

### **Agenda overview (Aaron)**

- UC ANR and UCCE overview
- CED- LAB overview
- Extension generally
- Outdoor Recreation & Extension nationally
- National NACDEP, NET, NEORWG
- Program overviews
  - Aaron
  - Alec
- Outdoor Rec Institute

# UC ANR Cooperative Extension

## Community and Economic Development in Rural California

### *CA Jobs First Recreation & Tourism Working Group*

*November 7, 2025*

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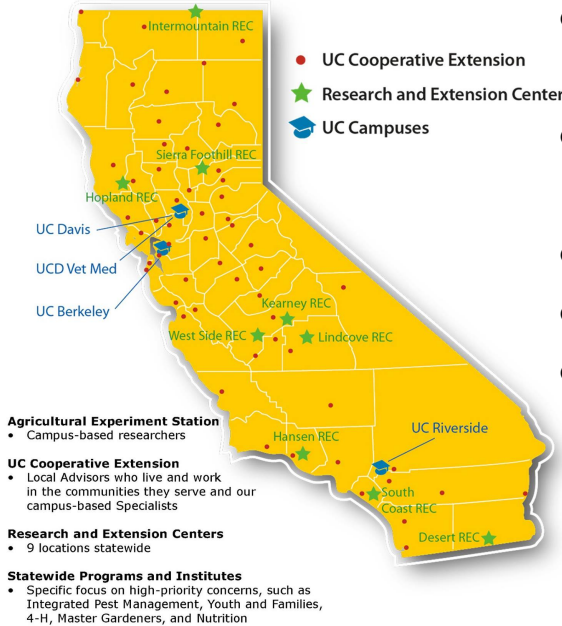


**UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA**  
Agriculture and Natural Resources

UC Cooperative Extension

# UC ANR and Extension

- UC ANR uses its 262 academics to share science-based information and practices to improve lives and livelihoods.
- Two-way street with advisors elevating local needs for university research
- In-county advisors allow integration into community
- The Land Grant System ties us to a nationwide network
- We are known for our 4H & Master Gardener programs



- Subject matters-Ag & Natural Resources, CED, youth and nutrition development
- 5 UC campuses house Ag Experiment Stations that work closely with Research and Extension Center to address local ag issues.



# CEDLab

- Statewide network of county advisors and statewide specialists focusing on working lands
- Topic Areas-Agri-Food Tech, Food Systems & Business Support, Biobased Products & Bioenergy, Labor & Workforce Development, Community Resilience & Utilities, Disaster Prep & Community response
- Creating an environment that supports the growth of local businesses and entrepreneurs, and where residents can build wealth and participate in the economy.
- Key clientele- econ dev professionals, policymakers, public entrepreneurs, small and medium businesses, and alternative enterprise.



## How we do CED

- Demystifying CED success via case studies
- Providing “institutional” literacy in governance, finance, and scale strategies.
- Empowering actors with concrete strategies and connections to key actors in these arenas.
- Linking government, non-profits and private entrepreneurs to one another.

# The secret life of advisors

- We're university academics who advance while retaining our role and location.
- We are evaluated by peers from around the state based on...
- **University & public service**- Using our role and knowledge to help inside the UC and the area(s) we serve
- **Creative output** - Toolkits, Social media posts, Scholarly, non-scholarly, popular press publication, and Research projects and reports
- **Extension Education**- creating and delivering curriculum for clientele in workshops or lectures, Technical assistance, Convening, facilitation, and planning support, Data analysis and decision-making tools
- UC ANR Policy Institute - Inform not advocate
  - Provide policy makers access to subject matter experts to provide science backed info
- Vision 2040-what guides our work and where are we going
  - “valued in every CA community for meaningful engagement and making a positive impact in people's lives.”
  - CED basis is about identifying community priorities, and empowering institutional capacity



- National Association of Community Development Extension Professionals (NACDEP)
  - Professional touchstone
- Participating on various workgroups:
  - Small Business and Entrepreneurship
  - CD Essentials Curriculum
- Strong representation for tourism and rural economies
- Alec serving as the UC ANR liaison

<https://www.nacdep.net/>

SAVE THE DATE!

2025 NETtra Tourism Conference



National Extension Tourism Network

HOME ABOUT NET NEWS RESOURCE LIBRARY WEBINARS EVENTS CONTACT

**OCT 7-10 2025**

Scan the QR code and sign up for e

**Welcome to the National Extension Outdoor Recreation Working Group homepage!**

**Latest News**

**NET Outdoor Recreation Case Study Series Launches!**

The NEORWG steering committee is pleased to announce the first two case studies in a series they have planned to share examples of the Extension's impact in outdoor recreation development.



- **Building Entrepreneur-Friendly**

- National Extension Tourism Network (NET)
  - Professional Network
- Agritourism, Tourism Institutes, Extension Tourism applications
- Biannual Conference - New Hampshire in 2025
- National Extension Outdoor Recreation Working Group (NEORWG)
  - Professional Network

<https://extensiontourism.net/>

**CHOICES** A publication of: **AAEA** Agricultural & Applied Economics Association

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**Professional Certifications**

**C2ER Certified Economic Research Professional (CERP)**

C2ER's professional certification, the Certified Economic Research Professional (CERP), is the industry standard for recognizing excellence in economic research and embodies the applied skills of economic, demographic, industry, and workforce analysis. CERPs undertake rigorous evaluation of their research experience and leadership to earn this designation.

- Who is a Certified Economic Research Professional?
- Why should I become a Certified Economic Research Professional?
- How do I become a Certified Economic Research Professional?
- How is my certification work evaluated?
- What are the maintenance requirements?

**FRED Data Practitioner Digital Badge Program**

C2ER is honored to share the FRED Data Practitioner Digital Badge Program as a resource for its members.

As mentioned on their [What is FRED](#) page, [FRED](#) (short for Federal Reserve Economic Data) is an online

- Council for Community and Economic Research (C2ER)
  - Credentialing and training for applied economics
- Agricultural & Applied Economics Association (AAEA)
- Rural sections - Extension represented
- Data for decision-making, decision tools, strategy- context, planning

<https://www.aaea.org/>

<https://www.c2er.org/>

## OUTDOOR RECREATION & GATEWAY COMMUNITIES

Outdoor recreation and tourism are economic forces that rural communities are increasingly experiencing and grappling with, particularly gateway communities situated near national parks, public lands, or scenic amenities. These activities offer diversification opportunities for the local economy, and in some areas, are becoming an integral part of the vitality of rural communities. They also interact strongly with environmental stewardship and can play a central role in the socio-cultural well-being of rural communities. However, these activities bring with them pressures, challenges, and complex tradeoffs that affect the social, economic, and environmental fabric of each community. Research and Extension programs are finding ways to help communities recognize and navigate them.

### In the West:

- 23% of the U.S. population
- 34% of all U.S. National Park visits
- Nearly 5 million jobs associated with outdoor recreation
- 10.8% of Western farms engage in agritourism or direct-to-consumer sales (7.5% at the national level)

The National Extension Tourism Network's Outdoor Recreation Workgroup (NEORWG)



Supporting recreation economies in the West



Support from the WRDC and seed funding



Known public initiatives in the West



- **Western Rural Development Center (WRDC) University of Idaho**
- Outdoor Recreation as a program area
- UC ANR partnered on a multi-state grant led by Utah State and University of Montana
- Discovery and documentation of Extension's role in serving rural community economic development

## “Investigating Extension’s Scope and Role in Outdoor Recreation in the West: Attitudes, Challenges, and Opportunities” - WRDC Grant

<https://wrdc.uidaho.edu/programs/outdoor-recreation/>

## National Partners (Aaron)

- NACDEP & NET
  - National organizations that connect us to dozens of academics working in similar areas
  - NACDEP - covers a diverse array of CED topics, small business and entrepreneurship, land use planning, workforce development, public health, applied data. . . .
  - NET - tourism focus, both Extension folks, also tourism institutes
    - State and local tourism focus
    - CED blend
- NEORWG
  - Smattering of both
  - Emergence during pandemic - nexus of tourism impacts
  - Refocus for existing tourism
  - Led by Utah State and University of West Virginia
  - USDA MOU
- Partner on WRDC grant led by Utah State and University of Montana
  - Focus area for Western Rural Development Center
  - Timely - identification of the role of Extension in outdoor recreation planning
  - Socialization of collaborative opportunities, tools, data
  - Identification of in-state resources, collaboratives
- Regional development as central
  - Strong component here for regional economic strategy (both NACDEP & NEORWG)
    - Regional rural development
    - Crossover to Community development
      - Rural sociology, urban planning, regional economic strategy

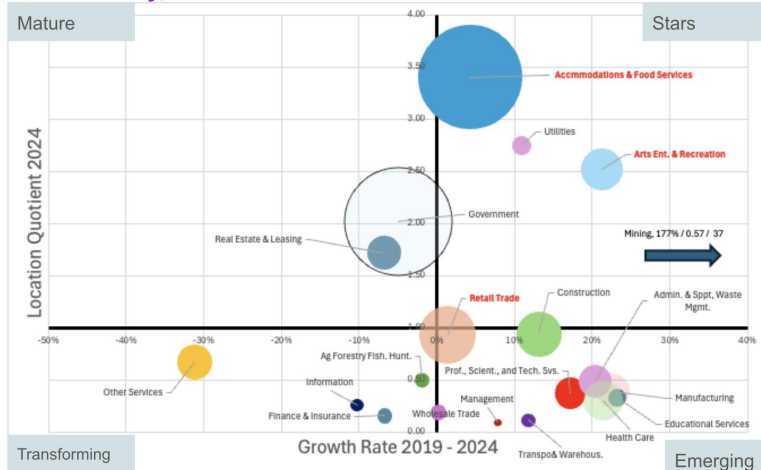
## Regional Work - Aaron

- Lots of definitional work to be done, case examples, co-learning
  - Movement statewide, nationally
  - Lots of things in the Venn diagram, going to be a bit different in each region
  - Truth of the matter is doing a lot of this work isn't really that exotic
    - Exercise reading around in the EPA RERC plans . . . the strategies laid out might well be part of other more traditional community planning
  - Innovation is I think in the interdisciplinary nature of recreation collaboratives
  - Refocusing traditional disciplines, and yes, some novel approaches to policy, analysis, planning engagement
  - New frameworks.... Benefit in starting with the fact that what we're doing here is not reinventing the wheel of the professions and what communities already know how to do - current preferences
- For me, it's about doing CED work in a rural economy driven by outdoor recreation
  - My impression is as important as these topics are that they tend to be a little underrepresented in this space . . . hanging around these convos in Utah, Colorado, Oregon, here in CA
- Real action is in supporting development of CED planning capacity
  - SLIDE - Key factors in argument
    - Nonprofits with less than \$500k budget
    - Fewer than a dozen paid staff working on community and economic development issues
  - Emerging regional development authority
  - Addressing issues small business development, workforce development
    - What happens beyond the trailhead
- CED Fundamentals - skill and leadership development for planning
  - Wrapping 4 session series
- Building decision-making tools
  - Again engagement-based
  - Applied economy, workforce, tourism/visitor data

## Workshop Series at a Glance

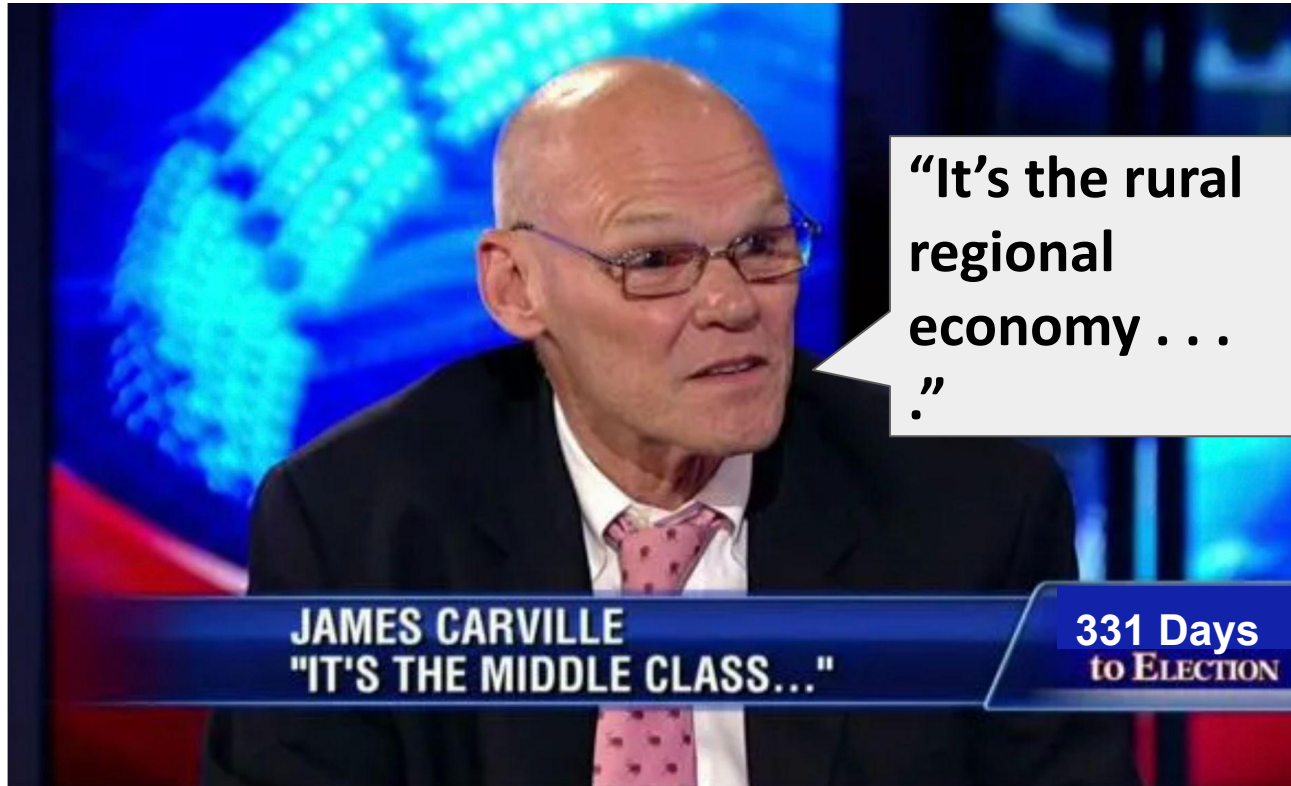


## Overall Economy, Eastern Sierra 2019 - 2024



- **Aaron's Work**
- Supporting CED capacity in Eastern Sierra region
- Tactical program and TA for small business, workforce development, regional economic strategy
- 4-session series: CED skill-leadership workshops
- Building Data tools for decision-making
- Sierra Jobs First initiative

# What happens beyond the trailhead in Gateway communities?



"It's the rural regional economy . . . ."

**JAMES CARVILLE**  
**"IT'S THE MIDDLE CLASS..."**

**331 Days**  
**to ELECTION**

# Alec up North- Del Norte, Humboldt, & Trinity

- Weaverville Basin Mountain Biking Trail User study and Economic Impact Analysis
  - Rider survey to collect demographic, spending, rider experience info
  - Business interviews for qualitative info on tourism
  - User spending & customer profile, impact to local economy, trail & infrastructure development guide
  - Scaleable- I want to bring this to a trail near you
- Del Norte Integrated Trail Development Plan
  - Convene partnership with Del Norte County, Redwood Parks Conservancy, True North & Del Norte Trail Alliance
  - Assist with CERF grant writing and project planning
- Del Norte Trail Alliance Board Member
  - Formalize board actions
  - Pushing partnerships and improving FS relationship

From Trinity Trail Alliance



# CED and Outdoor Rec

- 2 hires coming - Specialist in CED Outdoor Rec (statewide), CED Advisor in Outdoor Rec
- 2026 will be onboarding and planning
- Meanwhile working on respective program areas

New position - 4H Youth Development - Outdoor Recreation  
in Lassen, Modoc, Plumas, and Sierra closing March

<https://ucanr.edu/job/cooperative-extension-area-4-h-youth-development-advisor-outdoor-education-serving-lassen-modoc>

**March 2, 2026 closing date**





























