

FY 12 13 Awards

Grant Archives

Table of Contents

Shifting Intermediaries: Tracing the Land Grant Role in Water Management in Nebraska	2
Assist Farmers in Rural MI & WI in Making Informed Decisions About On-farm Scale Anaerobic Digesters	3
Rural Social Media Champions: Development of Models of Diffusion & Best Business Practices.....	4
Utility Scale Renewable Energy Development - Project Siting & Conflict Resolution	5
Are we Ready? Community Leadership in the Disaster Cycle.....	6

Shifting Intermediaries: Tracing the Land Grant Role in Water Management in Nebraska

August 8, 2012

PI: Gasteyer, S. (Michigan State University)

Co-PIs: Knutson, C., Schutz, A., and Wall, N. (University of Nebraska-Lincoln)

Award: 20,000

Project Abstract: This project will document how land grant agricultural research, extension system, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and other key actors influenced water supply and management from the 1920s to present in the arid Great Plains. We will use this knowledge to create a conceptual map of how local people access knowledge of technologies, practices, management systems, ideas and alternatives to current practice. We will use this conceptual model to clarify the role of land grant universities in fostering rural community resilience and sustainability in the context of increasing water scarcity. We will focus on the Republican River Basin in Nebraska, where irrigated and dry land farms produce corn, beans, and cattle, among other crops. Increasing recognition of water scarcity and water conflict has created restrictions on water withdrawals. Key stakeholders have identified new technologies, practices, and social systems as key to long term sustainable management of underground and surface water resources. Building on previous and ongoing research and outreach in the Basin, our project will use a multi-method approach to document where residents and decision makers in the Basin go for information, technologies, and practices. This knowledge will be used to identify new roles for land grant institutions in helping rural places in the arid Great Plains to address and respond to water scarcity.

Assist Farmers in Rural MI & WI in Making Informed Decisions About On-farm Scale Anaerobic Digesters

August 8, 2012

PI: Gould, C. (Michigan State University)

Co-PIs: Haugen, V., Larson, B. and Rivin, J. (University of Wisconsin), Kirk, D.
(Michigan State University)

Award: \$9,538

Project Abstract: The long-term outcome of this project is to increase the economic prosperity of rural communities through renewable energy development. Achieving this goal requires some intermediate knowledge transfer steps. We propose to support knowledge transfer steps by pulling together all that is known about the economics of installing, operating and maintaining a small digester and assembling.

We will address the economic issues that were brought up at the 2011 small digester conference, while the USDA NCR SARE grant will focus on designing an anaerobic digester system that a 100-head dairy can afford. Case studies and article will summarize the results of the literature.

Rural Social Media Champions: Development of Models of Diffusion & Best Business Practices

August 8, 2012

PI: Niehm, L. (Iowa State University)

Co-PIs: Frazier, B. (Western Michigan University) and Stoel, L. (The Ohio State University)

Award: \$18,427

Project Abstract: Social Media Champions are business owners who are actively and successfully using innovative social media techniques in their marketing and promotional efforts. It is posited that these champions may serve as exemplars for other rural community businesses and facilitate the diffusion of social media technologies for small rural businesses. Researchers will use qualitative research methods to collect data that will enable identification of innovative best practices in social media used by small, rural businesses, and profile characteristics of social media champions to better understand their role in diffusing social media use in rural communities. Researchers will conduct interviews with rural business owners in three mid-western states who are seen as leaders in social media use to promote their businesses. For this study, rural social media champions will be defined as: being among the first in their communities to use social media; using at least one form of social media (e.g. blogs, Facebook, Twitter) to promote their business; using social media for at least one year; and considered a leader related to business social media use in their community. Community climate and infrastructure that may facilitate or impede social media adoption for small community businesses will also be assessed. Following analysis of the data, researchers will develop a model of diffusion/adoption processes to identify factors that favor social media adoption by rural businesses. Case studies concerning best practices in social media by rural entrepreneurs will also be developed and disseminated through the national Extension website.

Utility Scale Renewable Energy Development - Project Siting & Conflict Resolution

August 8, 2012

PI: Romich, E. (Ohio State University)

Co PIs: Beya, W. (Michigan State University) and Hall, P. (The Ohio State University)

Award: \$10,732

Project Abstract: Rural communities throughout the Midwest are struggling to determine if large-scale wind and solar projects are acceptable to local residents and to assess the potential community development impacts. Residents in communities targeted by renewable energy projects have many questions about related to the construction process, the environmental impacts, land use impacts, social impacts, and the economic impacts.

Uncertainty and lack of information often leads to community conflict and various concerns raised at public hearings. Ongoing community conflict and resistance may prevent the expansion of utility scale renewable energy projects throughout the Midwest. Engaging citizens in outreach and community education on utility scale renewable energy projects can diminish potential community conflicts, while providing community leaders with best practices to facilitate the project siting process.

Are we Ready? Community Leadership in the Disaster Cycle

August 8, 2012

PI: Silvis, A (University of Illinois)

Co PI: Cain, S. (Purdue University)

Collaborator: Maltsberger, B. (University of Missouri)

Award: \$12,000

Project Abstract: This project will build on a curriculum currently under development at the University of Illinois, with input from University of Missouri and Purdue University Extension. Workshop participants will include the Community or County Emergency Management Director, local elected officials, emergency responders, faith community leaders, not-for-profit leaders, civic club leaders, health and education leaders, business leaders, etc.

The objectives are to help community leaders:

- Identify and understand the four phases of the disaster cycle (preparedness, response, recovery, mitigation).
- Understand the role of leadership in each phase of the disaster cycle.
- Learn a process for identifying key local leaders, both formal and informal, who should be involved in each phase of the disaster cycle.
- Develop a foundation for community partnerships and processes to plan for and manage a disaster.