

Southern Rural Development Center 2019 Plan of Work Outline

In October 2016 at the annual meeting of the Southern Rural Development Center (SRDC) Board of Directors and Technical Operations and Advisory Committee (TOAC), the SRDC was given guidance to help set the course for the next five years. Based on a survey distributed throughout the region in the early months of 2016, the following broad priorities were established to guide efforts:

5 Year Plan Priorities:

- Develop Pathways for Vibrant Communities
- Build Strategic Partnerships
- Mobilize Resources around Emerging Issues

With these three broad priorities as the framework, the FY2019 Plan of Work continues to build on these directives. The section below details the specific plans under each priority that will be given attention in the coming year.

- **Priority One: Develop Pathways to Vibrant Communities. The SRDC will continue the following efforts:**
 - SERA 47-Local & Regional Food Systems – Continue to provide support and coordinate working groups in the accomplishment of their goals as it continues progress towards its five-year plan.
 - Broadband Access and Adoption – Provide leadership and continue to support national efforts by coordinating the work of the National Digital Education Extension Team (NDEET) and the 4H Tech Changemakers project.
 - National Sustainability Summit – Provide assistance in planning and promoting the event, scheduled for April 16-19, 2019 in Tampa, FL. .
<https://www.nationalextensionsummits.com/>
- **Priority Two: Build Strategic Partnerships**
 - CREATE BRIDGES, Walmart project – Continue work with the three pilot states to explore ways to strengthen the retail economic sector in rural places, with possible expansion of the program to other areas of the region.
 - USDA Office of Partnership and Public Engagement – Lead in overall coordination with the other RRDCs of four Partnership and Community Collaboration summits, aimed towards helping rural communities and disadvantaged groups increase access to USDA programs and other resources.
 - Southern Region Program Leadership Network (PLN) – Continue to support the annual work of PLN along with helping support the Program Leadership Committee’s efforts in planning of the annual joint meeting.
 - Southern Region Community Resource Development (CRD) Indicators – facilitate gathering and reporting of southern region CRD indicators.

- **Priority Three: Mobilize Resources around Emerging Issues and Opportunities**
 - Community Capacity Building –
 - Coming Together for Racial Understanding - Support initial pilot teams in launching state efforts, lead the research team exploring these efforts, and prepare to launch a second workshop in late 2019.
<http://srdc.msstate.edu/civildialogue/index.html>
 - Recruit and coordinate a team of southern CRD specialists to prepare to lead the Facilitative Leadership program available through Michigan State University
 - Explore possibilities of a CRD 101 Workshop
 - Facilitate ongoing monthly CRD Webinar series showcasing efforts throughout the South.
 - Infrastructure – Rural Water & Sewer Emphasis: Focus efforts on how water and sewer systems can be structured to be more sustainable, especially in the face of disasters.
 - Heirs' Property – Lead in coordination of the AFRI Southern Region Heirs' Property Collaborative project as well as to continue to foster collaboration throughout the region between interested parties in addressing the issue.
 - 2020 Census – Work in partnership with other identified organizations in promotion of the upcoming census to ensure that rural participation is strong.