



Committed to the future of rural communities.

Arizona—Rural Business Service

Regional Collaboration

AZ SET Teams Break Down Old Barriers to Regional Development

Outline Of Need:

Arizona is a big state, but with only 15 counties...15 very **BIG** counties! Economic development information and strategies are often organized around the county. That's a real disadvantage for Arizona's rural communities, who often got overshadowed by the large metro area within the county. As well, neighboring small communities were competing against each other for limited resources instead of collaborating to use the strengths of each to develop a regional strategy.

How Rural Development Helped:

Last year Arizona became one of the eight pilot states for a national initiative called Stronger Economies Together (SET). It was a competitive award process for communities who wanted to receive technical assistance and training to develop strategies to work collaboratively with other communities of interest, regardless of traditional geographic and political lines.

USDA Rural Development became the lead agency, working with Cooperative Extension, Rural Development Centers, and other community based economic development groups.

Fast Facts

Program: Stronger Economies Together (SET)
Investment: Technical Assistance—35 hours of training
Partners: Cooperative Extension, Western Rural Development Center, AZ Rural Development Council, Native Capital, RCAC
Demographics
Rural communities
Impact:
Diverse groups working together for the first time—crossing state, county, town line. Coalitions developed among many demographic groups



Arizona's NARRED and CRREDO SET Teams have logged in over 65 hours in training and coalition building

The Results:

The Arizona SET Team has been training the two awardees for Arizona since September. Out of the nine module curriculum, we have completed six modules for one Team and seven for the other.

One SET Team, NARRED (northern Arizona), is comprised of representatives from the Navajo, Hopi and Kaibab Paiute Tribes, four small rural communities, a Native American artisan group, local government officials and private businesses. The other Team, CRREDO, actually covers portions of three states: Arizona, Nevada and California; three counties: Mojave (AZ), San Bernardino (CA) and Clark (NV) as well as including the Fort Mohave Tribe, private businesses, local government officials and economic development groups.

For each of these groups, the training and regional statistics we provide have been VERY helpful...but the real value comes from having these separate groups talking and working together for the first time ever to develop a vision, goals, asset maps and a comprehensive regional plan.

April 2011