

One Montana

A Rural-Urban Partnership for
Sustainability in the 21st Century

What is at stake?

- We as a society and a state focus far too much on what divides us.
- The rural-urban divide is no exception and this increasing disconnect is threatening the sustainability of our state and country.
- Any solution can only occur through a functioning discourse between **rural** and **urban** America.

Why is this Important to Montana?

- Because of its vast open spaces and low population, Montana is seriously impacted by the limiting consequences of a rural-urban divide.
- Those very same attributes of our state can contribute to a vibrant rural-urban partnership – leveraging our natural resources, our community spirit, and our capacity for change.
- To do so, we must focus on what unites us.

Montana's high quality natural environment is an increasingly rare attribute in our country. Its natural resources, particularly clean air, water, wildlife and open space, are what rural people have and what urban people need and/or want

•Quality of Life Study for Montana," (2005)

Demographers predict that, by the year 2030, 80% of the state's residents will be living in the seven largest cities.

•Project 2030: Montana's Aging Population (December, 2008)



Eight of the ten poorest counties in the United States are in Montana – and all of them are agricultural.

•The Economist Magazine (December, 2006)



Montana ranks 49th in the U.S. for average wage per job. The blame comes from the rural nature of the state.

•Big Sky Business Journal (April, 2007)



In 1950, approximately 70% of the food that Montanans ate was produced in Montana; today it's less than 10%.

•Montana's Food System Fact Sheet



Rural ←→ Urban

- Rural America provides food production, energy, natural resources, water, and waste management.
- Urban America provides markets, jobs, and specialized services such as health care and technology.
- Rural and urban areas must be recognized as interdependent elements of our society.

What Is “One Montana?”

A Rural-Urban Partnership

- “*One Montana: A Rural-Urban Partnership*” is a statewide, programmatic initiative
- Led by the Montana University System and others
- Designed to build and sustain basic connections between rural and urban Montanans
- A national model in our country’s pursuit of sustainability

The Goal of “One Montana”

To change the way we think and act about rural and urban communities from “divide” to “connect” in order to enhance the sustainability of our state and be a model of sustainability for other states and our country.

We all want the same things:

- Personal Well-Being
- Economic Stability
- A Healthy Planet for the Future



A Sampling Of Rural-Urban Issues Facing Montanans

- Effects of Condensed Population in Seven Largest Cities
- Retention of Productive Agricultural Land and Open Space
- Sustainable Sources of Energy and Water
- Access to Quality Health Care
- Fair Governance for both Rural and Urban Citizens
- Sustainable Local Food Systems
- Sustainable Economic Development Opportunities Capitalizing on both Rural and Urban Attributes

Who Supports “One Montana?”

- The Executive Leadership of the Montana University System
- The leaders of the Montana State Senate
- The Montana Congressional Delegation
 - Undaunted Stewardship
 - Leadership Montana
 - Many others

Why “One Montana” is a good model for the country

- Montana has a distinct rural-urban divide
- Montana will be greatly affected by issues of climate change, energy development, and water demand
- Montana’s overall low population = good chance of success
- Montana’s identity and community has a history of putting aside differences (1972 constitution)

The Role Of The Montana University System

- Leadership
- Facilitation
- Coordination
- Research
- Collaboration
- Outreach
- Catalyst

Examples of how the Montana University System can play a Role

- Research expertise
- Communications network
- Outreach and extension programs in rural communities
- Outreach and ag liaison programs in urban communities
- Facilitating a wide variety of public meetings
- Promoting rural-urban exchanges and internship programs
- Leadership development
- Catalyzing partnerships between existing University programs, the private sector and outside nonprofit organizations

Who else will play a Role?

- Local and State Government
- Special Interest Groups
 - Communities
 - Citizens
 - Others

Implementation

- Operated out of University System - Office of Higher Education (?)
- Funded by public sources, foundation grants, private and corporate contributions
- Create and maintain “One Montana” website
- Organize town meetings to build grassroots support
- Identify and oversee community-based rural-urban projects
- Help obtain funding for rural-urban projects
- Hold an annual statewide meeting to further the agenda

What is Your Role?

- Suggest Project Ideas
- Make Presentations
- Engage Your Organization

Conclusion

- A healthy and vibrant sustainable rural-urban partnership is critical to the sustainability of Montana and our country
- Benefits: human health, ecosystem health, stronger communities, energy independence, vibrant family-scale production agriculture, successful small businesses
- A model for sustainability throughout the country

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