



**Strengthening Partnerships through Network Collaboration
2010 Southern Region Convening**

*Harris Conference Center
Charlotte, North Carolina
May 11 and 12, 2010*

DAY ONE ~ MAY 11

Morning

Plenary Convening Opening 9:00

PRA Host Welcome:

Glen Sink, Southern Region PRA Chair & Executive Director, Council for Rural Virginia..... 9:05

Ellen Matthews Davis, Virginia State Director-USDA Rural Development , Council for Rural Virginia Board of Directors; Co-Chair Strategic Rural Partners for Community Capacity

Dr. Oliver McBride, Past Chairman, Council for Rural Virginia; Executive Director, Crossroads Institute; Current Advisor to the Council Board of Directors

Southern Region Convening Purpose: to establish stronger partnerships with participants at the state and regional level and to encourage communities to work together.

Southern Region Convening Deliverables:

Strengthen Regional Partnership Building

Improve Regional Collaboration

Enhance rural policy program delivery by the number of regional strategies successfully implemented

Focus on the economy in multi-county regional collaboration

Welcome: North Carolina Governor (Invited) 9:20

**Keynote Speaker: Cheryl Cook, Deputy Under Secretary Rural Development
U.S. Department of Agriculture 10:00**

Cheryl Cook was appointed by Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack as Deputy Under Secretary for USDA Rural Development. She manages policies and programs in Rural Development's three main areas: Business and Cooperatives, Housing and Community Facilities, and Utilities.

Ms. Cook will address the Convening about:

Rural Regions; How we work together to set strategic directions?

How should we define rural regions for the future—locally and nationally?

How do we build regional network and communication structure

How do we advance rural program and policy coordination cross states and cross regions?

Break

10:30

Economic Development in the Rural Southern States10:45

Ferrel Guillory, Director for Public Life, Center for the Study of the American South located at the University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill

Addressing the current situation in the four major topics and the importance of each

Content Speakers: 11:15

Strengthening Partnerships through Network Collaboration

- **Economic Development** – Education & Skills for Job Creation
Matt Chase - President of National Association of Economic Developers
- **Workforce Development** – Rethinking Skill Development
Ron Painter - President of National Association of Workforce Boards
- **Energy** - Advancing Efficiency, Generation for Fuel Development
Ted Abernathy – President – Southern Growth Policies Board
- **Broadband** - Global Opportunities and Rural Lifestyles
Peter Stenberg, Economic Research Service, USDA, Washington DC

LUNCH..... 12:15

Afternoon

Day One PM Sessions will begin the process of setting regional development strategies around the core areas of content planning: Economic Development, Workforce Development, Energy and Broadband. Concurrent sessions over two days will set the direction for partnership implementation in each of these tracks. Conference participants are asked to choose and stick to a track from the panels to strategic partnership development.

Session 1: Research Panels 1:15

For each of the 4 strategic areas: Economic Development, Workforce Development, Energy and Broadband, content speakers will extend remarks on their topics for the smaller group to include regional examples in the subject area. Facilitators will promote discussion, Q&A, etc.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT	ENERGY	BROADBAND
<p><u>Track Moderator:</u> Walter Harris – SC</p>	<p><u>Track Moderator:</u> Dr. Oliver McBride - VA</p>	<p><u>Track Moderator:</u> Jack Tarburton MD/DE</p>	<p><u>Track Moderator:</u> E-Jane Patterson – NC</p>
<p>Industry Experts:</p> <p><u>Matthew Chase</u> Executive Director, National Association of Development Organizations (NADO)</p> <p><u>Jonathan Watts Hull</u> Southern Legislative Conference</p> <p><u>Senator Frank M. Ruff, Jr.</u> Senate of Virginia Virginia’s State/Federal Rural Coalition Roanoke River Basin Bi-State Commission serving Virginia & North Carolina</p> <p><u>Jim Clinton, CEO</u> Cenla Advantage Partnership Central Louisiana</p>	<p>Industry Experts:</p> <p><u>Ron Painter</u> Chief Executive Officer National Association of Workforce Investment Boards</p> <p><u>Gerald A. Doeksen</u> Regents Professor and Extension Economist Oklahoma State U National Center for Rural Health Works</p> <p><u>Carl Mitchell</u> President and CEO Virginia Economic Bridge</p> <p><u>Leanna Blevins</u> Associate Director New College Institute</p>	<p>Industry Experts:</p> <p><u>Ted Abernathy</u> Executive Director of the Southern Growth Policies Board</p> <p><u>Liam E. Leightley</u> Executive Director Institute for Advanced Learning and Research</p> <p><u>Brent Bailey</u> 25 x’25 Initiative Mississippi Biomass and Renewable Energy Council</p>	<p>Industry Experts:</p> <p><u>Peter Stenberg</u> USDA Economic Research Service (ERS)</p> <p><u>Lionel J. (Bo) Beaulieu</u> Director Southern Rural Development Center (SRDC)</p> <p><u>John A. Dillman III</u> Executive Director Maryland Upper Shore Regional Council</p> <p><u>Rene’ F. True</u> Executive Director ConnectKentucky Frankfort, KY State Strategy/Growth/Technology</p> <p><u>Larry Mathiot</u> Government Relations Manager CenturyLink</p>

BREAK 2:30

Session 2: Local and Regional Applications 2:45

For each of the 4 strategic content areas: Innovative leaders at the community, state and regional level whose stories will inspire leaders, model potential directions and may hold the keys to potential regional action. One formal presentation will be made in each session followed by participants contributing examples of which they are aware. Pre-convening correspondence will advise participants to be prepared to discuss innovative and successful projects from their region. Participants may wish to bring specific examples in an electronic format that can be made available at a later date. Facilitators will be responsible to capture the information electronically (web sites, PDF’s etc.) for delivery to participants as a follow up.

Local and Regional Application Stories for the Regions

<u>Economic Development</u>	<u>Workforce Development</u>	<u>Energy</u>	<u>Broadband</u>
Moderator Walter Harris, SC Executive Director South Carolina Rural Economic Development Council Scribe Stan Perry, SC	Moderator Dr. Oliver McBride, VA Executive Director Crossroads Institute Galax, VA Scribe Leanna Blevins, VA	Moderator Jack Tarburton, MD Delaware and Maryland State Director, USDA Rural Development Scribe Janice Stroud-Bickes, VA	Moderator Hunter Goosmann, NC General Manager ERC Broadband Asheville, NC Scribe Beth O'Connor, VA
Participants	Participants	Participants	Participants

Afternoon Session Concludes 4:30

Evening Reception 6:00

Featuring
 Food Systems
 Heritage Music

Foothills Connect, Farm Fresh Market – “Showcase and Tasting”

The restaurant group which is part of “Foothills Connect” will share North Carolina’s “freshest and finest foods” in a “Showcase and Tasting” at the evening reception.

Featuring local wines and foods

Virginia has the music plan! H William “Bill” Smith former Executive Director of the Crooked Road & Heritage Music Trail and currently Virginia State President, RC & D Councils and a Council for Rural Virginia Board of Director will plan the entertainment.

- ... Blue grass, banjo, etc. – traditional “foot stomping” music.
- ... Potential for a tribute to the 75th Anniversary of the Blue Ridge Parkway

DINNER ON YOUR OWN

DAY TWO ~ MAY 12

Morning

BREAKFAST at the hotel

Opening Community Development Session 8:30

Mary Randolph, Chairman for PRA and Executive Director of the Wyoming Rural Development Council

Mary will give an overview of PRA and Place Based Activities by SRDCs. She will share examples of Communities Building Success, of PRA and NRDP Farm Bill issues, and talk about how to build and strengthen new rural partnerships

Session 3: Regional Strategy Concepts (Continue Tracks)..... 9:15

For each of the 4 strategic content areas: Economic Development, Workforce Development, Energy and Broadband – Continued tracing will address what should be done in each of the four areas to advance local and regional efforts? Brainstorm and prioritize points that were discussed in the second session. Focus on key areas and items from which to build deliverables.

BREAK 10:45

Session 4: Regional Strategy Decisions 11:00

Each team working in the four content areas will review the brainstormed ideas and identified priorities through a weighed voting process. (In the wake of the session, these will be divided into short-term actions and longer-term strategies by facilitators for presentation at the Plenary Session).

LUNCH..... 12:00

Afternoon

Plenary Session, (Report Out) : 1:00

Reports from each of the four work groups with proposed action steps to advance regional efforts around Economic Development, Workforce Development, Energy and Broadband.

Next Steps Discussion:..... 2:00

Vanessa Orlando, Executive Director Rural Maryland Council will lead group discussion: Ideas for further follow-up, action steps, conference report out, and communication

CONFERENCE ADJOURNS 2:30