



## Items of Interest

Recently Released SRDC Publications: Coming Together for Racial Understanding Research Issue Briefs & Infographics



The Southern Rural Development Center along with partners of [Coming Together](#) recently published an issue brief and infographics regarding research on Ripple Effect Mapping. Below is a summarization of the findings from this research.

Coming Together is a dialog-to-change process for communities seeking new pathways for working together across racial/ethnic lines that seeks to foster understanding and build trust to take informed collective action for meaningful change. Using a Ripple Effect Mapping process to inform a follow-up survey, evidence shows that the dialog-to-change process does create positive change in shifting individual mental models, informing personal and interpersonal relationships, and emergent changes in institutional practices and culture. To view the publications, visit the SRDC's [Special Topics landing page](#).

## Recently Released Article: America's Farmers are Getting Older, & Young People Aren't Rushing to Join Them



Authors David R. Buys (Associate Professor of Health, Mississippi State University), John J. Green (Director of the Southern Rural Development Center & Professor in Agricultural Economics, Mississippi State University), and Mary Nelson Robertson (Assistant Professor of Human Development and Family Science, Mississippi State University) recently published "America's Farmers are Getting Older, and Young People Aren't Rushing to Join Them." This

article details how the farming labor force has a problem: It's aging rapidly. Following up on a peer-reviewed article they published in the [Public Policy and Aging Report](#), the authors examine the trend and implications of the farming labor force and investigate the data. To read the full article, visit [The Conversation webpage](#).

## Webinars:

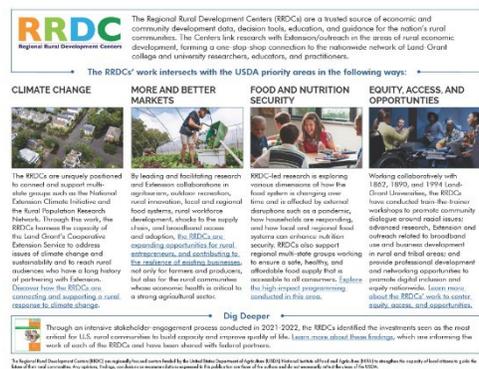
### National Broadband Navigator Webinar

Tuesday, December 5, 2023  
1:00 PM CT/2:00 PM ET/  
12:00 MT/11:00 AM PT

More information is available on page 3.

[REGISTRATION LINK](#)

## Regional Rural Development Centers (RRDCs) & Land-Grant Universities (LGUs) Investments in Rural America



The RRDCs, established through the Rural Development Act of 1972, have been building capacity in rural places alongside the nation's Land-Grant University system for more than 50 years. The Centers link research with outreach in the areas of rural economic development, forming a one-stop-shop connection to the nationwide network of land-grant college and university researchers, educators, and practitioners. [The RRDCs' work intersects with the USDA priority areas](#) in the following ways:

1. [Responding to Climate Change](#)
2. [Contributing to the Development of More and Better Markets](#)
3. [Understanding and Improving Food and Nutrition Security](#)
4. [Centering and Promoting Equity, Access, and Opportunities](#)

## Recently Released Product: Area and Road Ruggedness Scales Data



The USDA, Economic Research Service (ERS) has recently released the new Area and Road Ruggedness Scales data product. This product provides measures of topographic variation, or "ruggedness," for census tracts across 50 States and Washington, DC. The data file includes geographic identifiers, including the vintage 2010 census tract, county, and State identifiers, as well as region and rurality codes. These identifiers can be used in mapping applications and to explore various spatial categories.

This data product provides continuous and categorical measures of topographic variation for vintage 2010 census tracts, offering users the flexibility to utilize measures of rugged terrain that meet their unique needs.

The Area Ruggedness Scale (ARS) has six categories based on the changes in elevation for all terrain and classifies census tracts as: (1) level; (2) nearly level; (3) slightly rugged; (4) moderately rugged; (5) highly rugged; and (6) extremely rugged.

The Road Ruggedness Scale (RRS) has five categories based on the changes in elevation beneath roads and classifies census tracts as: (1) level; (2) nearly level; (3) slightly rugged; (4) moderately rugged; and (5) highly rugged.

This data product serves as a resource for those working to better understand and address issues of rural development and demographic change, as well as individual and community well-being. To our knowledge, these are the first ruggedness measures with full nationwide coverage for the United States and the first to provide a roads-only version to help study the impact of rugged terrain on travel by car.

Additional information about the measures can be found in the downloadable Excel file, which includes the data, definitions and sources, and a codebook for the Area and Road Ruggedness Scales and supporting variables. A recorded webinar providing an overview of the data is available: <https://www.ers.usda.gov/conferences/data-training-webinar-area-and-road-ruggedness-scales/>.

For more details and link to the data visit: <https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/area-and-road-ruggedness-scales/>

## National Broadband Navigator Webinar

The central focus of this webinar will be introducing an innovative public spatial analysis tool, the BEAD Broadband Navigator, developed in partnership with the Rockefeller Foundation. This tool provides high-quality spatial data and mapping visualization to be used for your state, region, county, or community broadband projects to enhance broadband service for those most at risk of being left out of the digital opportunities in healthcare, workforce, business, and education.

The online event is set for **December 5, 2023, at 1:00 PM CT/2:00 PM ET** and is hosted by Penn State Extension, the National Digital Education Extension Team (NDEET), and the Southern Rural Development Center (SRDC).

Registration is now open, <https://tinyurl.com/ry3muh8v>

## National Telecommunications & Information Administration (NTIA) Launches BEAD Initial Proposal Progress Dashboard

NTIA has launched a new [BEAD Initial Proposal Progress Dashboard](#) that the public can use to monitor the progress of states and territories as they work toward implementing the \$42.45 billion Broadband Equity Access and Deployment (BEAD) program. For the first time, the public will have insights into each of the 56 eligible states' and territories' progress toward submitting their initial proposals for the BEAD program by the December 27, 2023 deadline. Initial Proposals are critical plans that show how each state or territory will spend millions – or billions – of funding to expand high-speed Internet service.

States and territories have 180 days from June 30th—the date on which they received official notification of their [BEAD allocation](#)—to submit their Initial Proposal. Once NTIA approves a state's proposal, that state can request at least 20% of their allocated funds. The BEAD Initial Proposal consists of two separate volumes: Volume I is focused on the Eligible Entity's challenge process; Volume II consists of the remainder of the Eligible Entity's BEAD implementation plan as detailed in the [BEAD Notice of Funding Opportunity](#). States and territories are presented in order of the number of milestones reached and will be updated weekly.

Additionally, the Dashboard notes whether NTIA has approved each volume. The Dashboard contains six key milestones the states and territories should reach to meet the 12/27 deadline.

1. Share a pre-submission draft of Volume 1 with NTIA for guidance and feedback
2. Release Volume 1 for public comment
3. Submit Volume 1 for NTIA approval
4. Share a pre-submission draft of Volume 2 with NTIA for guidance and feedback
5. Release Volume 2 for public comment
6. Submit Volume 2 for NTIA approval

### About the National Telecommunications and Information Administration

The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), part of the U.S. Department of Commerce, is the Executive Branch agency that advises the President on telecommunications and information policy issues. NTIA's programs and policymaking focus largely on expanding broadband Internet access and adoption in America, expanding the use of spectrum by all users, advancing public safety communications, and ensuring that the Internet remains an engine for innovation and economic growth.

To view the Dashboard, visit the [Internet for All webpage](#).

## Job Opportunities

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### Assistant Professor & Extension Specialist in Tourism Economic Development, Auburn University

Auburn University is seeking a 12-month tenure track assistant professor and Extension specialist to provide statewide leadership in tourism economic development. This position is housed within the Horst Schulze School of Hospitality Management at Auburn University in the College of Human Sciences. This position is designed to assist the College of Human Sciences and the Alabama Cooperative Extension System in developing the state's full economic tourism potential. The selected applicant will provide strategic and inclusive leadership in tourism economic development in the Alabama Cooperative Extension System. Required qualifications include an earned doctorate in Hospitality and Tourism Management, Tourism Economics, Sustainable Tourism Development, Outdoor Recreation, Natural Resources, Economic Development, or a related field when employment begins.

Applicants should also have evidence of, or strong promise in, building a record or scholarship, grantsmanship, and multi-disciplinary collaborations. The candidate selected for this position must also be able to meet eligibility requirements to work in the United States when the appointment is scheduled to begin and continue working legally for the proposed term of employment.

Apply online using the link: <https://www.auemployment.com/postings/40771>. Provide application letter, complete CV, transcripts from all universities attended, research and educational interests, and three (3) professional references (names, email addresses, and phone numbers). For more information about the position, contact Dr. Alecia Douglas, Ph.D., Chair- Search Committee, at [acd0011@auburn.edu](mailto:acd0011@auburn.edu).

### Assistant Administrator, Community Development and Outreach, Fort Valley State University

#### **Open until filled.**

The assistant Administrator for Community Development and Outreach will develop, coordinate, and facilitate programming through the Cooperative Extension Program designed to assist communities to realize their long-term goals; through provision of education, technical assistance, and opportunities to secure grants that support strategic planning and community visioning to provide a foundation for economic development. Coordinate or assist in the coordination of programs through outreach efforts with USDA Agencies, State, private and public and nonprofit entities. Master's degree in Agricultural Economics, economics, business administration or other business disciplines is required. Preference will be given to applicants with extension and strong community development experiences. Applicants with degrees in closely related disciplines with community development experiences may also apply.

[LEARN MORE AND APPLY](#)

### Associate Professor, Community Health, Family & Consumer Sciences Department, University of Tennessee

The position of Associate Professor in Community Health, Family & Consumer Sciences Department is responsible for planning, developing, and implementing research-based adult and youth Extension programs in nutrition to promote safe food handling practices, healthy dietary habits, and to improve health and nutritional status among Tennesseans, including, but not limited to, Extension programs for diet-related disease prevention and management, food safety, and food preservation.

[LEARN MORE AND APPLY](#)

## Associate Director, Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development (NERCRD)

The Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development (NERCRD) seeks applications for an Associate Director position, which is renewable annually conditional on funding. The individual will lead the Center's outreach-oriented activities in consultation with the Director by:

1. fostering relationships among Northeast land grant universities and rural development partners;
2. identifying and responding to opportunities for cross-state collaborations and sharing of extension programs;
3. developing and implementing educational programs, including translating scientific findings into practice; and,
4. securing grants and conducting nationally recognized outreach activities consistent with the Center's mission.

The mission of the NERCRD is to work on a range of issues with land grant universities and other Northeast partners as well as nationally in support of regional economic growth and rural development.

Questions can be directed to Stephan J. Goetz, NERCRD Director, Department of Agricultural Economics, Sociology, and Education, The Pennsylvania State University at [sjg16@psu.edu](mailto:sjg16@psu.edu).

[LEARN MORE AND APPLY](#)

## Conferences, Workshops, Trainings

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### Investing in Rural Prosperity: Successful Approaches to Demographic Shifts Conference

**In-person: November 14-15, 2023, Cape Girardeau, Missouri**

**Registration Deadline: November 6, 2023**

The Investing in Rural Prosperity: Successful Approaches to Demographic Shifts conference is hosted by the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, the Delta Regional Authority and Southeast Missouri State University, Division of Economic and Workforce Development to discuss the changing population trends affecting rural America and how communities are incorporating the TRIC framework into their responses. SRDC Director John Green will be one of the featured speakers.

Registration is free, but space at this in-person only event is limited. Please register by November 6<sup>th</sup>. For more information, contact the St. Louis Federal's Community Development staff at [communitydevelopment@stls.frb.org](mailto:communitydevelopment@stls.frb.org).

[LEARN MORE & REGISTER](#)

### 2024 Southern Rural Sociological Association (SRSA) Meeting

**In-person: February 4-5, 2024, Atlanta, Georgia**

*Theme: Rural Livelihood Stories: Past, Present, and Future*

The 2024 SRSA Annual Meeting calls for all forms of scholarly work to share stories, particularly those that address theoretical frameworks, collaborations between scholars, practitioners, and communities, and diverse voices that provide accounts of livelihoods that inform future rural development.

The SRSA meeting will showcase papers, posters, and panels to discuss the importance of rural livelihoods stories across time, capturing snapshots of communities, struggles, and actions to pursue pathways to resilience that taken together will form a gallery exhibiting rural lives and landscapes.

[LEARN MORE & REGISTER](#)

## 2024 Association of 1890 Research Directors (ARD) Research Symposium

**In-person: April 6-9, 2024, Atlanta, Georgia**

Deadlines: **Abstracts**- November 13, 2023; **Awards Nomination**- January 19, 2024; **Registration**- February 23, 2024

Save the date for the 2024 Association of 1890 Research Directors (ARD) Research Symposium. *Theme: Climate, Health, and Cultivating the Next Generation of Agriculture Leaders: Creating Solutions in Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources.*

More information coming soon.

## 2024 National Association of Community Development Extension Professionals (NACDEP) Conference

**In-Person: June 17-20, 2024, Houston, Texas**

Save the date for the 2024 National Association of Community Development Extension Professionals (NACDEP) conference. More information coming soon.

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