



# NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture • Rural Development  
West Virginia

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Contact: Rick Satterfield: (800) 295-8228

**Entities Selected for “Stronger Economies Together” Program  
(Provides Technical Assistance for Rural Regional Development)**  
*~~ Five Entities Selected in West Virginia~~*

Morgantown, July 15, 2010 – In March 2010, USDA Rural Development, in conjunction with The Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development, West Virginia State University Cooperative Extension, and other state and local partners, released details of a program called “Stronger Economies Together” (SET), a program designed to help regional teams develop new approaches to strengthen and enhance regional economic development activities. The SET program is an opportunity for current or newly formed multi-county teams to receive the latest tools, training, and technical assistance to help their region move forward and take advantage of positive growth and quality of life opportunities. Five West Virginia multi-county area entities were chosen through a competitive application process.

The five entities selected in West Virginia were as follows:

- 4-C Economic Development Authority
  - ✓ Fayette, Nicholas, Raleigh and Summers Counties
  - ✓ Contact: Judy Radford, Executive Director, (304) 254-8115
  - ✓ Goals: Unified Community Development; Enhancement of Entrepreneurial Support; and Strengthening Private Sector Partnerships
- Hardwood Alliance Zone (HAZ)
  - ✓ Preston, Barbour, Tucker, Lewis, Upshur, Randolph, and Webster Counties
  - ✓ Contact: Jennifer Giovannitti, (304) 637-0803
  - ✓ Goals: Develop Marketing Plan for HAZ; Create Contact Management System for Business Prospects; Organizational Maintenance; and Industry Training and Outreach
- National Coal Heritage Area Authority
  - ✓ Boone, Cabell, Fayette, Lincoln, Logan, McDowell, Mercer, Mingo, Raleigh, Summers, Wayne, Wyoming, and Paint Creek/Cabin Creek, Kanawha Counties
  - ✓ Contact: Christy Bailey, Executive Director, (304) 256-6941
  - ✓ Goals: Creation of National Coal Heritage Area Discovery Center; Expand and cross-promote the Coal Heritage Trail; and Assist with the completion of Country Roads Scenic ByWay Interpretive Center
- Doddridge & Ritchie County SET Team
  - ✓ Doddridge and Ritchie Counties
  - ✓ Contact: Missy Hinterer, (304) 873-1652
  - ✓ Goals: Increase per capita income by increasing farm income and profitability; Attract and develop agricultural-related businesses; and Develop a sustainable revenue stream with value-added businesses
- Eastern Panhandle Regional Planning and Development Council

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- ✓ Berkeley, Hampshire, Jefferson and Morgan Counties
- ✓ Contact: Carol Crabtree, (304) 263-1743
- ✓ Goals: Promote business growth for higher paying job potential; Identify target markets for job growth and development; and Comprehensive marketing plan for the area

The SET program eligibility requirements were: 1) Applicants must be Multi-county regions (two or more counties) in West Virginia (or in conjunction with counties in neighboring states) where the average rural population is 51% or more of the region's total population based on Census data or other sufficient data or documentation OR 2) Applicants must be Multi-county regions (two or more counties) in West Virginia (or in conjunction with counties in neighboring states) where 75% of the region's land area is located in rural areas of that region based on Census data or other sufficient data or documentation.

The successful applicants will receive the following: 1) Valuable intensive strategic planning training for their 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 regional economic development activities; 2) Database tools specifically designed to help the regional teams examine the critical drivers of their region and identify emerging growth sectors and regional competitive advantages; 3) Technical assistance and educational support from the Northeast Regional Rural Development Center, WV Rural Development staff, and West Virginia State University Extension staff; and 4) Other educational and information-sharing opportunities with other SET program participants around the country.

If you have questions about SET, please contact:

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