

A Vision for Rural New York



Mission:

Chart a clear vision for rural community and economic development to help guide policy-makers in the decade ahead.

Rural Vision Initiative Partners

NYS Legislative Commission on Rural Resources

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Thank you to Rural Resources Commission Members who served as Future of Rural New York Symposium workgroup chairs: Senator George H. Winner, Jr., Senator William T. Stachowski, Assemblyman David Koon, Assemblyman James Bacalles. Also, thank you to NYS legislative staff who served as workgroup recorders at the Symposium: NYS Legislative Commission on Rural Resources, Senator Winner's Staff, NYS Assembly Task Force on Food and Farm Policy, NYS Assembly Program and Counsel, and NYS Senate Council on Health Care Financing. Many thanks to Cornell Cooperative Extension Association professionals who served as workgroup facilitators at regional listening sessions and the Symposium.

For additional information:

All supporting information can be found on the Rural New York Initiative's web site, including this report, at <http://rnyi.cornell.edu> and by following the links to the Rural Vision Project.

Acknowledgments



Geneva Listening Session



Van Etten Listening Session

The Rural Vision Initiative also gratefully acknowledges the many individuals and state organizations who participated in both the listening sessions and the symposium: NYS Office of Mental Health, NYS Office of Children and Family Services, NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance, NYS Department of Labor, NYS Department of Transportation, NYS Office of Real Property Services, NYS Canal Corporation, NYS Education Department, NYS Energy and Research Development Authority, NYS Department of Health, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, NYS Department of Public Service, NYS Division of the Budget, Center for Health Workforce Studies/SUNY School of Public Health and NYS Tug Hill Commission. Many thanks to the people of New York State who participated in the Rural Vision Initiative over the past year.



Tully Listening Session



Malone Listening Session

Introduction

The State of New York, with nearly 19 million citizens populating a 47,000-square-mile land area, has long been identified with its cities, large and small, and their surrounding suburban communities. But a more precise picture reveals that New York has extensive rural areas. These are remarkable in many ways for their unique rural cultural foundations, environment and resources. More than three million residents live in rural New York, which comprises the vast majority of the state's land area. **The future prosperity of our rural regions remains undeniably central to the Empire State's overall well-being in this new century.**

Affirming the importance of New York's rural areas, in 1982 state legislators established the **Legislative Commission on Rural Resources** (LCRR). "The rural economy and environment contribute greatly to the quality and maintenance of life in New York State," the Legislature stated in the law creating the Commission. "New York's indispensable rural resources are decentralized, diverse and unique, and their enhancement and protection require special attention in view of their special characterization and needs."

Today this mission remains as vital as ever before. The Commission on Rural Resources has emerged as a leader in shaping state laws and policies to address the range of issues that impact rural development. These include spearheading initiatives in local government reform, rural health care, agriculture and farmland protection, economic development, water quality, education, land use, transportation and many more.

Likewise, **Cornell University** has a long history of research, outreach, teaching and training focused on a wide variety of rural development issues. As New York State's land-grant university, Cornell conducts basic and applied research on issues of importance to citizens of the state and, in the tradition of public service, is dedicated to working with citizens, communities, and organizations throughout the state.



Crafting a new, clear, and bold vision for rural New York State is vital for the success and well-being of its citizens, communities, and regions.



Rural Vision Initiative

The NYS Legislative Commission on Rural Resources has partnered with Cornell's Department of Development Sociology (*the Rural New York Initiative and the Community & Rural Development Institute - CaRDI*), along with Cornell Cooperative Extension to advance an important project called **The Rural Vision Initiative**. The goal of the Rural Vision Initiative is to identify the short-term and long-term challenges and opportunities facing New York's rural communities. The Rural Vision Initiative aims to chart a clear vision for rural community and economic development to help guide policymakers in the decade ahead.

The Rural Vision Initiative presents an ambitious and challenging task that participants believe is absolutely essential to the future of rural communities and the quality of the Empire State's future culture, economy and environment. In particular, it seeks a balance between two sets of demands that confront rural areas: while some localities are faced with burgeoning, often unplanned growth, others struggle with declining opportunities, rivaling the experiences of many inner cities. Both demands create compelling sets of requirements and related public policy issues.

This exciting and unique partnership on behalf of rural New York commenced in late 2005 and early 2006 with eleven regional **"Rural Listening Sessions."** To begin to understand the present-day challenges and concerns facing rural New York, it was critical to hear firsthand from today's rural leaders and citizens. The first rural listening session was held in Van Etten, Chemung County, in late December 2005. By May 2006, 11 listening sessions had been conducted across the state — from the Southern Tier-Finger Lakes region to the North Country, and from central and western New York to the Capital Region and eastern Long Island.

The sessions were attended by local elected officials, leaders of non-profit organizations, state agency representatives, business owners, farmers, social service agency representatives, policymakers, extension educators, community college representatives, BOCES and school district administrators, and other rural New Yorkers.

The listening sessions covered eleven policy theme areas:

- Agriculture & Food Systems
- Community Capacity & Social Networks
- Economic Development
- Energy
- Environment, Land Use, & Natural Resources
- Health Care
- Housing & Transportation
- Local & Regional Governance
- Poverty
- Schools & Youth
- Workforce Development

"This mixing of interest groups forced us to find words to describe what balances our interests, as we realize what conflicts."

— a listening session participant

"...there was a need to bring the listening session to the local level and give community members a chance to participate and have a voice."

— a listening session participant

Future of Rural New York Symposium

The listening sessions laid the foundation for discussions at a comprehensive **Future of Rural New York Symposium** held in Syracuse, New York, July 19-21, 2006. Nearly 200 participants representing a spectrum of rural New York constituencies met to establish a concrete working agenda for local and state policymakers and others.

Rural leaders within the New York State Legislature — Senator George H. Winner, Jr. and Assemblyman David Koon, Chair and Vice-Chair, respectively, of the Commission on Rural Resources — addressed participants at the opening of the Symposium and remained throughout the forum to work closely with the ten policy work groups. They were joined by two of their colleagues on the Commission, Senator William T. Stachowski and Assemblyman James Bacalles. The Commission and Cornell University extend a special thanks to participants and sponsors for their input and support.

Senator Winner stressed that "**we need a Rural New York Agenda that is embraced across the wide spectrum of New York government.** It's time to build on what has been accomplished over the last 20 years, with a fresh look as we embark into the 21st Century and the new challenges that face rural citizens and communities everywhere. **The work we do here is crucial. It's a blueprint for the future we envision.**"

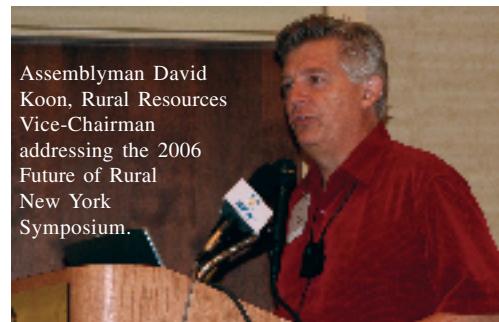
Assemblyman David Koon reinforced these remarks, stating that "Although we have lots of brainpower and energy, we have a lot of work to do and we as legislators have a lot of listening to do. And not just Rural Resources Commission members need to listen. **The problems faced by Upstate affect every other part of the state and all of our state and Federal representatives need to understand and help. You need to tell them about rural New York.**"

Senator Stachowski noted that "**many rural and urban problems are similar... it is often advisable to connect them in order to catch the support of urban legislators.**"

Assemblyman Bacalles stated that "**broadband access is crucial to the vitality and well-being of rural communities,** and small places will find it essential to act as part of a region in order to flourish."



Cornell University professor Max Pfeffer introducing the NYS Legislative Commission on Rural Resources panel. From left to right: Senator George H. Winner, Jr., Senator William T. Stachowski, Assemblyman David Koon and Assemblyman James Bacalles.



Future of Rural New York Symposium

The following pages depict the current state of rural New York through the lens of the many people who participated in the listening sessions and Symposium. The pages summarize and highlight the discussions at the regional listening sessions, as well as the priorities identified at July's **Future of Rural New York Symposium**.

The emerging rural vision presented herein represents the diverse opportunities and challenges of our state's unique regions. As participants at the listening sessions and Symposium urged, **rural development in New York in the 21st Century requires strong networks and partnerships, pride of place, solid citizen support, engaged Federal, state and local governments and non-governmental entities, and enhanced regional collaboration and coordination.**

"(it is) empowering to community individuals to provide input into (the) legislative process."
— a listening session participant

Rural development in New York in the 21st Century requires strong networks and partnerships, pride of place, solid citizen support, engaged Federal, state and local governments and non-governmental entities, and enhanced regional collaboration and coordination.



From left to right: Senator George H. Winner, Jr., Rural Resources Chairman; Cornell University Vice-Provost for Land Grant Affairs Ron Seeber; and David Thornburgh, Executive Director, Alliance for Regional Stewardship.



Symposium Workgroup



Symposium Workgroup

Agriculture & Food Systems

Agriculture remains a key component of successful rural communities and an important aspect of the desired "quality of life and state identity" for rural New York.



Regional Listening Sessions

Emerging opportunities and research needs include:

- Farmland protection and purchase of development rights (PDR).
- Alternative energy production.
- Look into successful models from other states.
- Loyalty to local foods (distribution/promotion through schools, institutions, groceries).
- Consistent labeling/ branding/ marketing for NY products.
- Cooperative efforts on various levels (farmer-to-farmer, farmer-to-community, regional).
- Issues of scale, cost-effectiveness, and efficiency (economies of scale).
- Support for small farms, start-up farms, intergenerational farm-transfer, youth ag. programs.

Emerging concerns and tensions include:

- Zoning, competing land uses, and increasing land prices.
- Farm labor shortages (lack of qualified and stable labor, entry-level labor).
- High cost of doing business (especially health care/insurance, tax structure).
- Aging farm population, with corresponding lack of opportunities for youth.
- Lack of infrastructure (local manufacturing facilities, value-added & small scale processing — local slaughterhouses, dairy plants, etc.).
- Disconnect and conflict between agricultural and residential uses, rural and urban populations (reflects lack of agriculture education and awareness).

Future of Rural New York Symposium

Identified Priorities:

- Education of citizens, consumers, public officials and farmers on critical agriculture and food issues to improve competitiveness and sustainability. Would lead to increased participation in local government by agricultural producers, create more opportunities for existing farmers, and reduce barriers to entry for new farmers.
- Greater connection of agricultural commodities to local markets for enhanced farm profitability and community wellness.
- Improved regulation, planning, research and development of food and agriculture systems for competitiveness & sustainability.
- Farmland protection. Continue/improve current programs.
- Increase consumption of locally produced agricultural products.
- Encourage county partnerships in regional agricultural development.

Community Capacity & Social Networks

Rural areas have a strong legacy of community involvement. Rural social networks exist in a wide range of both formal and informal sectors, including social service agencies, schools, 4-H, fire departments, churches, families and neighbors, and civic organizations.



Regional Listening Sessions

Emerging opportunities and research needs include:

- Increasing numbers of retirees present a strong potential volunteer base.
- Opportunities for youth – increase quality, not necessarily quantity.
- Establishment of community identity and pride; focus on what brings people together.
- Schools as community resources; integration of school and community.
- Rural spirit of volunteerism (need a better understanding of what motivates people).
- Creation of more inclusive and diverse social networks.
- Increased cooperation, communication, and pooling of resources.

Emerging concerns and tensions include:

- Isolation and segregation by socioeconomic status (rich vs. poor, haves vs. have-nots).
- Brain drain and associated challenges of youth engagement.
- Barriers to community involvement and volunteering.
- Parochialism and territorialism are outdated and restrictive.
- Trend of declining socialization and local interaction, at all ages.
- Changing social structures and values.
- Lack of infrastructure and funding support.

Future of Rural New York Symposium

Identified Priorities:

- Community capacity building and training, including state investment in professional staff support for capacity building.
- Community capacity issues should be included in school curriculum.
- Facilitation of connections and communications between and within governments and organizations, such as the use of advisory boards for planning, and the use of electronic communication (media, Internet).
- Appoint a Governor's Task Force to recommend ways to enhance overall civic participation and inclusiveness in rural areas.

Economic Development

To remain competitive, rural areas require access to essential services, resources, and infrastructure supportive of economic development.



Regional Listening Session

Emerging opportunities and research needs include:

- Small business incubation/development.
- Niche industry and niche markets (for both industry and agriculture).
- Cooperative efforts and regional coordination.
- Tourism (eco-tourism, agri-tourism, cultural tourism).
- Agriculture as form of economic development.
- Benefits of buying locally.

Emerging concerns and tensions include:

- Lack of telecommunications (e.g., high speed internet).
- Issues of taxation (on both an individual and business level).
- Empire Zone program, as currently structured.
- “The high cost of doing business” for small businesses.
- Is bigger always better?

Future of Rural New York Symposium

Identified Priorities:

- Improve broadband infrastructure and access through legislation and redirection of existing economic development resources.
- Initiate regional governance through legislation, including merging of services and incentives to those communities.
- Enhance ability to meet the credit needs of rural communities and small businesses through more responsive commercial lending services; enforce CRA (Community Reinvestment Act).
- Support microenterprise development at the local and regional level.
- Address the loss of skilled young people in many rural areas – limits economic development through reduced workforce.
- Coordinate & consolidate programs that support economic development.
- Empire State Development (ESD) programs — allocation/distribution of funding should funnel money into communities, not just large companies.
- Evaluate tax system with regard to local government.

Energy

Identifying specific sources of alternative energy in rural areas and evaluating the associated costs, benefits, and barriers has become a major focus.



Regional Listening Sessions

Emerging opportunities and research needs include:

- ➔ Opportunities to put underutilized agricultural land back into production by growing energy crops (biofuels production).
- ➔ Education of diverse audiences (landowners, consumers, producers, Army Corps of Engineers, k-12 and college).
- ➔ Decentralized, small scale, local production and locally owned energy facilities.
- ➔ Increasing energy efficiency through more sustainable communities (public transportation, green buildings, energy-saving products).
- ➔ Potential role of local business and employers.

Emerging concerns and tensions include:

- ➔ High current energy costs (i.e., “heat or eat”).
- ➔ Lack of hard data on cost efficiency and benefits of alternative energy (high up-front cost, short-term versus long-term expenses).
- ➔ Problems of infrastructure and distribution (current structure of the grid system).
- ➔ Confusion over availability of state incentives for energy efficient and alternative energy development.
- ➔ Potential role of local business and employers.

Future of Rural New York Symposium

Identified Priorities:

- ➔ Development of an inventory of renewable energy resources and markets.
- ➔ Creation of a pool of “**energy consultants**” to assist with conservation, project development, etc.
- ➔ Streamline state energy programs to make them more business and consumer friendly.
- ➔ Sharing resources between municipalities may help with energy efficiencies (e.g., purchasing of fuel).
- ➔ Improve “lobbying efforts” of rural NY for their interests (establish a Rural Energy Alliance).
- ➔ **Energy development in rural NY must be tied to Economic Development.**

Environment, Land Use & Natural Resources

The quality and diversity of the natural resources and environment in rural areas are strengths upon which communities can build their futures.



Regional Listening Session

Emerging opportunities and research needs include:

- ➔ Alternative energy (especially wind and biomass).
- ➔ Creative forms of tourism.
- ➔ Regional planning and policy building.
- ➔ Education.
- ➔ Connections between rural and urban.
- ➔ Agricultural preservation.

Emerging concerns and tensions include:

- ➔ Property taxes.
- ➔ Funding.
- ➔ Cultural conflicts (e.g., farm-neighbor conflicts, relocated urban vs. rural values).
- ➔ Zoning.
- ➔ Water and sewer systems.
- ➔ Loss of active rural landscape.

Future of Rural New York Symposium

Identified Priorities:

- ➔ Integrate Ag and farmland protection, natural resource protection, and environmental planning in a **multifaceted training and outreach curriculum**.
- ➔ Incorporate **sustainable land-use practices** as a contemporary theme into earth science and biology curricula.
- ➔ Include **Smart Growth principles** that protect farmland and downtown revitalization as selection criteria in developing grant applications.
- ➔ Reform **forest tax law** to keep land forested, in production, and out of development.
- ➔ Provide technical assistance/ education to local government institutions.
- ➔ Connect **land-use planning and transportation** (ties in with infrastructure recommendations).
- ➔ Provide funding and continuing education for **Timber Theft legislation** (training local law enforcement about timber theft).

Health Care

Long-range planning in rural health care is critical for the future development of rural areas and to the quality of life and well being of community members.



Regional Listening Session

Emerging opportunities and research needs include:

- Strong potential for tele-medicine (requires development of IT capacity and infrastructure).
- New paradigm of preventative care.
- School-based health clinics and services (as community health centers).
- Role of EMTs and other volunteers.
- Incentives within health care education system to encourage service to rural areas.
- Perceived long term benefits of investment in this area.

Emerging concerns and tensions include:

- Restrictive insurance, with cumbersome paperwork.
- Lack of public transportation greatly reduces access to services.
- Shortage of healthcare workers and emergency services volunteers.
- Lack of mental health services (particularly for youth).
- Cooperation vs. competition among rural hospitals.
- Health care for low income and working poor populations.
- Low Medicaid reimbursement rates restrict coverage and burden rural hospitals.

Future of Rural New York Symposium

Identified Priorities:

- **Provide affordable and accessible health care coverage.** Limited coverage options, opportunities and resources in rural areas and the link to multiple other patient/rural health system concerns.
- **Expand rural health networks.**
- **Develop statewide universal health care coverage** in seven to eight years. Include minimum standards of coverage, including prevention and behavioral health, eligibility criteria and mandatory enrollment.
- **Technology.** Address the lack of **high-speed internet access** by a State subsidy of a centralized or regionalized entity for broadband access, including legislation & financial incentives to encourage carriers to work together to provide universal access.
- **Expand distance learning, tele-health, regional electronic medical records and the continuing medical education access infrastructure.**
- **Address service reimbursement issues** for rural providers.
- **State Department of Health should promote wellness/prevention as a new health model.**

Housing and Transportation

Development of adequate housing and transportation infrastructure is core to the overall health of our rural communities. Access and affordability remain major concerns for both housing and transportation.



Regional Listening Session

Emerging opportunities and research needs include:

- ➔ Connections between housing and transportation demands.
- ➔ Alternatives to traditional public transportation.
- ➔ Exploration of new models (European models, New Urbanism principles).
- ➔ Opportunities for public/private partnerships.
- ➔ Changes in new housing development regulations.

Emerging concerns and tensions include:

- ➔ Aging and deteriorating housing stock.
- ➔ NIMBY-ism.
- ➔ Increasing property and land values.
- ➔ Gentrification, rural/urban conflict.
- ➔ Cost of services.

Future of Rural New York Symposium

Identified Priorities:

- ➔ Use of shared transportation assets among not-for-profit agencies to reduce redundancy in transportation services.
- ➔ Employment of regional transportation coordinators.
- ➔ Relaxation of state and federal agency based restrictions on human agency service providers to encourage sharing of vehicles and services.
- ➔ Increased state aid for rural transportation service providers, infrastructure repair, and for rural affordable housing.
- ➔ Generate awareness of available state, federal, and foundation resources through increased educational outreach initiatives.
- ➔ Local planning should address future development and tie it to adequate low income housing opportunities in rural communities which face urban gentrification and second home growth.

Local and Regional Governance

Rural local governments are generally perceived as being accessible and responsive to public input, but their traditional structure, functions and financing may also be less efficient and effective in providing the public services and community development capacity required in the 21st century.



Regional Listening Session

Emerging opportunities and research needs include:

- Sharing of models, best practices, mentoring, and case studies across regions.
- Education and training on government issues at multiple levels—local officials, citizens, youth, and state policy makers.
- Inter-municipal cooperation and consolidation of municipal services (e.g., highway departments, police forces, water and sewer services).
- Develop joint local and regional comprehensive plans and infrastructure.
- “Professionalization” of local government functions through appropriate training, especially management, finance, planning and development.
- Enhance citizen participation and leadership development.
- Develop strong linkages with economic development.

Emerging concerns and tensions include:

- Burdensome tax structure, especially financing multiple local government services with same property tax base.
- Duplication and uneven quality of services.
- Unfunded state mandates/regulations that are overwhelming local taxpayers.
- Slow response to change because of institutional and attitudinal barriers.
- Lack of regional cohesion in planning and zoning and economic development.
- Tension between consolidation and local knowledge/needs.
- Lack of infrastructure (e.g., high speed Internet, cell phone coverage) that hinders effective communication and economic development at local, regional and state level.

Future of Rural New York Symposium

Identified Priorities:

- Allocation of service functions consistent with the capacity of local governments to provide effectively and efficiently—fiscal, professional staffing, governance structure.
- Review and reform methods of financing local government and emergency services, including excessive reliance on property tax to support schools, town and village government; and property tax administration and exemptions.
- Mandatory tax relief.
- Improve local government management capacity through training, technical assistance and cooperation.
- Promotion of understanding of local government issues among citizens and elected officials with an emphasis on overcoming apathy and instilling a sense of community.

Schools and Youth

Rural schools fill an integral role as centers of the community and as a bridge for youth to connect with the broader society in fulfilling their dreams & ambitions.



Regional Listening Session

Emerging opportunities and research needs include:

- ➔ More effective use of school buildings as community resources.
- ➔ Development of flexible curriculum, with experiential, school-community collaborations and service learning opportunities.
- ➔ Local education for local needs, with increased awareness of local workforce development needs and career opportunities.
- ➔ Alternative funding models (reform tax structure).
- ➔ Integration of physical, mental, and emotional health (school-based health centers).
- ➔ Communication, collaboration, and resource-sharing between various levels of educational institutions.
- ➔ Community colleges as emerging resource.

Emerging concerns and tensions include:

- ➔ Overemphasis on Regents, standardized tests, and “teaching to the test.”
- ➔ Current phenomenon of “brain drain” and out migration.
- ➔ Mismatch between local needs/resources and current curriculum.
- ➔ Funding and taxation concerns (property taxes are ineffective).
- ➔ Devaluation of vocational and agricultural education (e.g., stigma, tracking of “college” vs. BOCES/CTE).
- ➔ Travel distance and lack of transportation (may be a disincentive for after-school activities and services).
- ➔ Lack of stable leadership.

Future of Rural New York Symposium

Identified Priorities:

- ➔ **View the school as community center; community as school** (i.e., shared resources). Include healthcare family education and counseling, shared broadband connection for computer labs and access by public.
- ➔ **Remove regulatory and liability barriers** to the use of school buildings as community centers and the sharing of transportation and other resources.
- ➔ Ensure **high quality education** leading to success in school, employment, and civic engagement. Include community colleges, increase recognition of technical programs, and promote pre-K literacy.
- ➔ **Integrate BOCES more into “mainstream” education.**
- ➔ Promote active learning through internships.
- ➔ Promote Adult continuing education.
- ➔ Address teacher retention issues and update hiring practices. Offer loan forgiveness as an incentive. Provide bonuses to specific content area teachers.
- ➔ Schools should **provide a bridge out of poverty**. Prenatal through age 5 programs are essential; consider year-round school to eliminate “summer set back”; provide tutoring and mentoring.
- ➔ Statewide solution that takes into account rural school children and taxpayer equity. **Equitable, Adequate, Flexible, Efficient Funding.**

Workforce Development

Changing demographic and employment structures in rural areas require a focus on workforce development and retention issues, including associated structural impediments.



Regional Listening Session

Emerging opportunities and research needs include:

- ➔ BOCES and community college opportunities.
- ➔ Entrepreneurship programs.
- ➔ Partnerships between local business and education (mentorships, internships, job shadowing, career fairs, etc.).
- ➔ Comprehensive local/regional needs assessments (i.e., agricultural education/workforce development needed in some areas).

Emerging concerns and tensions include:

- ➔ Funding.
- ➔ Lack of a living wage.
- ➔ Barriers to small businesses (both existing and start-up operations).
- ➔ Aging population and the out-migration of skilled workers, youth and recent college grads.
- ➔ Stigmas, labels, and negative perceptions –“lack of credibility in existing systems.”
- ➔ Displaced workers and economic adjustment.

Future of Rural New York Symposium

Identified Priorities:

- ➔ Create regional database-driven interactive websites which directly link & service all levels of education, business, personnel and prospective employees as well as human service agencies with regard to current and future workforce needs.
- ➔ Create a valid and reliable career readiness certification process for NYS utilizing Equipped For the Future and WorkKeys Assessments, which include soft skills and other regionally identified tracks (i.e., health care, retail, etc.).
- ➔ Create regional consortia of educational and training providers to identify and develop existing and required educational and training programs in concert with the other community stakeholders and their current and projected workforce needs.
- ➔ Secure a stable agricultural workforce through an examination of current immigration proposals and address language and cultural barriers that exist between immigrants and local communities.

Next Steps

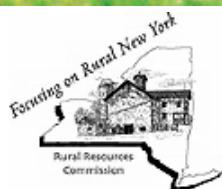
- The Rural Vision Partners recognize that the feedback from the regional listening sessions & the priorities identified at the statewide Symposium are not necessarily all encompassing and may require further clarification. We invite input at either the NYS LCRR e-mail at ruralres@senate.state.ny.us or 518-455-2544 (Senate) or 518-455-3999 (Assembly), or the Rural New York Initiative web site at <http://rnyi.cornell.edu>.
 - Not all identified priorities and proposals presented will require state legislative or regulatory action. Some initiatives will naturally fall within the province of local or regional entities, including non-governmental organizations, and state or Federal agencies to address.
 - The Rural Vision Initiative sponsors will engage in research and outreach activities with interested faculty, state and local stakeholders.
- The Commission on Rural Resources will draft legislative and/or regulatory proposals as appropriate in cooperation with legislative committees and state agencies, which will be reviewed with interested stakeholders for their input. It is anticipated that the Commission during the 2007 legislative session will introduce several such proposals.
 - Progress reports and updates on proposals are always available from the Commission through its newsletter and will also be posted on the Rural Vision Initiative web page at Cornell.
 - This publication is being distributed to the NYS Legislature, Governor and state agencies, local officials and citizens. It will also be published on the Rural New York Initiative website at <http://hosts.cce.cornell.edu/rnyi/>.



Rural Vision Initiative



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