant issues that include small business development, local and regional foods, agriculture water conservation, wildfire preparedness, and renewable energy with an introduction by the Center’s director.

**RURAL CONNECTIONS – NOVEMBER 2015**
This issue includes 11 articles from Extension, researchers, economists, and community development practitioners, and an introduction by the Western Rural Development Center’s director, Don Albrecht. The authors discuss the economic recovery of western counties, community-based organizations, preparing Oregon coastal communities for disasters, crowdsourcing climate data, volunteers in New Mexico manage community water systems and strive to address the vacant home problem, sustainability in Guam, and microirrigation for sustainable water use.

**RC Monthly**
The Western Rural Development Center’s electronic newsletter, *RC Monthly*, is published each month. Distributed to over 800 people, it highlights the Center’s activities along with funding opportunities, upcoming conferences, trainings, and webinars. To receive *RC Monthly*, join our mailing list by visiting wrdc.usu.edu.
Our study sets out to shed light on understanding return migration to demographically struggling rural communities and to look for insights on how to promote it. We concentrate on isolated places with relatively modest natural amenities and experiencing migration loss. (See map.) We focus on people in the labor force, not retirees, given the greater challenges of bringing in people who need employment, and who potentially have considerable impacts on the community. Findings Interviews revealed a web of interconnected themes which both motivated and countered rural return migration. Three broad categories emerged as both reasons for and barriers to rural return migration: family, community, employment. Through these conversations we also learned of impacts returning migrants had on their rural home towns.

Read or download the brief by visiting wrdc.usu.edu.
THE WESTERN RURAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER’S DIRECTOR, DON ALBRECHT, IS NOT ONE FOR SITTING STILL OR STAYING IN ONE PLACE. HE TRAVELED 42,830 MILES IN 2015 TO MEET WITH CURRENT AND FUTURE PROJECT PARTNERS. BELOW IS A PARTIAL LIST OF THE AGENCIES HE MET WITH DURING HIS TRAVELS.

**PARTNERSHIP BUILDING 2015**

* A partial list of our current/future partners met with during 2015.

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<th>Agency/Association</th>
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<tr>
<td>Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities (APLU)</td>
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<td>Bureau of Land Management</td>
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<td>Center for Large Landscape Conservation, Bozeman, Montana</td>
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<tr>
<td>Council on Food, Agricultural and Resource Economics (CFARE)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Western County Commissioners and Economic Development Directors</td>
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<td>Extension Committee on Organization and Policy (ECOP)</td>
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<td>Mayors and City Councils throughout the West</td>
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<tr>
<td>National Association of Counties (NACo)</td>
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<td>National Association of Development Organizations (NADO)</td>
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<td>National League of Cities</td>
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<td>National Rural Electric Cooperative Association</td>
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<td>Rural Community Consultants</td>
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<td>Rural Planning Group State of Utah</td>
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<td>Governor’s Office – Public Lands Policy Coordinating Office</td>
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<td>State of Utah Governor’s Office of Economic Development (GOED)</td>
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<td>State of Utah Department of Workforce Services</td>
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<td>State of Utah Governor’s Office of Energy Development</td>
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<td>U.S. Department of Health and Human Services</td>
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<td>U.S. Economic Development Administration</td>
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<td>U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)</td>
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<td>U.S. Forest Service</td>
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<td>USDA Rural Development (RD)</td>
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<td>USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA)</td>
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<td>USDA Agricultural Research Service (ARS)</td>
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<td>USDA Economic Research Service (ERS)</td>
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<td>USDA Rural Housing Service (RHS)</td>
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<td>USDA Rural Business Cooperative Service</td>
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<td>USDA Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR)</td>
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<td>USDA Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Utah League of Cities and Towns</td>
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<td>Western Extension Directors Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>Western Association of Agricultural Experiment Station Directors</td>
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<tr>
<td>World Trade Center Utah</td>
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The Western Rural Development Center continues to use social media to listen, discover, share, and engage on topics related to the living in the West. Efforts were made in 2015 to maintain our social media presence by sharing relevant information and engaging with followers through Facebook and Twitter. We continue to receive positive responses for our social media efforts and are experiencing steady growth. We would like to expand these efforts and will do so as funding becomes available.

**SOCIAL MEDIA STATISTICAL HIGHLIGHTS**

**Facebook Snapshot (Jan. - Dec.)**
Posts reached 1,974 individuals

Our Facebook followers are:
- 56 percent Female (57 percent in 2014)
- 42 percent Male (40 percent in 2014)

The majority of our Facebook followers hail from the western U.S.

**Twitter Snapshot (Jan. - Dec.)**
Tweets earned over 127,600 impressions
856 impressions every business day during our peak months January - March

Our Twitter Followers are:
- 59 percent Female (34 percent in 2014)
- 41 percent Male (66 percent in 2014)

38 percent of our followers live in the WRDC’s region

**WEBSITE STATISTICAL HIGHLIGHTS**

49,653 Unique Visitors (43,050 in 2014)
80,028 Visits (70,531 in 2014)
202,529 Page Views (141,452 in 2014).
The Western Rural Development Center receives its core funding from the United States Department of Agriculture National Institute for Food and Agriculture (NIFA) and leveraged those funds in 2015 to secure additional funding for a number of projects.

Additional funds leveraged from the following organizations and agencies in 2015:

- Utah State University Cooperative Extension
- Utah Agricultural Experiment Station
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
- USDA Agricultural Marketing Service
- USDA Rural Development

![2015 Funding Chart]
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 LAND-GRANT INSTITUTIONS
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 LAND-GRANT INSTITUTIONS
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
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.

The Regional Rural Development Centers are a trusted source of economic and community development data, decision tools, education, and guidance in our nation’s rural communities.

Together the Centers form a one-stop shop to connect to the nationwide network of land-grant college and university researchers, educators, and practitioners to provide sound information and hands-on, community-level training. The trainings help rural communities make science-based decisions about their community and economic development investments.