

# National Rural Development Partnership and Partners for Rural America Inc.





# Objective for today

- ◆ History of the Partnership (NRDP & PRA)
- ◆ Farm Bill language
- ◆ Understanding of how SRDCs operate today
- ◆ Programs/projects of SRDCs
- ◆ Questions



# Acronyms



- ◆ NRDP – National Rural Development Partnership
- ◆ SRDCs – State Rural Development Councils
- ◆ Partnership –All of us
- ◆ PRA – Partners for Rural America
- ◆ RUPRI – Rural Policy Research Institute

# History of the Partnership

- ◆ Roots in the Rural Development Act of 1972
- ◆ 1990 President's initiative on Rural America
  - President's Council on Rural America (inactive)
  - Cabinet-level working Group on Rural America (inactive)
  - Monday Management Group – National Rural Development Partnership - NRDP (still active!)



# State Rural Development Councils



- ◆ 1991: Eight pilot councils established
- ◆ 1992: Thirty-two councils
- ◆ 2000: Forty councils
- ◆ 2009: Twenty-eight federally recognized councils

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# Other milestones

- ◆ 1999 Partners for Rural America Inc. formed
- ◆ Authorized in 2002 Farm Bill; reauthorized in 2008 and 2014.

# NRDP Mission

*Improve the quality of life in rural America!*



# Purpose of NRDP

- ◆ To enable rural institutions (state, federal and local, for profit and non-profit) to work together more effectively through *communication, collaboration* and *cooperation*.
- ◆ Improve the quality of life in rural America



# Core Values of the NRDP

- ◆ Inclusiveness
- ◆ “Flat” Organizational Framework
- ◆ Equal Standing of all partners
- ◆ Commitment to the grassroots
- ◆ Flexibility – one size does **NOT** fit all
- ◆ Creative/collaborative solutions
- ◆ Partnerships
- ◆ Focus on enabling rural communities to achieve **their** goals and objectives

# Farm Bill Authorization

Why congress authorized the NRDP:

*In this time of constrained resources, coordination and collaboration among public and private sector entities is essential to the future well being of rural communities and businesses.*

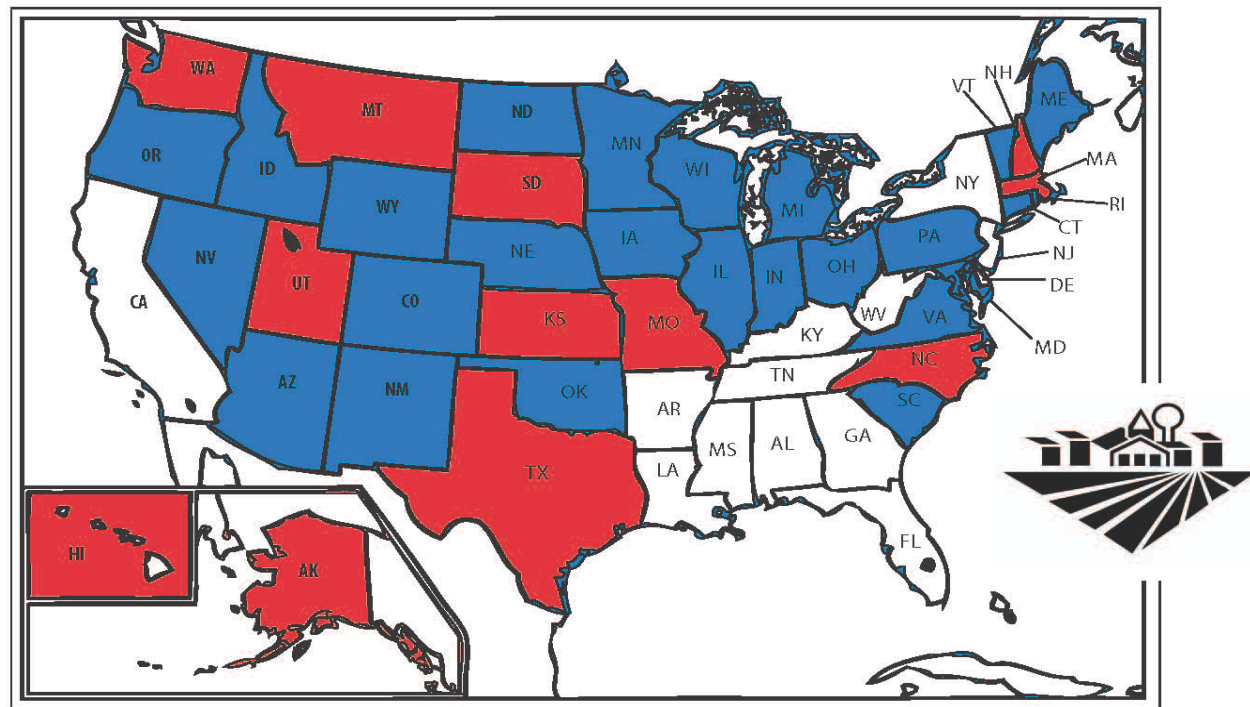
# Provisions of Farm Bill

- ◆ Reauthorizes the NRDP through 2018
- ◆ Coordinating Committee
- ◆ Federal agencies to enter into cooperative agreements with and provide grants and other assistance to SRDCs
- ◆ Annual plan and report to the Secretary
- ◆ Appropriation of \$10M each year

# My favorite part!

- ◆ "(A) In general.— The State Director for USDA Rural Development of a State, other employees of the Department of Agriculture, and employees of other Federal agencies with rural responsibilities shall fully participate as voting members in the governance and operations of State rural development councils, including applications for grants, contracts, or other agreements in accordance with this section, on an equal basis with other members of the State rural development councils.

# 28 Federally Recognized State Rural Development Councils



■ States with SRDCs

□ States without SRDCs

■ States with non-active SRDC

# State Rural Development Councils

- ✓ Various stages of engagement
- ✓ Various cooperators and structures
  - ✓ State agencies, Land grant universities, non-profit organizations
- ✓ Program and Policy driven agendas
- ✓ All must meet Standards of Independence
- ✓ Board make-up: 6 partner groups

# Required Partnerships

- ◆ Federal agency representatives
  - ◆ State agency representatives
  - ◆ Local government representatives
  - ◆ Tribal government representatives
  - ◆ Nonprofit sector representatives
  - ◆ Private for-profit sector representatives
- (Regional organization representatives & Others)

# Standards of Independence

- ♦ The Council and/or the Council's executive committee (or similar decision-making body) sets its own direction and major operating policy.
- ♦ The Council and/or the Council's executive committee (or similar decision-making body) has the sole power to hire/appoint, supervise, and if necessary, dismiss the Executive Director through a fair and predetermined process.
- ♦ No more than 20 percent of SRDC members are appointed by any single institution.
- ♦ No more than 20 percent of the Council's executive committee (or similar decision-making body) is appointed by any single institution.
- ♦ No person or institution outside the Council elects or appoints any of the Council's leadership (Chair, Co-Chair, or President).
- ♦ The Council has by-laws or operational guidelines that are signed by Council leadership and include a date the governing documents became effective. The by-laws include clear statements about how decisions are made; those statements are consistent with items 1-5 above.
- ♦ If a Council has a Cooperator, a written agreement signed by both parties explicitly gives the Council complete control over the governance and operations of the Council.



# Work of Councils

**Vermont Rural Partnership:** (Budget: \$1.5M - \$1.1 in grants; \$317,000 in kind; operate on \$176,000; 2 FT staff, 3 staff grant funded)

- *Community visits*
- *Vermont digital economy partnership*
- *Vermont higher education food system consortium*
- *Vermont working landscape partnership*



# Work of Councils



## **Wyoming Rural Development Council:**

(Budget: \$554,000; State funded; 4 FT staff; non-profit arm generating \$15,000)

- Community Assessments
- State Main Street program (Budget: \$750,000)
- State Broadband planning and mapping
- Grant assistance
- Youth Entrepreneur initiative

# Work of Councils

**Rural Maryland Council** (Budget: \$167,000 operating expenses & \$167,000 for grants to communities; Staff: 2 FT, 2PT)

- ◆ Advocate for rural funding
- ◆ Transfer of wealth study
- ◆ Youth survey program



# Work of Councils

**Michigan Rural Partners:** (Budget:\$275,000;  
Staff: 1 PT)

- ◆ Small Town and Rural Development Conference
- ◆ Community Assessments
- ◆ Grants for rural projects



# Work of Councils

**Idaho Rural Partners:** (Budget: \$80,205 – private and philanthropic funds; donated space and technology; 2 PT employees)

- ◆ Community Reviews
- ◆ Broadband planning and mapping



# Work of the Councils

- ◆ **Illinois Rural Partners:** The Voice of Rural Illinois (Budget: \$16,000; volunteer board, no staff)
  - 2014 Funding initiative (\$15,000 for projects)
  - Publishing a Rural IL Resource Directory (SET-Stronger Economies Together)
  - Newsletter and website





# Work of Councils

**Nevada Rural Development Council:** (Budget \$0; fee for services; Volunteer director)

- ◆ Community Assessments (fee)
- ◆ Coordinate SET – Stronger Economies Together
- ◆ Rural Nevada Summit
- ◆ Hoop House Farming - training

# Work of Councils

## **Oregon Rural Development Council:**

(Budget: cash on hand; staff: volunteer)

- ◆ Partner in local forums
- ◆ Partner in local Oregon Day – legislature
- ◆ Rural Policy Forums





# PRA Mission

Partners for Rural America (PRA) exists to support the efforts of its member State Rural Development Councils (SRDC's), which are uniquely positioned:

- ❖ To expand economic and social opportunities for America's rural communities and their residents;
- ❖ To promote equal treatment of rural America by government agencies and the private sector;
- ❖ To provide a collective voice for rural America.

# PRA Purpose

- ◆ Promoting policy and mechanisms for on-going federal commitment for the work of state rural development councils
- ◆ Identifying financial, programmatic and administrative resources to support the work of its members
- ◆ Supporting regional partnerships through communication, information and financial resources

# Purpose continued....

- ◆ Facilitating communication between members, the National Rural Development Partnership and federal funding sources
- ◆ Providing mechanisms for communication exchange on federal policy activity between federal partners, state councils and local leaders
- ◆ Promote the excellent work of members state rural development councils to federal agencies, public interest groups, foundations and the private sector.

# Achievements

- ◆ Farm Bill authorization
- ◆ Federal Appropriation
- ◆ Cooperative agreement with USDA to host 4 regional planning sessions
- ◆ Partnership with RUPRI
- ◆ Support & network between SRDCs

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