Aligning Resources to Support Recreation Economies

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Themes

Issue context
Motivation
Nexus between FS and WVU
Structure
Discussion – what have we learned?
Rural America COUNTS

- 70% of the nation's land area is rural.
- 74% of land in farms and 72% of the water area.
- 11% of all US workers work in rural areas.

A strong Rural America...
...is good for All Americans!

The numbers presented here are based on 2013 rural county definitions. Images courtesy of Twitter (camping scene), and USDA (bottom photos.) The nation's four Rural Development Centers link the research and educational outreach capacity of the nation's public universities with communities, local decision makers, entrepreneurs, families, and farmers and ranchers to help address a wide range of development issues. Information presented here does not necessarily reflect the view of the USDA or of other funders.

THE OUTDOOR RECREATION ECONOMY GENERATES:

- $887 BILLION in consumer spending annually
- 7.6 MILLION American jobs
- $65.3 BILLION in federal tax revenue
- $59.2 BILLION in state and local tax revenue

United States Department of Agriculture
National Institute of Food and Agriculture
Employment Contributions

Employment is the estimate of average annual full-time, part-time, temporary, and seasonal jobs. In 2014, the Monongahela NF supported an estimated 1,640 jobs in the local area. Direct contributions stem from economic activity associated with an FS program. Secondary contributions are the ripple of economic activity spurred by direct contributions.

Management of the Monongahela NF supported 1,640 local jobs. The chart below displays in which economic sectors these jobs occurred.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Economic Sector</th>
<th>Direct Employment</th>
<th>Secondary Employment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation &amp; Food Services</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation &amp; Food Services</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail Trade</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Others</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Others</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Management: Manufacturing
A brief description of NFS Structure and positions

**Regional foresters**
- Lead the land management programs in 9 regions
- Reports directly to the Chief
- Coordinates activities among forests within the region
- Coordinated regional land use planning

**Forest Supervisors**
- Coordinates activities among districts,
- Allocates budget
- Provides technical support to districts
- Report to regional foresters

**District Rangers**
- Manages district level activities
- Reports to the Forest Supervisor
- Directs on-the-ground activities
  - Campgrounds,
  - Watershed restoration
  - Trail maintenance
  - Vegetation and wildlife

*Ranger Districts often have the closest connection to local communities and on-the-ground activities.*
2010 USFS Framework for Sustainable Recreation

Guiding Principles
• Connecting people with their natural and cultural heritage
• Recreation activity in the great outdoors promotes healthy lifestyles
• Sustainability underlies all program decisions
• Community engagement is essential
• National Forests and Grasslands are part of a larger landscape
• The Recreation program is integrated into the larger agency mission

Areas of Focus
• Restore and Adapt Recreation Settings
• Implement “Green” Operations
• Enhance Communities
• Invest in Special Places
• Forge Strategic Partnerships
• Promote Citizen Stewardship
• Provide the Right Information
• Develop a Sustainable Financial Foundation
• Develop our Workforce

Lessons Learned
• The Forest Service role changes
• Forming a “we” sooner than later is important
• Engage where you’re at!
• The Engagement Model works best at a landscape scale
• Sustainability encompasses all resource areas
• Discovery and learning is part of the journey
2016 “High Five” Focus Areas

1. Modernization of our recreation special uses program
2. **Increase capacity and focus on our community service and volunteer programs**
3. Renewal of strategy to implement digital innovation
4. Implementation of citizen access through our system of recreation roads and trails
5. **Leverage demonstration projects in key special places**

Seneca Rocks, Spruce Knob-Seneca Rocks National Recreation Area
2018 One USDA

• Modernizing USDA mission support activities to be more efficient and effective by utilizing enterprise solutions;
• Serving customers and improving the delivery of USDA’s core missions;

One USDA and Recreation Economies in WV

• Extension
• Rural Development
• 2017 USDA Recreation Economy Resource Guide
Tucker County then......
Tucker County now....
Unique Landscapes

Spruce Knob, Spruce Knob-Seneca Rocks National Recreation Area
From a Restoration to Recreation economy

Monongahela NF key priority areas:
• Watershed and high elevation spruce restoration
• Forest Health and Vegetation Management
• Recreation

Moving from traditional methods to 21st Century solutions...
Partnerships and Collaboration!
CASRI 2009
Joint Chief’s restoration initiatives 2015-Present
Trout Unlimited
The Nature Conservancy
Canaan Valley Institute
REI
American Conservation Experience
Student Conservation Experience
What does a Recreation Economy Vision look like in Eastern West Virginia?

**Intent:** Bringing diverse stakeholders together to create a shared recreation vision among the 10 county region of the Monongahela landscape.

**Method:** Convening business owners, residents, and community leaders to dialogue how to move forward together to make full use of community assets to attract and create a whole community experience centered around nature-based recreation for visitors.

**Outcome:** Producing a local climate where communities can rally around the recreational assets of the MNF to foster sense of place and connection to the landscape and as a result, rural prosperity and economic development.

Dolly Sods Scenic Area, Monongahela National Forest
Multi-faceted
Connected
Community-minded
Sharing
Mining/lumber/RR heritage
Independent
Mountain culture
Farming
Nature
Outdoor recreation
Fishing
Skiing
Hiking
Biking
Stargazing
Creative/Making
Entrepreneurial
Microbreweries
Good food/company
Arts and Music
Historic Architecture
Contain growth
COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP AND COLLABORATION MEETINGS

- Davis
- Thomas
- Marlinton
- Franklin
- Richwood
- Cowen
- Elkins
- White Sulphur Springs
Anatomy of a Community Engagement:

• District Ranger Convenes local constituents.
• Pre-release of content (agenda)
• Meeting facilitated by WVU
• Compiled notes, needs, and funding opportunities
• Spreadsheet with partners, projects, grants, ongoing
• Feed into greater process (?)
• Final community assessment document (developed with community member)
• Follow-up meeting
• General Project Needs:
  • Someone who can be a coordinator to keep the momentum going in these communities.
  • Needs a way to track project success ➔ excel database: partners, projects, grants, ongoing, completed, interest, and funding stream matching (due: next team meeting-Brooke)
  • Spreadsheet of partners and their relationship and abilities in the overall project (due: next team meeting-Brooke)
  • Structure and tracking: each community to have a datasheet to categorize pre-work, participants, assets, needs, and action items (due: February 22nd Cowen meeting-Brooke)
  • Contingency thinking
  • A document assessing each individual community (due: next team meeting-Brooke)
  • Tool development: asset mapping. Community is working with WVU GIS tech Jackie Strager (ongoing-Doug)
  • Explore WVU support for website and branding (Doug)
  • Develop an application for communities (maybe for Feb 22nd meeting in Cowen-Doug)
  • Engage the community early and often to build their skills so if something pulls away partners, they can continue moving forward.
  • Establish a community “champion” or POC (ongoing)
  • Create a big picture “not a document” but more like a public facing website that shares the involved communities, project mission, partners, project process. Focusing on highly sharable content focusing on public viewership (due: next team meeting-Brooke)
  • Create a community assessment instrument: (due: March Tucker County meeting-Doug)
  • Go fund me page? Mon Town Grants??
  • Briefing papers: 1. Theme 2. Internal/external
  • Meetings: Notes sharing, needs tracking, funding opportunities, follow-up assessment/application
  • Objectives: Big picture, vision definition, “Mon Towns”, CASRI label naming
  • Partners: One USDA/RD, WV Tourism, Eastern CC, AFHA, Woodlands, Region 4 Planning, private donors/stakeholder
  • Projects: asset mapping, Kristen’s thing, IMBA ride center, TCF agreement
  • Needs: summit, a champion, website/social media, learn from others, “on-ramp” for new participants (what’s in it for me)

20
The late West Virginia Senator Robert C. Byrd...

“West Virginia is one of the most beautiful and unique of all places. It is the most southern of the northern and the most northern of the southern; the most eastern of the western and the most western of the eastern. It is where the East says good morning to the West, and where Yankee Doodle and Dixie kiss each other good night!”
WEST VIRGINIA UNIVERSITY

Extension Service
- Rural Tourism Specialist
- Rural Economist

Natural Resources Analysis Center
- GIS Technician

Landscape Architecture
- Site Design

Graphic Design Program
- Social Design and Community Branding

Recreation, Parks, and Tourism Resources
- Resident Attitudes and Visitor Preferences
The collaborative process in natural resource management

- Antecedents
- Problem-setting
- Direction-setting
- Structuring
- Outcomes

WHY TRANSDISCIPLINARY?

• Transdisciplinary Design in education = both the collaboration of specialists in varying fields and also the integration of community members who are given equal power and voice in the process (Cybernetics and Design, 2015)

• Mixed methods research improves the likelihood of the advancement of the concept of sustainability through inter-disciplinary cooperation as well as increasing data robustness through stakeholder triangulation (Molina-Azorin & Font, 2016).
COMMUNITY PARTNERS
ARC GIS ONLINE ASSET MAPPING
The Monongahela National Forest Gateway Communities Recreation Economies project intends to develop a recreation economies framework and implementation process that will allow the communities in the National Forest to develop and promote sustainable recreation and tourism to improve their economies.

Extension, USDA RD, USFS, and national, state, and local partners are committed to developing recreation economies by working collaboratively to:

1. Engage Partners (national, regional, state, local)
2. Inventory Forest and Community Recreation Economy Resources
3. Assess the Recreation Economy Opportunities, Needs, and Priorities of MNF Gateway Communities
4. Measure Recreation Economies Indicators of Success
5. Analyze Gaps
6. Develop Resources
7. Marketing and Promotion to Locals and Visitors
Marlinton Community Recreation Vision

1. Working together, we will gain designation by the International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA) as a Ride Center™ - the first in the state.

2. Providing year-round, sustainable recreation opportunities that benefit the economy of our local communities.

3. Recreation as a tool for education. The Forest is a natural classroom that inspires people to value the natural world and to champion it.

4. Creating connections between people and their heritage

5. Providing opportunities for maintaining healthy lifestyles
Snowshoe Highlands IMBA Ride Center

Partners
- WVU
- USFS
- IMBA
- CVB
- Snowshoe
- Poca Trails
- Town of Marlinton
- Greenbank
- State Parks/Forests

Inventory of trails and supporting services/amenities complete
Application to be submitted by the end of June
7-24-17 Marlinton Rec Economies meeting Key Points

- Trails are the draw
- MTB development is big opportunity – IMBA Ride Center
- Need year round recreation opps in order to be best recreation option to the beach
- Entrepreneurship training
- Wayfinding – signage, apps, trailheads
- Broadband
- Cell service
- Is opportunity to disconnect a positive?
- Is recreation seen as an industry? Low paying jobs with no benefits
- Timber industry is down
- Better schools
- Need more data from visitors
- How to measure and report impact?
- Itineraries, packages, tools, apps
- Interpretation
- Map of assets is good starting point
- How is community development integrated with the MNF management plan?
- Define the ideal. Develop the purpose and vision. Where do we want to be or what do we want to do? What makes Marlinton special?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Name</th>
<th>County</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Coast</th>
<th>Cheat</th>
<th>Project Location</th>
<th>Community Lead</th>
<th>FY 18 Funding Requested</th>
<th>FY 19 Funding Requested</th>
<th>Funding Spent</th>
<th>Funds Needed for Project Completion</th>
<th>Matching Funds</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wayfinding</td>
<td>Tucker County</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Coast</td>
<td>Cheat</td>
<td>Potomac</td>
<td>Alana Schuster, Navy Buildings, Forest Service, $1,000,000</td>
<td>FS, HOH</td>
<td>FS, HOH</td>
<td>$1,000,000</td>
<td>$1,000,000</td>
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<td>Trail Maintenance</td>
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<td>High</td>
<td>Coast</td>
<td>Cheat</td>
<td>Potomac</td>
<td>Alex Schuster, Navy Buildings, Forest Service, $1,000,000</td>
<td>FS, HOH</td>
<td>FS, HOH</td>
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<td>$1,000,000</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.W. Frisco Trail</td>
<td>Tucker County</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Coast</td>
<td>Cheat</td>
<td>Potomac</td>
<td>Troy VanSly, Elaine Victoria</td>
<td>FS</td>
<td>FS</td>
<td>$1,000,000</td>
<td>$1,000,000</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Park at Chincoteague K.O.</td>
<td>Middle</td>
<td></td>
<td>Coast</td>
<td></td>
<td>Potomac</td>
<td>Brooke Andrew, Alex Schuster, Elizabeth Tomber, Troy VanSly, Erin Morgan</td>
<td>FS</td>
<td>FS</td>
<td>$1,000,000</td>
<td>$1,000,000</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes from Project Leads:

- Tucker MNF REC ECONOMIES ACTION PLAN

- Funding summary for FY 18:
  - FS, HOH: $1,000,000
  - Matching funds: $0
  - Total funds needed for project completion: $1,000,000

- Funding summary for FY 19:
  - FS, HOH: $1,000,000
  - Matching funds: $0
  - Total funds needed for project completion: $1,000,000

- Spring 2018/ongoing

- Late Spring/Early Fall 2018

- Ongoing

- The community will benefit from the improved economic conditions resulting from the Tucker MNF REC ECONOMIES ACTION PLAN.
WVU/USFS/Partner projects

1. **Asset mapping**
2. Rec economies economic impact assessment and monitoring
   - Secondary data
   - Business survey
   - Visitor survey
3. Community assessments
4. **Mon. Forest Rec Economies website**
5. POWER Grant – small business support, Woodlands/NCIF
6. Community Design Assistance
7. Branding – Mon Towns
Our vision is to help community stakeholders invest in a shared recreation resource to generate positive and tangible outcomes for the social, ecological, and economic health and vitality of this region. We will pursue this vision together with our partners through three key objectives:

1. **Provide a Gateway for Escape, Exploration, and Adventure in Diverse Landscapes.**
2. **Build Sustainable Recreation Opportunities through Community Engagement.**
3. **Foster a Recreation Economy with Direct and Indirect Benefits for the Local Community.**
Opera house project

Community Engagement Lab: WVU Landscape Architecture
Operahouseproject
CommunityEngagementLab:WVULandscapeArchitecture

Grass—Locally Available or Sourced
Permeable Pavers with Selected Pattern
Permeable Pavers for Vehicular Traffic

Timber for Covered Roofs or Wherever Found Necessary
Wooden Planks for Seating or Wherever Found Necessary
Locally Sourced Stone/Rocks for Aesthetic Appeal & for Kids Recreation
DISCOVERING TUCKER CULTURE
AND THEN DESIGNING A BRAND FOR IT...........
Your parents came here long ago as part of an entrepreneurial experiment called Arthurdale with skills of weaving, and bought one of the original farms that has become a storytelling part of the community with a business of sharing the makerspace of The Old Barn and 30 looms.

Your parents touched the community when coal was being produced by providing a general store and dreaming of tourism as a new economy. You left to make money in the nuclear energy sector and came back to live that dream of outfitting the outdoors and skiing visitors as well as local hunters and fishermen. You need to swap stories with the new dreamers who are struggling the way you did—with integrity!

You came here like others in the new generation of entrepreneurs, falling in love with the culture of microbrewery evenings, extreme mountain biking and skiing, but with energy and experience of the city that allows for providing the service experience that city dwellers are looking for as they get away. Here you have developed a culture of sharing resources and sweat equity that allows you to live in the place where you wanted to play. Like the generation before you, you are not afraid of hard work.

You support local artists.

PERSONAS
This is your first opportunity to help describe your hometown identity so that we can compare design ideas to the message you want to see.

Rate each word 0-5, with 5 high, to indicate how well it describes your community:

- nature/flora/fauna
- action
- retreat/haven
- close knit community
- arts/music
- outdoor adventure
- heritage/history
- coal mining history
- lumbering
- hunting and fishing
- farming
- resourceful
- crafts/weaving/ironwork
- resilience
- hardiness
- friendliness
- mountain
- good food and drink
- immigrant heritage
- unique shopping
- 

Do you like the idea of TUCKER COUNTY being represented by a T? If so, check the ones you like as ideas (as noted in small print beside box).

- NO-9
- YES-15

Do you like the idea of TUCKER COUNTY being represented by a grouping of different icons that represent unique things in each town? If so, which are best at doing that?

- NO-4
- YES-15

Rate each word 0-5, with 5 high, to indicate how well it describes your community.
TUCKER CULTURE

Multi-faceted
Connected
Community-minded
Sharing
Mining/lumber/RR heritage
Independent
Mountain culture
Farming
Nature
Outdoor recreation
Fishing
Skiing
Hiking
Biking
Stargazing
Creative/Making
Entrepreneurial
Microbreweries
Good food/company
Arts and Music
Historic Architecture
Contain growth
NIFA Capacity Funding

- **McIntire-Stennis Capacity Grant**
  - [https://nifa.usda.gov/program/mcintire-stennis-capacity-grant](https://nifa.usda.gov/program/mcintire-stennis-capacity-grant)
  - **Example:** The role of forest resources to support improved sustainable livelihoods in rural communities

- **The Hatch Act of 1887 (Multistate Research Fund)**
  - [https://nifa.usda.gov/program/hatch-act-1887-multistate-research-fund](https://nifa.usda.gov/program/hatch-act-1887-multistate-research-fund)
  - **Example:** Outdoor Recreation, Parks and Other Green Environments: Understanding Human and Community Benefits and Mechanisms

- **Evans-Allen Capacity Grant**
  - [https://nifa.usda.gov/program/agricultural-research-1890-land-grant-institutions](https://nifa.usda.gov/program/agricultural-research-1890-land-grant-institutions)
  - **Example:** Small Farm Agritourism as a Tool for Community Development in North Carolina
NIFA Competitive Funding

- **AFRI Foundational: Agriculture Economics and Rural Communities (Basic and applied)**
  - **Example:** A multi-generational approach to increasing the resilience of agricultural, natural, and social landscapes

- **Small Business Innovation Research Phase I: Community & Rural Development (8.6)**
  - [https://nifa.usda.gov/funding-opportunity/small-business-innovation-research-program-phase-i](https://nifa.usda.gov/funding-opportunity/small-business-innovation-research-program-phase-i)
  - **FY18 proposals due 5 October**
  - Increasing opportunities for employment and income generation in rural communities: Topics may include, but are not limited to, creative placemaking, recreational economies, rural tourism, agri-tourism, e-commerce innovations that connect producers with markets, and off-farm value-added agricultural development.
NIFA Sub-Award Funding

- **Regional Rural Development Centers (RRDC)**
  - [http://rrdc.info](http://rrdc.info)
  - **Example:** North Central Region Multi-State Rural Development Research or Extension Projects priority areas:
    - Innovation diffusion for rural development
    - Sustainable communities
    - Leadership development
    - Entrepreneurial communities

- **Extension Risk Management Education Centers (ERME)**
  - [http://extensionrme.org](http://extensionrme.org)
  - **Example:** Growing Agritourism and Farm-Based Education in West Virginia
The Regional Rural Development Centers link the research and educational outreach capacity of the nation's public universities with communities, local decision-makers, entrepreneurs, families, and farmers and ranchers to help address a wide range of community and economic development issues.

**FY17-18 Contacts**

**North Central Center for Regional Rural Development**
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don.albrecht@usu.edu

https://nifa.usda.gov/regional-rural-development-centers
USDA Rural Development

MISSION: It is Rural Development’s mission to increase economic opportunities and improve the quality of life for rural Americans.
Rural Development Offices

Regional CED Coordinators:

**North East:** Angela Callie  
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**South:** Greg Dale  
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**Mid West:** Christine Sorensen  
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**West:** Tim O’Connell  
Tim.Oconnell@wdc.usda.gov

CED Staff Contact:  

http://www.rd.usda.gov/browse-state
Examples of RD Programs Supporting Recreation Industry

- **Technical Assistance Through Cooperative Agreements**: Stronger Economies Together, Local Food Local Places, Cool and Connected

- **Grant Programs**: Community Facilities, Water Environment Programs, Rural Business Development Grants, Rural Cooperative Development Grant, Rural Micro-entrepreneur Assistance Program, Community Connect

- **Loan and Loan Guarantee Programs**: Business and Industry Loan Guarantee, Community Facilities Loan and Loan Guarantee, Water Infrastructure programs, Telecommunication Infrastructure Loans and Loan Guarantees, Intermediary Relending Program
Rural Development Programs supporting Recreation Economies in WV
QUESTIONS?

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