



## FACT SHEET

### “Stronger Economies Together” Program (Provides Economic Development Assistance for Multi-County Regions in Rural Pennsylvania)

#### **Deadline for Application May 3, 2010**

USDA Rural Development, in conjunction with The Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development, the Governor's Advisory Council on Rural Affairs, Penn State Cooperative Extension, and other state and local partners, has released details of a program called “Stronger Economies Together” (SET), a new initiative to provide regional strategic planning assistance to multi-county areas in rural Pennsylvania. The SET program will provide intensive training and technical assistance to entities encompassing two or more counties to facilitate collaborative regional development. The goal is to assist counties that wish to work together to capitalize on the strengths of their region and develop ways to enhance the quality of life in their region.

#### SET Eligibility Requirements:

- Applicants must be entities that encompass two or more counties in eligible rural counties in Pennsylvania. Applications are available at Rural Development’s web site at [www.rurdev.usda.gov/pa](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/pa) or by emailing [Robin.Lane@pa.usda.gov](mailto:Robin.Lane@pa.usda.gov)
- The following counties are considered rural and are eligible: Adams, Bedford, Bradford, Cameron, Clarion, Clearfield, Clinton, Columbia, Crawford, Elk, Forest, Franklin, Fulton, Greene, Huntingdon, Indiana, Jefferson, Juniata, Lawrence, McKean, Mifflin, Monroe, Montour, Northumberland, Potter, Schuylkill, Snyder, Somerset, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Tioga, Union, Venango, Warren, Wayne
- A complete application must be received electronically by May 3, 2010 (11:59 pm Eastern). Submit completed applications to: [Robin.Lane@pa.usda.gov](mailto:Robin.Lane@pa.usda.gov). You will receive an acknowledgment of receipt of your application within 36 hours. The final decision will be announced by June 8, 2010.
- There is no application fee, but chosen applicants should be prepared to supply some minor logistical support.

### Benefits of SET Program:

Two applicants will be chosen to participate in the SET program and receive the following:

- Valuable intensive strategic planning training for your regional team, including the newly developed “Stronger Economies Together” program, a program designed to help your regional team develop new approaches to strengthen and enhance your regional economic development activities.
- Database tools specifically designed to help your regional team examine the critical drivers of your region and identify emerging growth sectors and regional competitive advantages.
- Technical assistance and educational support for your regional team from the Northeast Regional Rural Development Center, Rural Development staff, and Penn State University Extension staff.
- Other educational and information-sharing opportunities with other SET program participants around the country. In addition, applicants will be in a stronger position to compete for expected future federal funding that is tied to regional collaborations.

The SET program is an opportunity for your current or newly formed multi-county team to receive the latest tools, training, and technical assistance to help your region move forward and take advantage of positive growth and quality of life opportunities in your region. If you have questions, please contact the following:

Robin Lane, USDA Rural Development, (717) 237-2275, [Robin.Lane@pa.usda.gov](mailto:Robin.Lane@pa.usda.gov)

Walt Whitmer, Extension Associate, Economic & Community Development, Penn State Cooperative Extension, (814) 865-0468, [wew2@psu.edu](mailto:wew2@psu.edu)

Stephan Goetz, Director, The Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development, (814) 863-4656, [sgoetz@psu.edu](mailto:sgoetz@psu.edu)

William Sturges, Executive Director, Governor’s Advisory Council on Rural Affairs, (717) 772-9028, [bsturges@state.pa.us](mailto:bsturges@state.pa.us)

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