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# CaRDI Reports

ISSUE NUMBER 11/FEBRUARY 2010

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## New York Communities 2009: A Year of CaRDI Publications



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## Preface

The following is the 2009 collection of two CaRDI publications: the Rural New York Minute and the Research & Policy Brief Series. Both publications were released monthly through June 2009. Starting in July 2009, we continued the monthly publications of the Minute, but moved to an every-other-month publication schedule of the Brief. In addition to the publications featured here, we also published four CaRDI Reports during the year. All CaRDI publications are available on our website at [www.cardi.cornell.edu](http://www.cardi.cornell.edu).

The CaRDI publications are an important vehicle for connecting Cornell University researchers and their work on community and economic development issues with stakeholders across New York State and beyond. The publications may be reprinted in community newspapers, published in organizations' newsletters, forwarded via listservs, and used as teaching tools in schools and elsewhere. It is our hope that these publications provide evidence-based research to inform decision-making at the local, regional, and state level. We strive to foster a productive dialogue around these and other issues and to strengthen our relationships with stakeholders across the state.

If you have any questions or comments about these publications, please contact Robin Blakely at [rmb18@cornell.edu](mailto:rmb18@cornell.edu) or 607-254-6795



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# rural new york minute

ISSUE NUMBER 25/JANUARY 2009

## The Changing Demographic Profile of Rural Areas\*

By **Annabel Kirschner** (Washington State University), **E. Helen Berry** (Utah State University) and **Nina Glasgow** (Cornell University)

The demographic profile of rural and small town America has changed rapidly and significantly in recent decades. The continued out-migration of increasingly educated young adults, the in-migration of ethnic minorities, and the growing numbers of retirees, have resulted in rural communities where residents are older, more ethnically diverse, and more likely to be female than in the recent past. These changes have transformed rural economies and are influencing a range of public policies.

### Age

Since the 1960s, the nonmetropolitan or rural population has aged more rapidly than the urban or metropolitan population. In 2000, the median age in nonmetro counties was nearly 4 years older than the metro population. This more rapid aging is due to three important trends:

- Throughout the 20th century, young adults have migrated disproportionately from rural to urban areas for education and employment.
- Higher rural birth rates, which historically offset youth out-migration, declined more rapidly for rural than urban women beginning in the 1960s, and both rates have converged at "below-replacement" levels.
- Since the 1970s, a steadily increasing number of older persons seeking natural amenities or retirement destinations have moved to a growing number of rural areas.

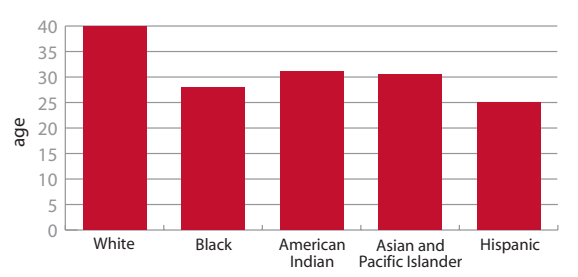
There has been a widespread percentage decline of rural youth and young adults under age 35 in all regions except in the West, an exception due to immigration and its effects. At the other end of the age continuum, the 75 and older population grew in all regions, but the 65-74 year-old population – the age group born during the Great Depression when birth rates were extremely low – declined. The baby boom, represented by 35 to 54 year olds, grew the fastest of all age groups in the last decade. By 2010, this group will fall into the 45 to 64 age group. Even without retirement in-migration, the very size of this group sets the stage for a rapid increase in older adults in nonmetro areas.

### Ethnic Diversity

Rural areas have always had regions of great diversity: the Black population in the rural South; Native American populations and reservations in the rural West and Southwest; and a Mexican heritage population in the Southwest which was once part of Mexico. These historical sources of diversity have been augmented by natural increase and by immigration, especially in the last decade as rural industries increasingly hire foreign-born workers to do low-skilled jobs. In every region, the non-Hispanic White population grew more slowly than any other major racial/ethnic group during the last decade.

Many rural areas have recently witnessed a rapid growth in diversity, especially in local school systems. This is because the median age of the non-White population is 10 to 15 years lower than that of the White population (see Figure 1). The non-White population will inevitably grow faster because a larger proportion is in its childbearing years, has somewhat higher fertility, and is experiencing higher rates of immigration in rural areas. Rural areas that are currently experiencing more rapid

**Figure 1: Median Age by Race, Nonmetro Counties 2000**



Source: U. S. Census Bureau, Census 2000.

growth in the non-White population can expect to see this continue for the foreseeable future.

### Gender

An important factor of aging rural populations is the female-male life expectancy gap. Because women live about 4 years longer than men, rural areas that age will become increasingly female. In 2000, almost two thirds of the rural population age 75 and older was female. Rural places have long been thought of as being dominated by males and by male occupations. In fact, the proportion of men relative to women in nonmetro places declined for 40 years but then increased between 1990 and 2000.

### Policy Considerations

Many rural communities will confront public policy issues related to their bifurcated populations of increasingly older, non-Hispanic White, female native residents, and younger, minority, male newcomers, many of whom will bring or start families with young children. This generation gap and, to a lesser extent, gender gap is reinforced by a culture gap of differing languages and backgrounds. It is important to ensure that all segments of the population are included in community decisions and that all benefit from community services. Cooperation and understanding between all segments of the population will enhance the viability of rural areas. Without such cooperation, many rural areas will confront increasing rates of poverty, failing education systems and increasing social tension. ▲

\*For More Information: See Chapter 3, "Changing Faces of Rural America," by Annabel Kirschner, E. Helen Berry and Nina Glasgow in William Kandel and David L. Brown (Eds.), *Population Change and Rural Society in the 21st Century*.

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- Glasgow, N. (2000). Rural/urban patterns of aging and caregiving in the United States. *Journal of Family Issues*, 21, 611-631.
- Krout, J. A. (1998). Services and service delivery in rural environments. In R. T. Coward & J. A. Krout (Eds.), *Aging in rural settings: Life circumstances and distinctive features* (pp. 247-266). New York: Springer.



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# rural new york minute

ISSUE NUMBER 26/FEBRUARY 2009

## Health Care Reform – What do New Yorkers Think? (Part 1)

By Kosali Simon and William White, Cornell University\*

Health care reform continues to be a major policy issue in the United States. Understanding the views of residents and employers is a vital aspect of sound public policy formulation. In this Rural New York Minute, we draw on recent research to examine New York State resident's views on health insurance reform. In the upcoming March issue, we will consider employers' views.

In a study funded by the New York State Health Foundation, we used the Cornell University's Empire State Poll (ESP), to survey 800 randomly selected NYS households (400 downstate and 400 upstate) about their views on healthcare reform. We supplemented the ESP with a random telephone survey of 300 rural households and because the ESP is based on land-line exchange numbers, also conducted a survey of 100 randomly selected cell phone users. In addition, four focus groups were conducted with NYS residents, three in upstate NY and one in downstate.

Residents were asked their opinions about the importance of health care reform, specific types of reforms and their willingness to pay for reform. Summarizing our findings:

### 1) Health Care and Health Insurance Issues are Important to NYS Residents

- Nearly 93% of residents interviewed thought it was extremely (59%) or very important (33%) that New York's government leaders work to reduce the cost of health care and health insurance; under 2% thought it was not important.
- 52% thought it was extremely important and 37% very important for New York's government leaders to work to reduce the number of uninsured New Yorkers.

### 2) Most NYS Residents Favor Expanding Public Health Insurance Coverage

- Some 82% of New York residents favored some form of expanded coverage for families whose incomes are above 100 percent of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL).
- Almost 41% of residents favored expanding coverage for everyone regardless of income level, another 7% favored coverage for persons who made up to 400 percent of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL), 16% 250 percent and 19% up to 150 percent of the FPL.
- Only 18% overall felt coverage should be limited to families at 100 percent of the FPL or less. Support was lower in rural areas where only 29% of residents favored coverage for all, and almost 23% favored coverage only at or below 100 percent of the FPL.

### 3) NYS Residents' Support for Specific Reforms Varied

- New Yorkers do not support Employer Mandates. Almost 60% of residents in the ESP sample opposed them, although there was a small margin of support among our sample of cell phone users (53%).
- In contrast, some 77% of residents in the ESP sample strongly or somewhat strongly favored a Shared Responsibility model that mandated coverage for everyone. In this case employers would be required to provide coverage for employees, employees would pay part of the premium, and the government would use tax revenues to cover the poor not insured through an employer. Support was also substantial among cell phone users (73%), while support was somewhat lower in the rural sample (65%).
- More than 2/3 of NYS residents (67%) favor offering High Deductible Plans as an option to reduce the number of uninsured.
- There was broad support among survey responders for a Single Payer model to cover the uninsured, favoring a Medicare-like system for all.
- When issues were explored in more depth in focus groups, many participants expressed concerns about the possible implications of reforms for government bureaucracy, the role of private insurers and taxes.

### 4) Residents Indicate Substantial Willingness-to-Pay for Reform.

- More than 4/5 of New York residents report some degree of willingness to pay higher taxes for reforms that would reduce the uninsured, while more than 3/5 report willingness to pay at least \$50 a year to partially reduce the numbers of uninsured.

## Conclusions

Our findings indicate health care costs and coverage are big concerns in New York State. Many feel that public coverage should be expanded to reduce the number of uninsured residents, and they are willing to pay higher taxes for such reforms. Moreover, residents are open to a range of possible solutions, although support varies by type and in particular, many express caution about employer mandates. Focus groups suggest some common concerns with government bureaucracy, the role of private insurers and costs in implementing reforms.

\*For the full report, please see <http://www.nyshealthfoundation.org/content/document/detail/1293/>



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# rural new york minute

ISSUE NUMBER 27/MARCH 2009

## Health Care Reform – What do New Yorkers Think? (Part 2)

By **Kosali Simon** and **William White**, Cornell University\*

Last month we presented findings on what New York State residents thought about health care reform. In this issue, we consider employers' opinions on this important issue. Examining employer views enables us to paint a more comprehensive picture of public opinion about NYS's health care reform options.

In the spring of 2008, a random sample of 475 New York State private employers was surveyed via telephone by the Cornell Survey Research Institute (SRI). Firms were stratified by the number of workers they employ. All survey questions were asked at the establishment level (a firm can comprise of one or more establishments). In addition, we conducted four focus groups with owners of small business (25 employees or less). Three of these were conducted in upstate NY (Buffalo, Ithaca and Rochester) and one in downstate (Brooklyn).

Employers were asked whether they provided healthcare coverage, why or why not, and their opinions about possible reform options. Summarizing our findings:

### 1) Health Insurance Offerings Vary Substantially by Firm Size. Employers Report Cost is a Major Factor in Not Offering Coverage:

- Over 96% of establishments belonging to firms with more than 50 employees offer their workers health insurance. However, reflecting nationwide patterns, the share falls to 88% for medium size firms (10-49 employees) and to 45% for small firms (9 or fewer workers).
- For all firm sizes, establishments that do not offer health insurance report that high premiums are a key factor in their decision.

### 2) Employers Believe They Bear Some Responsibility for Health Insurance Coverage, but They are Divided About Solely Taxing Firms to Pay for it:

- Employers of all firm sizes agree strongly or somewhat strongly that they bear some responsibility for providing health insurance to their workers. This ranges from 72% for small firms to 79% for medium firms and 88% for large firms. Employers also agree that individuals above the poverty level should bear some responsibility for buying insurance. This ranges from 79% for small and medium firms to 87% for large firms.
- Employers are more divided on solely taxing employers to pay for this coverage. A special concern was the potential increase in the tax burdens on smaller employers.

### 3) Employers Are Also Divided about Subsidized or Free Public Insurance Coverage.

- Almost half (49%) of small-size firms, 61% of medium firms, and 56% of large firms agreed strongly or somewhat strongly that they would offer coverage if employees whose income is less than 400% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) could be enrolled in "Family Health Plus". They are willing to subsidize this program.
- Some 72% of small firm establishments, 78% of medium firm establishments, and 81% of large firm establishments said they would not reduce coverage if there was legislation passed enabling people at less than 300% FPL to obtain free insurance.
- However, 53% of small firms, 63% of medium firms, and 52% of large firm establishments said such a program would change the way they ran their insurance program. Close to a third also said it would affect decisions about giving raises to workers near the income threshold, and that they would change their eligibility rules for health insurance.

### Discussion:

In our previous article, we reported that New York State residents support expanding public health insurance eligibility. They place health care costs and lack of insurance coverage high on their list of concerns for policy makers. On the employers' side, health insurance coverage in New York State varies sharply with firm size as it does nationwide, and among those firms without coverage, employers most commonly cite high costs as a key factor in the decision not to offer coverage.

While findings indicate most employers believe that firm's share responsibility for providing healthcare coverage, they also suggest proposals to solely tax firms to pay for coverage are likely to meet with mixed support. Findings also suggest that while expanding public coverage to more low income workers might not cause employers to drop coverage outright for all their workers, it is likely to lead them to alter how they do business. Possible indirect responses including changes in eligibility criteria and decisions about pay increases indicate that it is important to carefully consider the likely consequences of legislation on firm behavior across a range of dimensions and not simply whether they offer any health insurance coverage.

\*To see the full report, go to <http://www.nyshealthfoundation.org/content/document/detail/1293/>



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# rural new york minute

ISSUE NUMBER 28/APRIL 2009

## Are Both Parents Always Better Than One? Parental Conflict and Young Adult Well-Being.\*

By **Kelly Musick** (Cornell University) and **Ann Meier** (University of Minnesota)

### What is the Issue?

Growing up without both parents is associated with a host of poor child outcomes, such as higher poverty rates and lower levels of educational and occupational attainment. Compared to children living with their married, biological parents, children in single-parent and stepparent families also report greater substance use and risk-taking behavior, such as smoking, drinking, and drug use. They are more likely to have sex at an early age, to be young and unmarried when they form their families, and to experience the dissolution of their own romantic relationships.

Most work on families and the well-being of children treat married, two-parent families as the baseline against which other family types are compared. But this masks differences *within* married-parent families. In particular, studies show that children whose parents often argue fare worse than those whose parents get along. But how do children living with married parents who frequently argue fare compare to children living with single-parents or stepfamilies?

### How we conducted the study

We compare child outcomes across single-parent, stepparent, and high conflict married-parent families. We examine a range of outcomes covering various dimensions of children's development and well-being in young adulthood. Our work relies on new data from the National Survey of Families and Households (N=1,963), which includes prospective data from multiple members of the same family over time.

We examine indicators of young adult well-being in the areas of schooling (high school dropout, poor grades, no college), substance use (smoking, binge drinking, marijuana use), and family-related transitions (first sex by age 16, cohabitation by age 21, nonmarital childbearing, and relationship dissolution). Changes in these domains mark the transition into adulthood, and their timing and sequencing are important for success later in life. We relate children's adolescent family experiences to these outcomes, which are assessed when children are in their teens to early thirties.

### What we found

Our results clearly illustrate that the advantages of living with two continuously married parents are not shared equally by all children. Children from high conflict families (compared to low conflict families) have an increased likelihood of 8 of 10 of our outcomes: dropping out of school, poor grades, smoking, binge drinking, marijuana use, early sex, non-marital fertility, and union dissolution (see Table 1). Parental conflict appears not to be associated with college attendance or early cohabitation. For half of our outcomes, associations with parental conflict are statistically indistinguishable from those with stepfather and single mother-families. Differences are signifi-

cant in five cases: dropping out of school, not attending college, binge drinking, early sex, and early cohabitation. In these cases, except for binge drinking, the risks associated with high conflict are between 25-50% *lower* than those associated with stepfather or single-mother families. The odds of binge drinking are about a third *higher* for children from high conflict families compared to single-mother families.

**Table 1:** Averages on key outcomes, by family type.

Outcomes	All	Continuously Married			Stepfather	Single
		Low conflict	Medium conflict	High conflict		
High school dropout	0.12	0.06	0.08	0.12	0.19	0.25
Poor grades	0.22	0.18	0.18	0.24	0.23	0.28
No college	0.37	0.31	0.32	0.34	0.46	0.52
Smoking	0.31	0.24	0.27	0.33	0.38	0.38
Binge drinking	0.35	0.29	0.38	0.42	0.32	0.32
Marijuana use	0.24	0.20	0.24	0.25	0.29	0.25
Early sex	0.20	0.15	0.14	0.22	0.29	0.28
Early cohabitation	0.20	0.14	0.17	0.17	0.31	0.34
Nonmarital fertility	0.09	0.06	0.07	0.10	0.15	0.16
Union disruption	0.40	0.32	0.38	0.41	0.43	0.57

Source: National Survey of Families and Households (N=1,963)\*.

### Conclusions

Should parents stay together for the sake of the children? While children tend to fare better with both married parents, we find that high conflict married, stepfather, and single-mother families are more similar than different in the outcomes examined and, where there are differences, they are not uniformly in one direction. The findings are consistent with recent research that shows that although marriage confers benefits to adults on average, those in poor quality marriages are no better off than the single and, indeed, may fare worse on some measures. But how parents manage disagreement may be a key factor in children's perceptions of conflict and thus how they are affected by conflict. Incorporating, for example, how often disagreements become angry and violent, or how often parents reach resolutions or offer reassurances to children, may lead to better estimates of the associations between parental conflict and child well-being. We conclude with the perhaps obvious point that marriage is not a blanket prescription for the well-being of children, any more than it is for the well-being of adults. Recent policy initiatives to promote marriage need to take account of how variation within marriage relates to child well-being. ▲

\*Please visit <http://papers.ccpr.ucla.edu/papers/PWP-CCPR-2008-022/PWP-CCPR-2008-022.pdf> for the full report including citations and references



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# rural new york minute

ISSUE NUMBER 29/MAY 2009

## The Reluctant Rural Warriors

By **Patrick J. Carr**, Rutgers University– New Brunswick and **Maria J. Kefalas**, Saint Joseph's University

Nationally, less than 2 percent of young people between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five are on active military duty, yet a recent report by the Carsey Institute finds that a significantly larger share of the young people fighting and dying in Iraq and Afghanistan come from rural America ([http://www.carseyinstitute.unh.edu/publications/FS\\_ruralsoldiers\\_06.pdf](http://www.carseyinstitute.unh.edu/publications/FS_ruralsoldiers_06.pdf)). Why do rural youth have such high military enlistment rates?

The short answer to this question is that for many rural youth, enlisting in the military is very often the only real opportunity they have to leave their communities, particularly if they hold only a high-school diploma. In our book *Hollowing Out the Middle: The Rural Brain Drain and What it Means for America*, we explore the reasons behind the rural youth exodus. Though the youth profiled hail from Iowa, the stories these young Midwesterners tell resonate with the experiences of small-town young adults in rural New York State and across the nation. We found that enlisting represents the best, and possibly the only escape, out of the region's faltering farm and factory based economy.

Most youth headed to the military are not destined for college—not because they don't want a degree, but because their parents can't afford it. They might lack the grades and money to attend the best colleges, but they have no desire to settle into married life with their high-school sweetheart or get a job that may well be the same job they have when they retire. In indepth interviews, young people in rural Iowa told us that in old age, when they reflect on their lives, they don't want to regret missed opportunities: not seeing the rest of the country or the world, never taking a plane or seeing the ocean.

Given the economic downturn of most rural areas and in the face of record-long deployments, "enlistment bonuses" have become one of the recruiters' most powerful aids in convincing young recruits to sign up. For an eighteen-year-old soon-to-be high-school graduate from a small town, how long would it take to get \$20,000 in cash? Young people heading off to war engage in a cost-benefit calculus when thinking about whether to put themselves in harm's way or not. They weigh what they can do if they stay in their small towns against the military's promises and possibilities, and they are realistic about the very real risks that military service brings today. With the declining employment base in many rural areas, the military's appeal for rural youth armed with only a high diploma has never been greater. The Army promises



volunteers housing, travel, health care, and a pension if enlistees put in the years. And with every month they serve in combat, they earn more tuition dollars for a college degree and combat bonuses which, for first time recruits, can be thousands of dollars.

Though recruitment strategies have changed with time, and the draft hasn't been in place during the lifetimes of today's recruits, the tradition of military service for young rural adults endures as a time-honored rite of passage as familiar as homecoming and the senior prom. In many rural areas, the military has long been the small-town equivalent of an emergency exit. The young people we call "Seekers" long to experience the world, but, crucially, since they often lack their college-bound peers' academic and economic assets, breaking free of their small town is most easily accomplished via the military. With rare exceptions, their stepping stone for leaving will not be a college degree. For the "Seekers", enlisting may be the only way out. ▲

National Priorities Project, (2008) *Military Recruiting 2006*. Retrieved November 21, 2008 <http://www.nationalpriorities.org/Publications/Military-Recruiting-2006.html>. The report shows how the recruiting and advertising budget includes Department of Defense spending on operating the recruiting stations and advertising. The budget rose to \$1.5 billion in 2005 and surpassed \$1.8 billion in the 2007 fiscal year. However, that amount does not include the pay and benefits of 22,000 military recruiters and recruiting-related spending such as enlistment bonuses used to entice new recruits.



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# rural new york minute

ISSUE NUMBER 30/JUNE 2009

## For New Yorkers, it's all about the Economy

By Robin M. Blakely and Andrea C. Elmore, Cornell University

### What is the Issue?

The current recession has had dramatic impacts across the globe. Upstate New York, which has been weathering economic woes of its own for decades, has not been spared. After a decades-long social and economic transformation that left the upstate region in a particularly weak economic position, this recent slump has produced a massive state budget deficit as well as rising unemployment. New York City has traditionally been viewed as the economic engine of the state, yet it too has taken a severe hit, particularly in the financial services sector.

How do New Yorkers rank economic issues in relation to other concerns? How do upstate urban residents compare with their downstate counterparts? What do rural New Yorkers consider important? And, have these views changed over the past year?

To answer these questions we examine data from the 2008 and 2009 Empire State Poll, an annual telephone survey of NYS residents conducted each February by the Survey Research Institute at Cornell University. Specifically, we contrast survey responses to the following questions: "In your opinion, what do you think is the single most important issue facing *your community* as a whole?" and "In your opinion, what do you think is the single most important issue facing *New York State* as a whole?"

### Important Community Issues

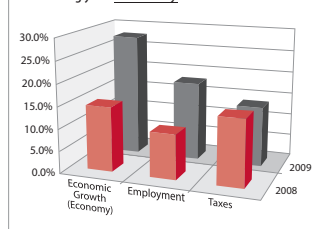
New Yorkers identified Taxes, Economic Growth, and Employment as the most important issues affecting their communities in 2008 (see Figure 1 and Table 1). These three issues were by far the most frequently cited out of fifteen different issues recorded. In 2009, almost twice the proportion of respondents identified Economic Growth as the most important issue. Employment also increased in importance, while the importance of taxes remained relatively stable. Downstate urban residents were much less likely than their upstate urban or rural counterparts to identify Employment as a concern in both time periods,

whereas Upstate urban residents were the most likely to identify Economic Growth in 2009. Upstate urban and rural residents were about twice as likely as downstate urban residents to identify Taxes in both years.

**Table 1:** In your opinion, what is the most important issue facing your community as a whole? By geographic residence category, 2008 and 2009.\*

	NY State		Downstate Urban		Upstate Urban		Rural	
	2008	2009	2008	2009	2008	2009	2008	2009
Economic Growth (Economy)	14.7%	27.7%	11.0%	26.1%	19.8%	34.0%	21.3%	26.2%
Employment	10.1%	17.9%	7.5%	13.9%	12.6%	23.6%	15.4%	25.9%
Taxes	15.1%	13.6%	10.4%	9.9%	24.3%	18.7%	21.7%	20.3%
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>39.9%</b>	<b>59.2%</b>	<b>28.9%</b>	<b>49.9%</b>	<b>56.7%</b>	<b>76.3%</b>	<b>58.4%</b>	<b>72.4%</b>

**Figure 1:** In your opinion, what is the most important issue facing your community as a whole? NYS Totals\*

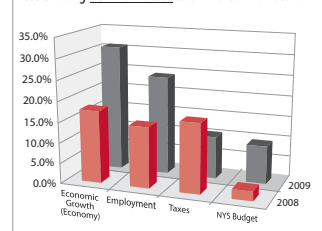


### Important State Issues

When asked about issues facing New York State as a whole, the responses shifted somewhat. In 2008, Economic Growth, Taxes, and Employment were again the top three issues identified, but by 2009 the relative proportion of respondents identifying these issues had shifted dramatically (see Figure 2 and Table 2). In addition, the NYS Budget was a fourth issue that ranked close in importance to Taxes in 2009. The percentages of New Yorkers who identified Economic Growth and Employment increased significantly between 2008 and 2009, Taxes declined in relative importance over the time period, whereas the proportion identifying the NYS Budget as the most important issue almost quadrupled. Of all New Yorkers, downstate urban residents were more likely to identify Economic Growth and Employment as the major issues facing NYS, although these issues were still significant for their upstate urban and rural counterparts. Upstate urban and rural respondents were significantly more

likely than downstate urbanites to identify taxes as a major issue facing the state, and were somewhat more likely to identify the NYS Budget.

**Figure 2:** In your opinion, what is the most important issue facing New York State as a whole? NYS Totals\*



**Table 2:** In your opinion, what is the most important issue facing New York State as a whole? By geographic residence category, 2008 and 2009.\*

	NY State		Downstate Urban		Upstate Urban		Rural	
	2008	2009	2008	2009	2008	2009	2008	2009
Economic Growth (Economy)	17.7%	30.7%	16.8%	34.9%	18.0%	24.6%	17.0%	23.8%
Employment	14.9%	24.1%	15.2%	26.9%	14.6%	18.5%	15.0%	20.9%
Taxes	17.0%	10.5%	9.4%	3.1%	29.2%	21.8%	30.4%	23.8%
NYS Budget	2.4%	9.4%	2.4%	7.7%	1.7%	11.8%	3.3%	12.2%
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>52.0%</b>	<b>74.7%</b>	<b>43.8%</b>	<b>72.6%</b>	<b>63.5%</b>	<b>76.7%</b>	<b>65.7%</b>	<b>80.7%</b>

### Conclusions

According to these data from the Empire State Poll, New Yorkers are increasingly concerned about economic challenges such as economic growth, employment, taxes, and the state budget. Downstate urbanites, in particular, show markedly increased concern since just last year about these economic issues, although upstate urban and rural residents point to the same issues as critical. And, while upstate urbanites view economic growth and employment as particularly vital issues to their communities, downstate urban residents are more apt to see these issues as significant for the state as a whole. ▲

\* Sources for data in the Tables and Figures is the Cornell University Empire State Poll and CARDI Rural Survey, 2008 and 2009.



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# rural new york minute

ISSUE NUMBER 31/JULY 2009

## Latino In-Migration among Counties in Decline<sup>1</sup>

By **Ronald L. Mize** (Cornell University), **Aditi Mehta** (M.I.T.), **Sarah Heath Olesiuk** (Boston College), and **Elias Saba** (University of Pennsylvania)

### What is the Issue?

Latinos increased their share of the U.S. population from 12.5 percent to 14.7 percent between 2000 and 2006 (U.S. Bureau of the Census), making them the nation's largest ethnic minority. Latino migration to the United States is often to rural areas with declining population. Many counties across the country, including some in upstate New York, would be experiencing much more significant population losses without this in-migration.

In 2006, Latinos comprised 16.2 percent of New York's population, an increase from 15.1 percent just six years prior (U.S. Census Bureau). Recent analysis of NYS counties by Eberts and Merschrod<sup>2</sup> demonstrate a marked growth in the Latino population in rural counties associated with the employment of migrant farmworkers. The Hudson and Champlain Valleys as well as the Central and Western rural regions of the state are the main receiving areas of Latino immigrants. While NYS counties have not seen the exponential growth rates experienced in areas such as the rural South and Midwestern U.S., the impacts from in-migration have nonetheless been significant. As communities undergo these marked demographic changes, the integration of new immigrants and the adequate delivery of services present serious challenges.

### In-Migration and Population Loss

Increased Latino in-migration into upstate New York counties occurs at a time of overall population declines in many communities. Between 1990 and 2000, while total population decreased in about half of NYS counties (all upstate), the Latino population decreased in only seven. And, for twenty counties in NYS, the Latino population increased while the total population decreased (see Figure 1).

The twenty counties that exhibit this pattern (increasing Latino population concurrent with total population decreases) are spread along the Southern Tier, Western, East Central (Mohawk Valley) and Central NY (Syracuse MSA) regions of the state (see Map 1). About half the counties are considered non-metropolitan, the other half are metropolitan. Latino population increases between 1990 and 2000 range from just nine percent in Schoharie County to eighty-six percent in Schenectady County. Among this group of counties, Broome County experienced the most significant relative population loss over the time period (five percent), yet increased its Latino population by sixty-one percent.

While some of the Latino population increases are significant *percentage-wise*, in many cases they represent relatively small *numerical* increases. For example, Seneca County had 363 persons of Hispanic origin in 1990. Ten years later, this number had increased to 659 (U.S. Census Bureau). While this represents an eighty-two percent increase over the decade, Latinos comprise only two percent of the total county population. This increase of Latinos in Seneca County occurred as the county as a whole *lost* 341 people (total county population declined from 33,683 in 1990 to 33,342 in 2000). These increases in the Latino population serve to offset larger overall population losses fueled primarily by White, non-Hispanic population decreases in many counties.

<sup>1</sup> This research was funded by USDA Hatch Grant 2005-06-044 (2005-2008).

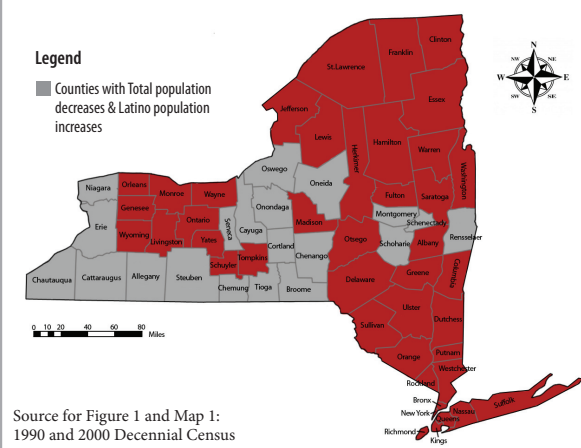
<sup>2</sup> Eberts, Paul and Chris Merschrod. (2004). *Socioeconomic Trends and Well-Being Indicators in New York State, 1950-2000*. Albany: New York State Legislative Commission on Rural Resources.

**Table 1:** Change in Total Population and Latino Population, NYS (1990-2000)

County	% Change in Population		County	% Change in Population	
	Total	Latino		Total	Latino
Allegany*	-1%	45%	Niagara	0%	39%
Broome	-5%	61%	Oneida	-6%	30%
Cattaraugus*	0%	48%	Onondaga	-2%	55%
Cayuga*	0%	34%	Oswego	0%	37%
Chautauqua*	-2%	46%	Rensselaer	-1%	73%
Chemung	-4%	12%	Schenectady	-2%	86%
Chenango*	-1%	15%	Schoharie	-1%	9%
Cortland*	-1%	26%	Seneca*	-1%	82%
Erie	-1%	40%	Steuben*	0%	54%
Montgomery*	-4%	27%	Tioga	-1%	39%

\*non-metropolitan counties

**Map 1:** Change in Total Population and Latino Population, NYS (1990-2000)



Source for Figure 1 and Map 1:  
1990 and 2000 Decennial Census

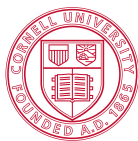
### Conclusion

New York State communities will inevitably change as a result of new migration patterns. Indeed, as many communities experience declines in the White, non-Hispanic population, continued Latino in-migration will result in a dramatically altered demographic profile. These changing demographic conditions translate into new opportunities and challenges for local communities. For more information on this topic, please see CaRDI's publication "Community Response to Immigrants in New Destinations," by Pfeffer and Parra, at: <http://devsoc.cals.cornell.edu/cals/devsoc/outreach/cardi/publications/upload/11-2008-RPB.pdf>.



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# rural new york minute

ISSUE NUMBER 32/AUGUST 2009

## The Power of Peer Learning Programs in Natural Resources\*

By Shorna Broussard Allred and Gary Goff, Cornell University

### What is the Issue?

There are 614,000 owners of over 11 million acres of private forestland in New York State (NYS) (Butler 2008). While a variety of outreach programs help owners manage their woodlands sustainably, insufficient fiscal and human resources exist to reach all owners. Some woodland owners are either unaware of or do not take advantage of the educational programs, resources, incentives, and professional advice available to them. Without the benefit of these outreach and education resources, owners may conduct forest management practices that have harmful economic or environmental consequences.

Peer learning is one way to extend traditional outreach and education programs. Peer learning involves voluntary, non-hierarchical learning between and among people who belong to similar social groups and who are not professionally trained as teachers. Peer-to-peer learning presents opportunities for participant leadership, empowerment, and information exchange. Some advantages of peer learning are its cost-effectiveness, improved communication, awareness, and empowerment among peers involved, and the complementary relationship to formal educational settings. However, little is known about its impact and the extent to which it adds value to existing programs such as those aimed at private woodland owners.

### Peer Learning for NYS Woodland Owners

NYS's peer learning program for woodland owners is the NYS Master Forest Owner (MFO) Volunteer program.<sup>1</sup> MFO Volunteers provide a local and accessible source of information about forestry and can serve as an important link among other woodland owners. The program trains owners in the principles of forest stewardship to better equip them to manage their own woodlands and to motivate other woodland owners to become actively involved in the management of their forestland. A four-day (40 hour) training is required to become a certified MFO Volunteer. Upon graduating, they conduct "woodswalks" with other forest owners, collaborate with agencies and organizations on forestry educational events, and prepare forestry articles for media outlets.

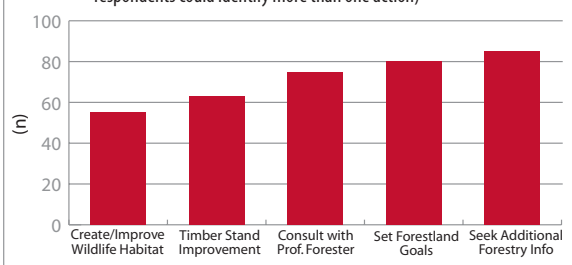
### Are Peer Discussions Related to Action?

In May of 2008 a survey was mailed to 584 forestland owners throughout NYS who had participated in on-site visits of the New York MFO/COVERTS Program between 1999 and 2008 (with a response rate of 56 percent). On-site visits consist of "woodswalks" where the MFO Volunteer visits another woodland owner's property or vice versa.<sup>2</sup> Woodland owners were asked whether they took action based in part on their discussion with the MFO Volunteer.

1 The New York Master Forest Owner (MFO) Volunteer program was instituted in 1991 with the goal of training woodland owners in the principles of forest stewardship to better equip them to manage their own woodlands and also to motivate other woodland owners to become actively involved in their forestland ([www.cornellmfo.info](http://www.cornellmfo.info))

2 Master Forest Owner (MFO) Volunteers are requested to send the Program Director a report containing the names and addresses of landowners for all on-site visits conducted. Please visit the Human Dimensions of Natural Resources website ([www.dnr.cornell.edu/hdru](http://www.dnr.cornell.edu/hdru)) for 2 reports on peer learning among woodland owners (HDRU Series No. 09-6 and HDRU Series No. 09-7)

**Figure 1:** Top 5 actions of woodland owners due, in part, to interaction with a NYS Master Forest Owner Volunteer. (based on 270 completed surveys - respondents could identify more than one action)



Source: Broussard Allred, S., Goff, G., Wetzel, L., and M. Luo. 2009. An Evaluation of the NY Master Forest Owner Volunteer Program: Survey of Woodland Owners Visited by a NY Master Forest Owner Volunteer. Cornell University Human Dimensions Research Unit, HDRU Series No. 09-7, June 2009, 39p.

Strong relationships between specific discussion topics and action steps were noted, suggesting the program's efficacy. Woodland owners reported that, as a result of these discussions with the MFO Volunteers, they were most likely to: seek additional information on forestry, set goals for their forestland, meet with a professional forester, conduct a timber stand improvement, and/or improve wildlife habitat (see Figure 1).

In addition to these action steps, almost 16 percent of woodland owners visited by a NYS MFO prepared a management plan for their forest, over triple the national average of 3.7 percent, and nearly 10 times more than the state average of 1.7 percent.<sup>3</sup> Thirty-one percent indicated that they benefited economically from actions they took as a result of advice given by a MFO Volunteer.

### Conclusions

Peer learning programs, as a complement to traditional outreach and education programs, can produce beneficial outcomes for NYS forestland. In this study, peer interactions positively influenced management planning, goal setting, seeking the advice of a professional forester, and improving their woodlands through management. While peer learning among woodland owners can facilitate learning as well as access to information and behavioral outcomes, many questions remain. Key areas for further attention include strategies for growing and supporting existing peer networks, designing new effective peer learning programs, and developing measures of return on investment. ▲

<sup>3</sup> Butler, J. 2008. Family Forest Owners of the United States, 2006. Gen. Tech. Rep. NRS-27. Newtown Square, PA: U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Forest Service, Northern Research Station. 72p.

\* Issue #32/August 2009 is a joint publication between Cornell University's Human Dimensions Research Unit and the Community & Rural Development Institute.



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# rural new york minute

ISSUE NUMBER 33/SEPTEMBER 2009

## Where do New Yorkers want to live?

By **Robin M. Blakely & David L. Brown**, Cornell University

### What is the Issue?

While a lot of attention has been paid to the so-called “brain drain”, in NYS this phenomenon has been largely re-cast as more of a failure to *attract* new migrants to the upstate region of the state, rather than a mass exodus, especially among the younger, well-educated demographic. Attracting new residents has become a focus of many local, regional and state level efforts to create community and economic development opportunities particularly in the upstate region. However, while attracting people to the state is important, the retention of current residents is also critical to maintaining a stable population and workforce.

While NYS's out-migration rate is similar to that experienced by many states, most New Yorkers choose to remain in the state. To complement the many efforts to attract new residents, we also need to understand why people plan to stay. In order to better understand people's residential plans and expectations, and the factors driving their residential choices, we examine data from the Empire State Poll, an annual telephone survey conducted by Cornell University's Survey Research Institute. The 1,000 responses are categorized according to whether the respondent lives in an upstate urban, rural, or downstate urban setting.

### Where do New Yorkers expect to live in 5 years?

The majority of New Yorkers (68.7 percent) see themselves living in the same community five years from now (Figure 1). Rural New Yorkers are the most likely (74.9 percent) to hold this expectation, and downstate urban (the New York City greater metropolitan area) are the least likely (65.6 percent). Among the downstate urbanites who expect to live in a different community in five years, about 42 percent expect to live in a small town or rural place. The rural preference is even stronger among upstate urbanites who expect to move during the next 5 years. Almost two-thirds (59 percent) see themselves as living in villages or in the open country. Rural respondents who expect to move overwhelmingly see themselves as staying in rural areas. So, while the majority of respondents across all geographic categories expect to stay in the same community, those who plan or expect to move seem to prefer a smaller, less densely populated community.

**Figure 1:** Five years from now I see myself living...

	NY State	Downstate Urban	Upstate Urban	Rural
In the same community	68.7%	65.6%	73.5%	74.9%
In a large city or metropolitan area (different community)	6.5%	7.6%	4.3%	4.2%
In a medium sized city (different community)	8.1%	9.1%	6.6%	5.2%
In a small town or rural village (different community)	12.4%	14.6%	9.5%	8.9%
In the open country (different community)	4.4%	3.1%	6.2%	6.8%

For those respondents who report they were likely to leave their current residence, about one-third expect to leave New York State (Figure 2). The likelihood of leaving NYS is just slightly greater for rural respondents than for urban respondents.

**Figure 2:** If you leave your current residence, how likely are you to stay in New York State?

	NY State	Downstate Urban	Upstate Urban	Rural
Very unlikely	25.1%	23.3%	26.5%	29.6%
Somewhat unlikely	8.6%	9.2%	7.6%	7.8%
Somewhat likely	14.8%	14.6%	14.7%	15.6%
Very likely	51.4%	52.8%	51.2%	46.9%

### What is important in determining where to live?

Many factors play a role in deciding where to live. When asked what was most important in making this decision, about a third of New Yorkers cited “being close to friends and family” (see Figure 3). This sentiment was strongest among rural respondents (40.9 percent) and weakest among downstate urbanites (28.8 percent). Upstate urban New Yorkers were roughly in the middle (36.9 percent). Considerations such as an affordable cost of living (18.1 percent) and the availability of well-paying jobs (10.6 percent) were also important. Taken together, these two economic factors play a significant role in determining where people choose to live (28.7 percent, in sum). These two factors were somewhat more important to downstate and upstate urban respondents than to rural respondents. While NYS's relatively higher tax rates are often blamed for population losses and other economic woes, our data suggest that taxes actually play a relatively small part in deciding where to live. Only 6.1 percent of respondents indicated that paying fair and reasonable taxes is most important to them in determining where to live. On the other hand, “living in a fun place” was cited by 14.5 percent of downstate urban respondents as the most important criteria, compared to only 7.5 and 7.3 percent for upstate urban and rural respondents, respectively.

**Figure 3:** What is most important to you in determining where to live?

	NY State	Downstate Urban	Upstate Urban	Rural
Numerous well-paying job opportunities	10.6%	9.4%	13.6%	10.4%
Being close to friends and family	32.5%	28.8%	36.9%	40.9%
Being close to others my age	1.1%	1.3%	0.9%	0.8%
Opportunities to improve my community	2.6%	2.8%	2.8%	1.6%
Living in a fun place	11.7%	14.5%	7.5%	7.3%
Weather and climate	3.9%	3.3%	4.2%	5.7%
Affordable cost of living	18.1%	20.7%	14.0%	11.9%
Paying fair and reasonable taxes	6.1%	5.9%	5.1%	8.3%
Other	13.5%	13.3%	15.0%	13.2%

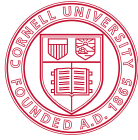
### Conclusions

Limited population growth restricts community and economic development at the local, regional, and state level. Hence, understanding the plans, expectations, and factors driving residential choices for New York State residents is an important piece of the overall population puzzle. While attracting new residents is important for invigorating local economics and for replacing persons who have moved away, it is also important to retain current residents who contribute widely to social and economic development and to community life. ▲



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Department of Development Sociology  
Cornell University

# rural new york minute

ISSUE NUMBER 34/OCTOBER 2009

## Community Awareness of Wildlife Disease\*

By Darrick Evensen, Dan Decker, Bill Siemer (Cornell University)

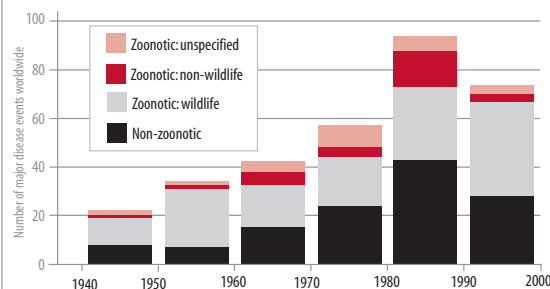
### What is the Issue?

New Yorkers spent an estimated 13.5 million days in 2006 observing, feeding, or photographing wildlife.<sup>1</sup> Accompanying this affinity for wildlife are some risks, including the transmission of disease from wildlife to humans, companion animals and livestock. Diseases originating in wildlife currently constitute the majority of all newly discovered or rapidly proliferating diseases that infect humans worldwide. This is likely to be a growing concern in New York State (NYS). It is important that communities respond to this increased risk by providing comprehensive information in a coordinated and measured manner.

### Scale and Trajectory of Wildlife Diseases

Between 1940 and 2000, newly emerging wildlife-associated zoonotic diseases (diseases spreading from animals to humans and vice versa) increased each decade (Fig. 1). This increase was fueled in part by a growing human population, global movement of humans and animals, and expansion of human communities into wildlife habitats. Many scientists expect global climate change to increase environmental stress on wildlife, lengthen seasons for exposure to disease, and expand the geographic ranges of pathogens and vectors that contribute to the spread of diseases. Such changes facilitate the spread of diseases by amplifying the vulnerability of wildlife to infection.

Figure 1: Trends in Emerging Diseases



\*Zoonotic: Spreading from animals to humans and vice versa  
\*Non-zoonotic: Unrelated to animals

Source: Adopted from Jones, K. E., et al. 2008. Global trends in emerging infectious diseases. *Nature* 451:990-993

### Some Wildlife-Associated Diseases in NYS

**Lyme Disease** is caused by bacteria transmitted primarily by deer ticks which can be active anytime the temperature is above freezing. Lyme disease is treatable with antibiotics if diagnosed early enough, but prevention is also essential.

**Rabies**, a virus that attacks the nervous system of mammals, occurs throughout NYS. Exposure to saliva or nerve tissue from a rabid animal can transmit rabies to humans. Animals commonly associated with rabies are raccoons, bats, skunks, and foxes. Rabies is treatable, but vaccination must begin within a few days of exposure to avoid paralysis. Pet vaccination and avoiding physical contact with wildlife are the best ways to prevent rabies.

<sup>1</sup>U.S. Department of the Interior (USDI), Fish and Wildlife Service, and U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau. 2008. National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation.

**West Nile Virus** is a mosquito-borne viral infection that can cause illness or death. It has been reported in birds throughout NYS. People can prevent this disease by eliminating where possible standing water and other mosquito habitat near their homes and by using repellents.

**Highly pathogenic avian influenza** has not been detected anywhere in the USA, but federal and state government agencies are continually monitoring for it. Almost every human case of avian influenza worldwide has resulted from direct contact with poultry. Concern exists that continual mutations in avian influenza virus could produce a virus that spreads more easily from birds to humans and between humans.

### Community Responses

Citizens can obtain information about local wildlife issues from a number of sources—elected officials, Cooperative Extension, local health departments, local or regional offices of the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), public safety offices (county and municipal police departments), nuisance wildlife control operators (NWCs), animal wardens, and nature centers. Coordination among information sources improves message consistency, thereby reducing confusion and concern among community members. Providing journalists with up-to-date information is important, as mass media is often the primary source of information about wildlife diseases. Producing informational resources tailored to each specific community, such as brochures, radio PSAs, newspaper articles, etc., can improve local communication effectiveness.

Proactive community outreach about wildlife diseases should be crafted carefully to ensure that the risks to people, pets and livestock are neither under-estimated nor over-estimated. Individual and community responses to a wildlife-associated disease can result in a wide range of effects, ranging from backlash against wildlife conservation and open space preservation if threats of disease are exaggerated, to increased risk to human and animal health if threats are not taken seriously. The challenge is to offer knowledge and behavioral suggestions that encourage people to take appropriate precautionary steps (see web links at bottom of page).

### Conclusion

The increasing opportunities for humans to interact with wildlife create potential risks of transmission of wildlife-associated zoonotic disease. A well-coordinated and measured community response includes developing and disseminating information about wildlife disease, reducing exposure/risk, identifying where to turn to if help is needed, and individuals behaving responsibly to prevent risks to the health of others in their communities. ▲

\*Issue #34/October 2009 is a joint publication between Cornell University's Human Dimensions Research Unit and the Community & Rural Development Institute.

### For further information:

**Disease protection and prevention:** [http://www.extension.org/pages/Wildlife\\_Diseases](http://www.extension.org/pages/Wildlife_Diseases)

**Lyme Disease:** [www.health.state.ny.us/diseases/communicable/lyme/fact\\_sheet.htm](http://www.health.state.ny.us/diseases/communicable/lyme/fact_sheet.htm)

**Rabies:** [www.health.state.ny.us/diseases/communicable/rabies/fact\\_sheet.htm](http://www.health.state.ny.us/diseases/communicable/rabies/fact_sheet.htm)

**West Nile Virus:** [www.health.state.ny.us/diseases/west\\_nile\\_virus/fact\\_sheet.htm](http://www.health.state.ny.us/diseases/west_nile_virus/fact_sheet.htm)

**Avian Influenza:** [www.health.state.ny.us/diseases/communicable/influenza/avian](http://www.health.state.ny.us/diseases/communicable/influenza/avian)



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# rural new york minute

ISSUE NUMBER 35/NOVEMBER 2009

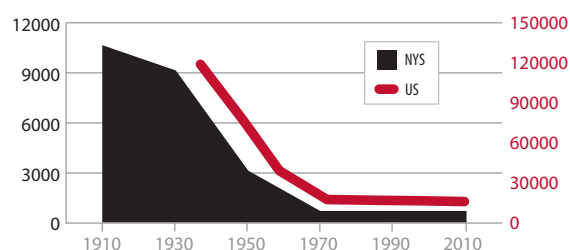
## School Consolidation: What do New Yorkers Think?\*

By John W. Sipple and Robin M. Blakely, Cornell University

### What is the Issue?

School consolidation is not a new issue in New York State (NYS). A combination of economic, educational, and social forces have reduced the number of school districts across NYS over the past century, from more than 10,000 in 1910 to 697 in 2009 (see Figure 1). While consolidation efforts usually seek to alleviate fiscal stress and/or provide enriched educational opportunities for students, consolidation plans frequently stir much controversy and debate.

**Figure 1: Number of School Districts in NYS and the U.S., 1910-2009**



Data sources: NCES (nces.ed.gov) and NYSED (nysed.gov), 1910-2009.

Communities across NYS are struggling to improve their public schools to meet local expectations, new state standards and federal requirements, but these efforts are often exacerbated by declining population, declining property values, increasing property tax rates, and increasing healthcare and pension fund costs. Further impacting the financial viability of NYS schools is a proposal to cap school property tax increases to 4% per year and require consolidation of each school district under 1000 students with another district in an effort to reduce the property taxes and requisite costs of operating small school districts.<sup>1</sup> In this *Rural New York Minute*, we examine New Yorkers' opinions regarding local school consolidation, and how levels of support vary across the state.

### Support Consolidation? It Depends.

Current legislation in NYS offers "incentive aid" to districts that consolidate. The computed formula operating aid for districts which reorganize is increased by 40 percent for five years, then reduced by four percent each year until it is phased out, thus providing a total of 14 years of additional operating aid.<sup>2</sup> However, levels of public support for school consolidation may vary depending on the purported benefit. In the most recent Empire State Poll and CaRDI rural survey, we asked 1,000 NYS residents whether they would support merging their local school with the school of a neighboring town if it resulted in benefits such as increased academic and afterschool opportunities, or a decrease in local school property taxes.

More than two-thirds (69.2 percent) of New Yorkers support consolidation if it would lead to an increase in academic and after-school opportunities (see Figure 2). About one in five are not supportive of this idea. People living in rural areas tend to be the least supportive, with one in four opposed. Downstate urban respondents voiced the most support (73.1 percent). Levels of support for consolidation fall when the stated benefit is a decrease in local school property taxes. Only about half of New Yorkers support consolidation for this benefit, and again the level of opposition to this idea is strongest among rural New Yorkers (31.7 percent are not supportive).

### Conclusion

Even though New Yorkers pay among the highest property taxes in the nation, they are significantly more supportive of school consolidation if it is expected to result in better academic and after-school opportunities for students than if it were to decrease their local property taxes. While the current policy discussion is focused on consolidating *rural* districts, rural New Yorkers are less supportive of consolidation than urban residents. However, since it is becoming increasingly difficult to improve academic and extracurricular programs while keeping property tax levies in check, pressure to merge programs, services, districts, and schools is growing. Rural schools must explore how they can gain efficiencies in their present configuration, examine alternatives to merger where the costs to merger outweigh the benefits, and engage in mergers where the academic and economic benefits are clear. ▲

**Figure 2: Level of support for merging local school with a neighboring town's school if it resulted in either increased academic and afterschool opportunities, or a decrease in local school property tax, by geographic region of NYS.**

	NY State		Downstate Urban		Upstate Urban		Rural	
	academic & afterschool	lower taxes	academic & afterschool	lower taxes	academic & afterschool	lower taxes	academic & afterschool	lower taxes
<b>Not Supportive</b>	19.1%	28.5%	15.8%	27.9%	22.0%	27.0%	25.5%	31.7%
<b>Neutral</b>	11.7%	21.8%	11.1%	22.8%	12.9%	21.3%	12.8%	20.3%
<b>Supportive</b>	69.2%	49.6%	73.1%	49.3%	65.1%	51.7%	61.7%	48.0%

Source: 2009 Empire State Poll and CaRDI Rural Survey, Survey Research Institute, Cornell University

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.cptr.state.ny.us/reports/CPTRFinalReport\\_20081201.pdf](http://www.cptr.state.ny.us/reports/CPTRFinalReport_20081201.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> NYS Department of Education. Guide to the Reorganization of School Districts in NYS. Albany, 2009. [http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/mgt/serv/sch\\_dist\\_org/GuideToReorganizationOfSchoolDistricts.htm](http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/mgt/serv/sch_dist_org/GuideToReorganizationOfSchoolDistricts.htm).

**Further Information:** \*This issue is a joint publication between CaRDI and the New York State Center for Rural Schools (<http://www.nyrrs.schools.org/>).

For examples of organizational, fiscal, and programmatic strategies that encourage or reduce the need to merge school districts, see the website of the New York State Center for Rural Schools.



Cornell University

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Department of Development Sociology  
Cornell University

# rural new york minute

ISSUE NUMBER 36/DECEMBER 2009

## Implications of Introducing Wine into NYS Grocery Stores\*

By **Bradley Rickard**, Cornell University

### What is the Issue?

The issue of selling wine in New York State (NYS) grocery stores has received mixed reviews from grocery stores, liquor stores, wine producers, and consumers. While proposals were put forward in 1984 and 2009 to sell wine in NYS grocery stores, neither resulted in legislation. The previous two proposals generated much discussion about the possible implications of such a move, yet relatively little research has been completed to quantify the likely economic effects for the various stakeholders. Furthermore, a new bill is currently being discussed in NYS that seeks to introduce wine into grocery stores and provide compensation to liquor store owners to address their expected loss in revenues. This is an important policy issue in NYS because it is the nation's second largest wine consuming state and the third largest wine grape producing state (USDA-NASS, 2008).

### The NYS context

The primary objective of the 1984 proposal was to increase market opportunities for NYS wineries, whereas the 2009 proposal's goal was to generate additional government revenue. Grocery stores favored the most recent proposal (see *Vote for wine*, 2009), liquor stores opposed it (see *Last Main Street Store*, 2009) and NYS wine producers appeared to be divided on the issue (see Frank, 2008; NYWIA, 2009). Approximately 35% of NYS wineries have publicly opposed these proposals; however, motivations for their opposition are not clear and there are reports that liquor stores have created a "blacklist" of wineries that support the policy change (Fickenscher, 2009).



### What outcomes might be expected?

Thirty-five other states sell wine in food and drug stores. Overall, the introduction of wine into grocery stores in these states has increased demand for wine between 20% and 300%; the range of results is primarily due to the extent of the change and when the analysis was conducted. Although other states' experiences of introducing wine into grocery stores sheds some light on the potential impacts in NYS, the individual cases do not exhibit all of the idiosyncrasies that characterize the NYS wine sector. This analysis incorporates state-specific policy details and market conditions to understand the implications for stakeholders in NYS.

An economic simulation model was developed to assess the likely implications of introducing wine into grocery stores. Twenty-one simulation experiments were performed across various market conditions and modeling assumptions. A range of changes in demand for in-state and out-of-state wine were considered, as was a range of parameters describing how consumers would respond to changes in prices of wines.

The simulation indicated that this policy change would benefit out-of-state wineries, government revenues, and in most cases the in-state wineries, but that wine sales at liquor stores would fall by 17% to 32%. Simulation results were subsequently used to develop a framework for evaluating various proposals that would provide compensation to liquor store owners.

### Industry and Policy Implications

This research indicates that future proposals need to carefully assess the benefits of provisions for liquor store owners, such as allowing liquor stores to sell beer and food, allowing liquor stores to maintain more than one sales outlet, or adopting a policy that facilitates a transfer of licenses from existing liquor stores to grocery stores. The simulation results show that expanded wine distribution and increased wine sales will generate additional (sales and excise) tax revenue annually. Moreover, these results indicate that annual government revenues from taxes on additional sales would be substantial.

In addition, while NYS's wine sector is relatively small compared to the major wine-producing regions in the world, it has experienced significant recent growth, approaching a stage in its development where it needs to review strategic marketing issues, including attracting a larger "domestic" consumer base. Introducing wine into grocery stores would increase the availability of wine to domestic consumers, and may be a mechanism to foster the development of this burgeoning industry. Introducing wine into grocery stores could be an important marketing opportunity for many wineries in rural regions of New York State that currently have access to a limited number of sales outlets. ▲

\*for the full paper and references on this topic, including a detailed discussion of the conceptual model, simulation model, and results, please visit:  
[http://www.wine-economics.org/workingpapers/AAWE\\_WP48.pdf](http://www.wine-economics.org/workingpapers/AAWE_WP48.pdf)



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# Research & Policy Brief Series

ISSUE NUMBER 33/JANUARY 2010

## Estimating the Job Impact of Public Investment in Bio-fuel Plants<sup>\*</sup>

By Susan Christopherson and Zachary Sivertsen, Cornell University

### What is the Issue?

There is a great deal of excitement about the green economy, clean technology, and the potential creation of “green jobs”. However, the methods used to project job creation from investments in renewable energy and energy efficiency are not well understood. Since these employment projections are used to legitimize public investment in “clean tech” firms via tax incentives, state and local economic developers need to know how to assess their reliability. In this policy brief, we examine 16 studies of the economic impact of ethanol plants and this “green” industry’s prospects for job creation.

### The Where and Why of Ethanol Plants

Corn remains the most prominent source for ethanol production. The big corn producing states are well positioned to take the lead in ethanol production because of concentrated ownership, very large farms, and storage and processing facilities. These attributes make ethanol production an economically rational “add-on” to other corn production activities.<sup>1</sup> Ethanol processing plants are popular investments in the major Midwestern corn-producing regions, not only because ethanol provides another market for corn, but because the processing plants are tied to the resources and local advantages of individual communities (<http://www.ethanolrfa.org/industry/locations/>).



While most job creation from ethanol processing occurs in the plants themselves, ethanol production creates jobs throughout the regional economy: on farms; in the transport of corn and processed ethanol to and from processing facilities; in the utility companies that provide electricity, natural gas, and water; in the cattle operations that utilize the spent grain for feed; and in the construction of the facilities and infrastructure needed for plant operation.<sup>2</sup> In addition to these new jobs, indirect or “induced” jobs are created in services such as banking, accounting, manufacturing, chemical production, retail, etc.<sup>3</sup>

While economic development officials may be interested in the ethanol plants’ job creation potential, investors are more interested in the potential for profit. Government subsidies for the facilities are almost always required to assure private sector profits while regulatory initiatives

are sought to create a market to increase bio-fuel consumption. Economic impact studies of ethanol plants help justify government policy to create bio-fuel markets and government investment in facilities resulting in profits for private firms (such as Archer Daniels Midland, the largest producer of ethanol in the U.S.).<sup>4</sup>

### How are economic impacts projected?

The sixteen studies we analyzed included both independent assessments and those conducted by organizations with a financial interest in promoting government subsidies. Studies sponsored by organizations that have a stake in the industry are not necessarily independent since sponsors have a significant interest in positively influencing the projected economic impacts. The studies we reviewed are based on different assumptions and use different methods, though most rely on input-output models to project job and tax impacts. The majority of input-output models in the studies we examined use federal, county and zip code data compiled by IMPLAN (an acronym for Impact Analysis for Planning), a private firm that specializes in input-output data and modeling. Because IMPLAN models and data are adaptable and relatively inexpensive, they are widely used in economic impact analysis.

Input-Output models are accounting frameworks that show how output for each and every regional industry is affected by a one-dollar change in final demand.<sup>5</sup> If money comes into the regional economy to build new roads or a new ethanol plant, the expenditures connected to that investment ripple through the economy, also known as a “multiplier” effect. However, while the standard accounting framework works well for many industries, it is problematic for assessing ethanol’s impact. One reason for this is that dry milling is the most prominent process in ethanol processing and that industrial category is not represented in the IMPLAN model. Accordingly, economic impact analyses of ethanol plants typically use the industrial sector of wet-milling to account for inputs into ethanol processing. While these two industries are similar in many respects, there are critical differences<sup>6</sup> that lead to problems estimating inputs into the industry and in the ultimate reliability of the multipliers produced. This example shows that the models used to project the job impacts of ethanol plants are affected by many individual decisions about which data are used and how they are interpreted.

Another important limitation of input-output models is that they use *estimated* data. None of the studies we examined used real world data to evaluate projections. Even when looking at existing ethanol plants, evaluators used input-output models to estimate job gains rather than looking at actual job change numbers. In order to determine the accuracy of model-based ex ante estimates, we need studies of the actual job impact of ethanol plants. In the absence of studies looking at actual jobs created, policy makers and citizens need to understand that the numbers produced in impact studies are only projections. They are not guaranteed and often are highly sensitive to factors beyond the control of the ethanol plant operators.





### How and why estimated impacts can differ

Given that these impact analyses are based on models, some differences among the results are attributable to the way the input-output analyses are constructed and the assumptions used to construct the analysis. For example:

- IMPLAN has to be adjusted to create a dry-mill ethanol industry sector. The way these adjustments are made affects how many jobs are projected for different inputs into the process.
- Construction costs and jobs are sometimes included and sometimes excluded from operating projections.<sup>7</sup>
- Corn being grown for the ethanol plant is sometimes considered a new input into the model although it was already being grown for other markets (feed and food).<sup>8</sup>
- New utility jobs associated with the consumption of natural gas, water, and electricity used in ethanol production are often over-estimated because: "All three of these...are massive, declining cost industries where the average cost of delivering their respective commodities up to capacity is declining sharply."<sup>9</sup>
- Transportation jobs are often over-estimated, especially in corn-belt states, because corn is already being hauled from farms to mills, or to livestock feeders or out of state. With ethanol production, the infrastructure and jobs that are already present would simply switch to ethanol transportation with small if any increases in employment.<sup>10</sup>
- Results can differ dramatically depending on how the model calculates the location of expenditures - whether key inputs are purchased locally or imported into the region. If inputs are imported, then local expenditures and their ripple effect on the local economy are lost to the region.
- The opportunity costs of growing corn rather than other crops or of using land for other purposes are rarely assessed in economic impact models.

An important consideration for policy makers is whether the *assumptions* are clear and available for evaluation. Without that information, public officials or interested citizens cannot assess whether the economic impact model is reasonable. Almost half of the studies examined did not discuss the assumptions made by the researchers. While this does not mean that the studies produced invalid or unrealistic projections, it means that the projections are difficult to evaluate. For example, if public officials examined the sixteen studies we analyzed, they would find that projected job multipliers differed significantly, ranging from a high of 73,<sup>11</sup> to a low of 2.8.<sup>12</sup> While some differences in projected job multipliers may be attributable to plant and expenditure location, such a wide range indicates that not all the projections are reliable. Among the studies evaluated, the most reliable seemed to set a job multiplier in a range from 2 to 7. A job multiplier of 2 is more likely in rural areas where there are fewer goods

and services (including inputs to the ethanol processing plant) that can be purchased locally. A multiplier around 7 is more likely if the plant is located near a metropolitan area where more inputs can be purchased locally and where there is potential for greater recirculation of dollars spent in connection with the plant.

### Information to Consider When Determining Whether to Subsidize the Production of Ethanol

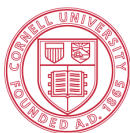
- **Local variation:** The impact of an ethanol plant on a local economy depends on a wide array of local and regional factors that are often overlooked in impact studies. The number of jobs that a given facility creates depends on the size of the plant, the complexity of the local economy, what goods and services are available locally, and how much income is generated locally by the corn price premium provided by the facility.<sup>13</sup>
- **Political motivation:** Political motivation may often determine results or affect interpretation of results. And, while the executive summary of a report may emphasize the positive, those interpretations are not always justified in the more detailed study findings. Policy makers need to take political interests and economic motives into consideration when evaluating study results, and these motives are not always apparent.
- **Property ownership and existing infrastructure:** Ownership patterns and how farmers make money are critical elements which determine whether a bio-fuel plant investment is economically feasible. Farmers will not participate in a bio-fuels program unless it has money-making potential. This includes the long-term and short-term costs of changing what they are doing to grow a bio-fuel crop. Large corn farmers in the Midwest grow corn as their primary commodity crop. Bio-fuel provides them with another market for their product and has the potential to raise prices. In eastern States, such as NYS, where farms are smaller and many farmers are engaged in high value-added crop production, such as organic food, bio-fuel production may not be efficient. Economic developers need to consider the comparative advantages of their own agricultural sector rather than basing decisions conducted in regions where the structure of agriculture is significantly different.
- **Return on Investment:** If public investment is required, economic developers and public officials need to assess whether the investment is likely to pay off for the tax payers. Could tax revenues be used in a more effective way? What are the opportunity costs of subsidizing ethanol production? For example, investment in marketing and distribution for farmers engaged in high value added food crop production may have a better long-term economic impact than investment in an ethanol plant.

### Conclusions

Economic impact analyses should never be accepted at face value to justify public investments. Officials engaged in making decisions about public investment in ethanol production should base their decisions on a deeper understanding of the inputs, methods and assumptions used in producing job projections and other ethanol related impacts. Experts on impact analysis exist on most college campuses and, in many states, in cooperative extension offices. These experts can provide assistance in understanding impact analyses and whether and how to use the results as a guide for policy. ▲

#### Notes:

- \* The 16 studies examined and other references cited in footnotes are available on the CaRDI website along with this publication.  
A working paper on this topic has been archived in eCommons@Cornell, and can be accessed at: <http://hdl.handle.net/1813/14219>.



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# Research & Policy Brief Series

ISSUE NUMBER 26/FEBRUARY 2009

## Exploring Regional Food Systems: A North Country Example

by Heidi Mouillesseaux-Kunzman (Cornell University) and Katherine Lang (Cornell Cooperative Extension of St. Lawrence County)\*

### What is the Issue?

In New York State and throughout the United States, agricultural landscapes and food markets are changing. In the midst of globalization, producers are increasingly growing for local and regional markets as consumers demand more regionally produced foods. Communities, too, are grappling with these changes. Community-based organizations, municipal agencies, and even local legislators are exploring how local and regional foods might contribute to community and economic development. To help NYS's "Adirondack-North Country" (A-NC) explore these themes regionally, the North Country Regional Foods Initiative (NCRFI) was formed in early 2008. With funding through the Economic Development Administration's University Center in New York State, and the support of the Northern New York Agricultural Development Program, seven Cornell Cooperative Extension Associations in New York's A-NC (Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Hamilton, Jefferson, Lewis and St. Lawrence counties) partnered as a region with the Community and Rural Development Institute (CaRDI) to better understand the impacts, opportunities, and challenges associated with local and regional food initiatives in their communities. This brief considers some of the ways that this research partnership might inform similar efforts and policies elsewhere.

### Adirondack-North Country Agriculture in Context

The region is known primarily for its dairy farms. Although this sector retains the largest number of farms in the A-NC (Figure 1), this number has decreased even as the total market value of dairy products sold has increased. At the same time, other types

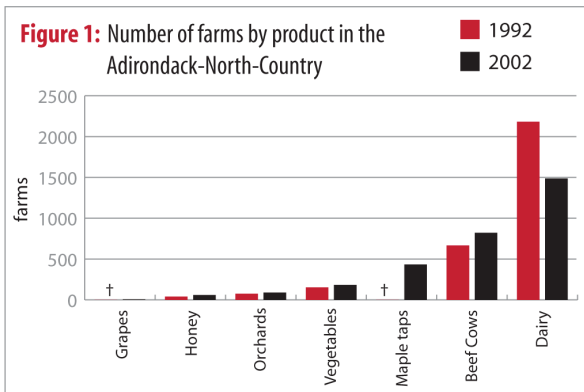
of farms have been increasing in number, representing an overall diversification in farm types in the region.<sup>1</sup>

Direct-to-consumer sales in this region have also changed dramatically. Direct market producers sold almost \$3.5 million in farm products directly to residents and visitors to the region in 2002. This represents a near doubling (83% increase) over the 1997 figure of \$1.89 million. In addition, the numbers of farms selling directly to consumers increased from 441 to 506 during this same period.<sup>2</sup>

These trends have both fueled and been influenced by farmers, local chapters of farm advocacy organizations, members of nonprofits working to end hunger, economic development departments, the media, and other individuals, agencies, and organizations. All share a dedication to improving the well-being of the region. Through the efforts of these groups, the region has seen the formation of a regional brand (Adirondack Harvest), farm-to-school committees, new farmers' markets, local/regional food events, a growers' cooperative, the Seaway Wine Trail, a regional Maple Weekend, and local/regional food guides.

Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) associations in the region are involved in this process. They are increasingly called upon to support farmers' interest in local and regional markets, to address hunger and nutrition concerns, and to support community and economic development. CCE has provided leadership and partnership in many related developments. However, like their partners working to support local food initiatives, they have had mostly anecdotal evidence about the impact of these initiatives. To better evaluate A-NC impacts, challenges and opportunities, the region's CCE county associations, in collaboration with CaRDI, set out to answer four specific questions: (1) How does local/regional food production and marketing in the A-NC affect agricultural production and farm profitability? (2) How do local/regional food initiatives contribute to community and economic development in the region? (3) How do organizations that provide support services to farmers, consumers, and communities, and collaborations among them, influence local/regional food businesses as well as the communities in which they are located? and (4) How can A-NC communities individually and collectively better support and capitalize on the positive contributions local/regional food businesses make to the region?

**Figure 1: Number of farms by product in the Adirondack-North-Country**



Source: 1992, 2002 Census of Agriculture and the Northern New York Agricultural Development Program NNY Regional Profile (<http://www.nnyagdev.org/nnysregionalprofile.htm>) +Data not available

<sup>1</sup> 2002 Census of Agriculture

<sup>2</sup> See Fact Sheet 2: *Local Food and Agriculture Trends* (Hilchey, Duncan 2008) at [www.nnyregionalllocalfoods.org](http://www.nnyregionalllocalfoods.org), for a more detailed analysis of this data.

\* David Kay serves as guest editor for this issue.



## Research Methods

To answer these questions, the project team (consisting of CCE educators and Cornell faculty and staff) analyzed secondary data and conducted interviews. The secondary data analysis was designed to understand the broader context of local foods in the A-NC region. The team conducted interviews in early 2008 with 15 farmers or other food business owners/operators and 11 representatives of organizations which support these businesses in the region. The interviews were designed to capture the distinct characteristics of 2-3 farm and food businesses per county. The businesses were selected to represent one or more of eleven different types of local/regional food enterprises prominent in the region. The organizations selected for the study include all of those in the region known to have primary programming activities that support local and regional food markets (retail and wholesale) and connections between local and regional producers and consumers. These include such organizations as marketing associations, commodity associations, local chapters of national farm advocacy organizations, buy local campaigns, hunger prevention organizations, and economic development agencies.

## What we learned

The most notable results of the study relevant to community and economic development policy are presented below:<sup>3</sup>

- Local/regional food business owners' and operators' business decisions are commonly tied to their personal interests and lifestyle goals.
- Owners/operators are intentional about contributing to their communities and see themselves doing so in multiple ways that include their contributions to the local economy.
- Organizational support for education and collaborative opportunities (primarily joint promotional and sales activities) are valuable to the local/regional food businesses.
- The organizations do not currently coordinate their activities across the region. However, most indicated they would like to be part of a network offering mutual support and learning opportunities.
- Organizations see the region's people as the primary asset in support of local and regional food initiatives. They report that the region's people have the skills, talent and interest in making local foods work.
- Although the owners/operators experience periodic cash flow gaps and/or have trouble affording insurance, they are optimistic about the future of local/regional food markets in the region. They expect increases in profitability and in capital to reinvest in their businesses.

These results suggest that the interviewed A-NC business owners and operators find the efforts of the support organizations

valuable. The organizations, in turn, see A-NC residents (as consumers, producers, and engaged citizens) committed to local and regional foods as the region's greatest strength for these businesses. Both the businesses and the organizations that support them are committed to working in the region to strengthen local and regional food initiatives for the benefit of producers, consumers, and whole communities.

## Next Steps

In light of these findings, members of CCE's NCRFI Project team have agreed to:

1. Strengthen CCE's support of local and regional food initiatives through the Northern New York Agricultural Program's Direct Marketing/Local Foods Team.
2. Support existing regional and county-based efforts to strengthen agriculture, food, and overall community and economic development.
3. Build on the Spring 2008 conference, "The Role of A-NC Foods in Community and Economic Development" by *regionally* coordinating efforts to share these research findings with policy makers. Invite a conversation about how A-NC communities might work together, as a region, to support local and regional food initiatives.

These approaches will provide CCE's A-NC partners with tools and support for a long-term conversation that could lead to *broader collaboration*. This collaboration would involve sharing of assets to address needs and to capitalize on opportunities relating to local and regional foods, ultimately achieving broader community and economic development goals.

## What is the broader relevance of the project?

This study addresses two issues that communities throughout New York State and the country are grappling with: local and regional food initiatives and regional economic development. Local officials and community and economic developers are increasingly recognizing that local and regional food can contribute to community and economic development.<sup>4</sup> The NCRFI offers an evolving model of how Cooperative Extension, in collaboration with Land Grant Institutions and other partners, can support and enhance existing regional efforts to achieve shared community and economic development goals. This model includes the following three elements: (1) Where appropriate, engage communities as a geographic, cultural and economic region; (2) explore the impacts of local and regional food initiatives (or other development strategies/sectors), and, if appropriate, organizations which support them, from a regional perspective; and (3) articulate steps to share research results with community and economic developers and policy makers, and to support related development activities. ▲

<sup>3</sup> The full results of this research are presented in the "Research Report on the Impacts of Local and Regional Foods in the Adirondack-North Country Region," available online at: [www.nnyregionallocalfoods.org](http://www.nnyregionallocalfoods.org)

<sup>4</sup> See: *Growing Home a Guide to Reconnecting Agriculture, Food, and Community*. (2002). Ithaca, NY: Cornell University, Community, Food, and Agriculture Program and Food System Planning. May 2007, American Planning Association EIP-16. (<http://myapa.planning.org/APAStore/Search/Default.aspx?p=3853>).





# Research & Policy Brief Series

ISSUE NUMBER 27/MARCH 2009

## Do Comprehensive Plans Matter?\*

by David Kay, Cornell University

*"You can save what you love best about the place you live while accommodating and attracting desirable growth if you begin with a sound comprehensive plan."*

*New York Planning Federation, 1996<sup>1</sup>*

### What is the Issue?

Comprehensive planning has often been more of an ideal than a routine practice. The authority to undertake comprehensive planning [See pullout] is identified in New York State law as "among the most important powers and duties" of municipalities. In 1986, however, barely half of the state's towns and villages had adopted comprehensive plans. This profile has changed over time: two-thirds of villages and almost three-quarters of towns now report adopting comprehensive plans. The use of other basic land use planning tools (zoning, planning boards, subdivision regulations, site plan reviews) is now also widespread.<sup>2</sup>

Does this mean that NYS residents are now in a better position to "save what they love best..." about their communities? Unfortunately, little if any systematic information has been collected about the quality, age, use, or effectiveness of municipal comprehensive plans in New York State. Merely tracking or monitoring the increased use of planning tools is at best a thin indicator of their impact on community development. The limited empirical research on plan quality and effectiveness is mixed rather than resounding in its reassurance, with conclusions about plans ranging from "somewhat weak"<sup>3</sup> or "weak analytically and substantively"<sup>4</sup> to increasingly "important... as a governing land use document."<sup>5</sup> The bottom line for NYS is a lack of empirical evidence.

### Research Methods

To obtain better information about comprehensive planning, CaRDI mailed a survey to a sample of NYS's planning board chairpersons in November 2007. The survey focused on the

status and role of local comprehensive planning. A response rate of 64% (95 of 149 mailed) was achieved. Statistical tests of these responses show that, in terms of municipal size and use of planning tools, the responding municipalities are representative of all NYS municipalities that have planning boards.

*A comprehensive plan articulates goals and approaches pertaining to "the immediate and long-range protection, enhancement, growth and development" of the municipality. Plans may cover a broad array of topics, but they focus on implications for the built and natural environments, public infrastructure, and related land use issues. State law stipulates that municipalities that adopt comprehensive plans must ensure all land use regulations are "in accordance" with it.*

### Survey Results

The survey results are consistent with prior data that shows that about 70% of NYS municipalities with planning boards have adopted comprehensive plans. Our results also show that comprehensive planning is not entirely missing in the remaining 30% of municipalities. Thirteen percent of respondents report that their municipality has a comprehensive plan, but that it has not been formally adopted.

Because comprehensive plans are created during concentrated periods of special effort, communities working on plans often seek professional help. Nevertheless, 24% of the respondents with comprehensive plans reported no involvement by professional planners, consistent with 2002 research that found about a quarter of municipalities with planning boards lacked "satisfactory" access to professional planning assistance. Where professional planners were involved, the use of private consulting planners outstripped that of public sector planners by more than twofold. It seems likely that access to skilled professionals would influence both the likelihood of undertaking a plan as well as its quality.

Consistency between zoning regulations and a comprehensive plan serves as a key indicator of the plan's role in shaping land use. While NYS requires that local zoning be "in accordance" with comprehensive plans, the link between the two land use tools is not as close as might be expected. According to statewide data, 140 villages, 5 cities, and 103 towns have zoning but lack a written comprehensive plan. More subjectively, only 22% of responding planning board chairs felt zoning was "completely" consistent with the comprehensive plan, though more than half felt it was

<sup>1</sup> David Church & Cori Traub. 2002. *A Practical Guide to Comprehensive Planning*. NY Planning Federation, 2nd edition. See <http://www.nypf.org/publications.htm>

<sup>2</sup> See [www.senate.state.ny.us/SenateReports.nsf/6DD2F2819E02BB6185256EBD004E2D20/DD3D4F72731A168B852574C0004EDAEB/\\$file/luac08reportlowres.pdf](http://www.senate.state.ny.us/SenateReports.nsf/6DD2F2819E02BB6185256EBD004E2D20/DD3D4F72731A168B852574C0004EDAEB/$file/luac08reportlowres.pdf)

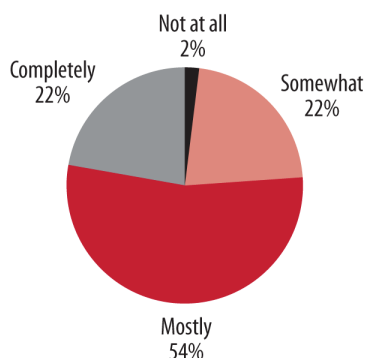
<sup>3</sup> P. Berke, M. Backhurst, M. Day, N. Ericksen, L. Laurian, J. Crawford and J. Dixon. 2006. "What makes plan implementation successful?" *Environment and Planning B: Planning and Design*, 33:581-600.

<sup>4</sup> R. Burby. 2003. "Making plans that matter", *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 69(1):33-49.

<sup>5</sup> E. Sullivan. 2000. "The evolving role of the comprehensive plan", *Urban Lawyer*, 32(4):813-837.

“mostly” consistent. Less affirmatively, nearly one in four thought zoning was only “somewhat” consistent (Figure 1.)

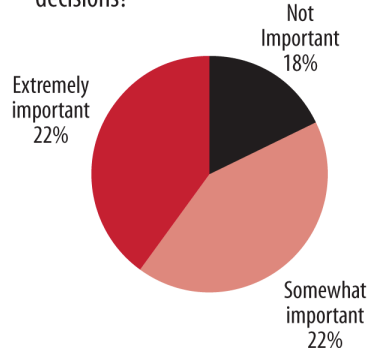
**Figure 1:** If you have zoning how consistent is it with your comprehensive plan?



One of the reasons for this lack of consistency is that many plans are seriously outdated. Though 56% of plans have been formally revised or adopted since 2000, another 22% predate 1990. About this same proportion (27%) were said to require “major revisions”. Only 13% were felt by the responding board chairs to need no revisions.

Are comprehensive plans actually used in planning board deliberations? Nearly a third (31%) of planning board chairs with comprehensive plans said the plan had “seldom or never” been referenced during board meetings during the prior year. However, a robust 75% felt they were personally “very familiar” with their plan, and 85% thought that at least some other board members were “familiar” with it. Board chairs weighed in directly on the central question, “How important is the plan in guiding board decisions?” As shown in Figure 2, a sizeable minority (40%) said the plan was “extremely important” in this regard, while just under a fifth (18%) dismissed its importance altogether.

**Figure 2:** How important is the plan in guiding board decisions?



Board chairs with plans were asked which topics were addressed in their comprehensive plans, as these are suggested but not mandated in state law. As shown in Table 1, only four of the listed topics were said to be addressed in 80% or more of the plans. Growth and development (92%) and the location and intensity of proposed uses (92%) were the most frequently cited topics among those that had comprehensive plans. Half or fewer of the plans addressed regional needs, affordable housing, educational facilities, health/emergency service facilities, or local economic development. Two of these (local economic development and affordable housing) were also among the lowest ranked by all respondents in a related question, “How well does your municipality plan for each topic?”. Board chairs who assigned greater importance to local economic issues like tax base, jobs and affordable housing were more likely to give poor marks to local planning in multiple topical areas.

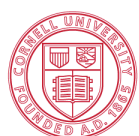
**Table 1:** Which topics are addressed in your comprehensive plans?

Growth & development	92%
Location/intensity of proposed uses	92%
Recreation and park land	80%
Commercial/industrial facilities	80%
Plan implementation	76%
Agricultural uses	72%
Historical & cultural resources	71%
Utility infrastructure	66%
Future housing	64%
Population/socioeconomic trends	62%
Transportation	62%
Coastal/natural/sensitive areas	56%
Regional needs/issues	49%
Affordable housing	47%
Health/emergency service facilities	44%
Educational facilities	40%
Local economic development	40%

## Discussion and Conclusions

These findings offer new insights into the scope, effectiveness, and impact of local comprehensive planning in New York State. The data suggest that for 25-50% of the communities with comprehensive plans in place, these plans serve as dynamic, evolving and functional guides to municipal efforts to shape the community’s future. In 20-25% of communities, existing plans appear to be too old, too ignored, or too irrelevant to be of use as a guide to the future. To realize the full rewards of good planning, we recommend that the state and other technical assistance providers assist local leaders to overcome the two most often identified barriers to “adopting, revising, or putting a plan to better use”: the sheer complexity of the process, and the associated costs.

\* Heidi Mouillesseaux-Kunzman serves as guest editor on this issue.



# Research & Policy Brief Series

ISSUE NUMBER 28/APRIL 2009

## Aging in New York State: Opportunities and Challenges\*

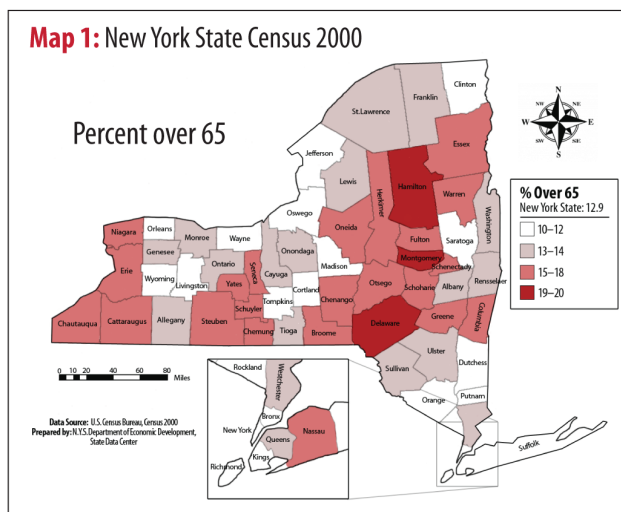
by **Nina Glasgow** and **Robin M. Blakely**, Cornell University

### What is the Issue?

New York State is third in the nation in the number of adults over the age of 60, with a population of almost 3.5 million. The aging of the baby boom generation is fueling dramatic population changes, presenting a host of challenges to communities, government agencies providing health, housing and senior services, as well as non-profit and private organizations working with older adults. Public discourse often focuses on aging as a “pensions and care issue” and as a “problem.” An aging population, however, also presents opportunities.

### Trends and Projections

In 2000, similar to the U.S. as a whole, 13.1 percent of New York State's population was age 65 or older. Map 1 provides a look at how the aging population was distributed across NYS in 2000. The proportion elderly is projected to climb to 20 percent or more by 2030, increasing from 3.2 million to over 5.3 million individuals (NYS Office for the Aging, 2007). During the same time period, the state's population age 85 and older is projected to increase by 76 percent, from about 315,000 to 556,000 persons.



By 2015, only 8 of New York State's 62 counties will have less than 20% of their population in the 60 and older age group (see Table 1). The number of counties with 20-24% of its population age 60 and older will increase from 13 in 2000 to 35 in 2015. The number of counties with 25-29% of its population age 60 and older is expected to increase from 1 in 2000 to 17 by 2015.

### Characteristics of New York's Aging Population

While older persons comprise an increasingly larger share of the total population, they differ significantly on many important demographic

**Table 1: Proportion of Population Aged 60 and Over, 2000 and 2015, New York State's 62 Counties.**

Proportion of County Population Aged 60+	# of Counties with Specified % of Elderly Persons 2000	# of Counties with Specified % of Elderly Persons 2015
12% - 19%	48	8
20% - 24%	13	35
25% - 29%	1	17
30% or more	0	2

Source: New York State Office for the Aging. (2007). "Demographic Characteristics of New Yorkers," Table 2, Proportion of Population Aged 60 and Over, 2000 and 2015. 2007-2011 State Plan on Aging. Albany, NY: New York State Office for the Aging. Data Source: NY State Data Center, Empire State Development, 2002.

characteristics (see Table 2). Women are a high proportion of the older population (59% compared to 52% of the total population), which is noteworthy because older women have fewer financial resources, greater life expectancy and are more likely to live alone compared with older men. The older population is less racially and ethnically diverse than the total population, with 79% of those aged 65 and older being white (reporting one race) compared to 66.5% for the general NYS population. Hispanics are significantly underrepresented among the state's elderly (8.7% compared to 16.2% of the state's total population). While older New Yorkers are as likely to be married as the general population, they are less likely to live in family households. They are more likely to live alone, in large part due to the high rates of widowhood among older people. Older New Yorkers are also more likely to be disabled than the state's total population. Because older New Yorkers are more likely to have grown up when average educational attainment levels were lower, they are more likely to have dropped out of high school or attained just a high school degree than today's general population, and they are less likely to have attended or graduated from college. The vast majority of people aged 65 and older in NYS are not in the labor force, but, among those who are, the unemployment rate is extremely low.

### State and Community Responses to Population Aging

New York's older population is not only becoming larger, but healthier. Medical advances in the 20th century led to tremendous gains in life expectancy, as well as improvements in the overall health, well-being, and mobility of the older population. This challenges stereotypes about the limits of chronological age and represents significant challenges and opportunities for New York State.

While the majority of older people do retire from their work careers, a more mature workforce is anticipated in the future. Gendell (2006) demonstrated a recent increase in the proportion of older people remaining in the workforce. Upstate New York has experienced a decline in the proportion of the population in the traditional labor force age range (18-65) and so having seniors who are able and willing to remain in the workforce may benefit upstate economic development efforts. The NYS Office for the Aging has established a



**Table 2:** Selected Characteristics of New York State's Total and Elderly Population: American Community Survey, Averaged for 2005-2007

	NYS Total 19,280,753	Age 65+ 2,527,954
<b>Population #s</b>		
Age 65+ % of total	----	13.1
<b>Sex and Age</b>		
Male	48.5%	40.7%
Female	51.5%	59.3%
<b>Race and Hispanic or Latino Origin</b>		
One race	98.3%	99.3%
White	66.5%	79.0%
Black	15.6%	11.5%
Other	16.1%	8.8%
Two or more races	1.7%	0.7%
Hispanic or Latino Origin (of any race)	16.2%	8.7%
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino	60.3%	74.9%
<b>Household Type</b>		
Family households	64.7%	49.6%
Nonfamily households	35.3%	50.4%
Householder living alone	29.4%	48.0%
<b>Marital Status (population 15 years and older)</b>		
Now married, except separated	46.2%	48.1%
Widowed	6.8%	32.8%
Divorced or separated	11.4%	10.9%
Never married	35.7%	8.1%
<b>Disability Status (with any)</b>	14.1%	39.0%
<b>Educational Attainment (population 25 years and older)</b>		
Less than high school graduate	16.1%	28.2%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	29.6%	36.0%
Some college or associate's degree	23.1%	15.8%
Bachelor's degree or higher	31.2%	20.1%
<b>Employment Status (civilian population 16 years &amp; older)</b>		
In labor force	62.6%	14.2%
Employed	58.4%	13.6%
Unemployed	4.2%	0.6%
<b>Not in labor force</b>	37.4%	85.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2005-2007 American Community Survey

Mature Worker Task Force to address older worker issues. With the country in a severe recession, however, it may be harder for older workers to retain jobs or to find new jobs. Additionally, individuals working past conventional retirement age may reduce younger workers' ability to find gainful employment.

Another consequence of an aging population is increased demand for particular kinds of community, health and long-term care services for the aging. In September 2007, Ithaca College's Gerontology Institute hosted a "Rural Aging Summit" that focused on the particular challenges facing rural older people across New York State (see <http://www.ithaca.edu/aging/ruralsummit/> for the final report). Rural areas have higher rates of income insecurity and poverty among older people, and inadequate housing options for older people. Moreover, a lack of rural public transportation limits access to services, and the range of health, medical and long-term care options is insufficient.

The NYS Office for the Aging is conducting an "Empowering Communities for Successful Aging" project to help local communities be more responsive to the needs of their aging citizens and to help communities recognize how older citizens might contribute to community development. (<http://www.empoweringnycommunities.org/index.html>). The project's initiatives include civic engagement of retired individuals who can contribute their expertise to helping community organizations, as well as providing positive cognitive, emotional and physical benefits to the individuals themselves. Another of the Empowering Communities important initiatives is the identification and implementation of best practices for elder housing and community support services. This will facilitate older New Yorkers aging in place in their own homes as long as possible without having to move to institutional settings. Map 2 shows the locations of planned and implemented community initiatives across

NYS that will address the housing, transportation, and service needs of the aging population. As shown in this map, many highly rural parts of the state lack these programs. For example, Delaware County, with almost 19% of its population over age 65, lacks all of these important initiatives.

**Map 2:** NYS Office for the Aging, Empowering Communities for Successful Aging, 2008.

- Planning Stages
- ▲ Implementation Stages

**Key**

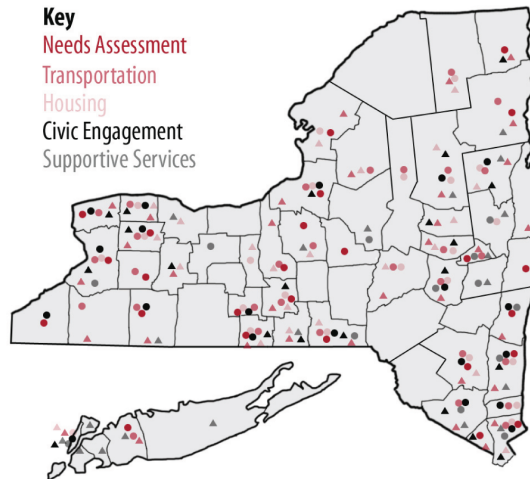
Needs Assessment

Transportation

Housing

Civic Engagement

Supportive Services

Source: NYS Office for the Aging <http://www.aging.ny.gov/GetInvolved/EmpoweringCommunities/ComboMap.cfm>**Conclusion**

The New York State Office for the Aging (NYSOFA) has been forward thinking in planning for the aging of baby boomers, and it is the lead agency in an aging services network that includes county offices for the aging, the NYS Department of Health and a number of other agencies and organizations. The following are program areas prioritized by NYSOFA and other groups in the aging services network as important to meeting the needs of an increasingly aged population.

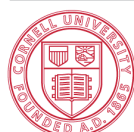
- Home and community-based long-term care
- Family caregiver support
- Health promotion/wellness/healthy aging
- Outreach services for an increasingly diverse older population
- Consumer education and protection
- Empower older persons through civic engagement and volunteerism
- Mental health, substance abuse, dementia and adult protective services advocacy
- Improve infrastructure – housing and transportation

An aging population brings both challenges and opportunities. The above set of program priorities reflects both. Planning for an aging population should include all areas of the state, upstate and downstate, urban and rural. The "rural blanks" in Map2 need to be filled. ▲

\*David L. Brown serves as guest editor on this issue.

**References:**

- Gendell, M. 2006. Full-time work rises among U.S. elderly. Retrieved May 2006 from the Population Reference Bureau Web site: <http://www.prb.org/Articles/2006/FullTimeWorkAmongElderlyIncreases.aspx>
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# Research & Policy Brief Series

ISSUE NUMBER 29/MAY 2009

## Jobs, Good-Paying Jobs, and Services

By David L. Kay and James E. Pratt, Cornell University

### What is the Issue?

For decades workers, labor leaders, and politicians decried the 'loss of good-paying manufacturing jobs' in the U.S. Phrases such as 'giant sucking sound' made an indelible impression on an anxious populace saturated with the message that the U.S. manufacturing 'core' was being devoured by outsiders, replaced by 'low-wage jobs in a service economy'.

Although intense policy debates on how to get the world economy back on track currently occupy center stage, the enduring question of the role of manufacturing versus services will surely reappear once the economy stabilizes. In this publication, we first consider the persistent perceptions of these two economic sectors and then challenge them with basic data about the composition and dynamics of modern economies.

### Manufacturing versus Services

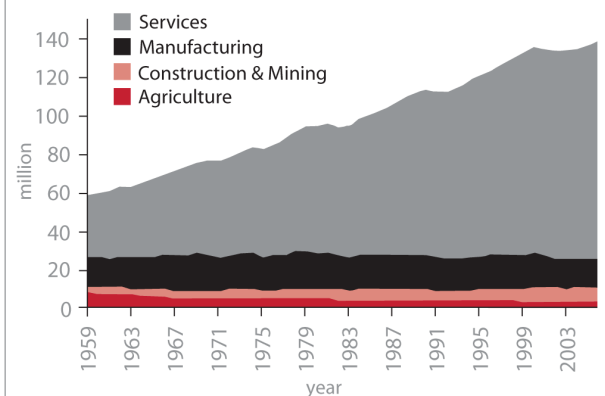
Manufacturing has had an illustrious history, serving as the "holy grail" of economic development. Politicians from Margaret Thatcher on the right to Karl Marx on the left extolled its virtues for over 100 years. Today, few economic development professionals would dream of challenging the benefits of well-paid manufacturing jobs. Nor is it our purpose to do so here. However, students of history will recognize that contemporary concerns echo those that arose when manufacturing replaced agriculture as the primary sector of our economy during the first half of the 20th century.<sup>1</sup> At that time, many decried the decline of agriculture as a loss of our economic and cultural heritage. Today, few advocate returning to an economy dominated by agricultural production.

Our concern is simply that praise of manufacturing has too often been accompanied by indifference toward, or even diatribes against, the 'service' sector. Where manufacturing has been seen as a dynamic driver of growth, service sectors have long been characterized in popular as well as academic works as 'tertiary', 'residual', and even 'parasitic'. These perceptions are embedded in, and partly derived from, widely accepted theories of economic growth. Many Americans have grown to associate 'services' with low-wage jobs flipping hamburgers and cleaning toilets. Some pundits contend that if the U.S. economy continues on its current course, 'dead-end' service jobs are all that will be left. While hamburger flipping and janitorial jobs are part of the service sector, this association relies more on myth than math and is increasingly misleading and counterproductive.

In the last half century, job growth in the U.S. has come almost entirely in the service sector, with the total number of service jobs outstripping the number in other major sectors (Figure 1). In contrast, the actual number of manufacturing jobs has remained nearly constant, varying both down and up but in the relatively narrow range of 14 to 18 million. Manufacturing job losses that have occurred have been geographically concentrated. Between 2000 and 2005, for example, more than one-third of the nation's loss of

manufacturing jobs occurred in just seven Great Lakes states: Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin. In sum, the decline of manufacturing has been highly consequential, but the losses have been decidedly regional, and overall have been *proportional* rather than *absolute*. U.S. job growth has been almost exclusively in the service sector.

**Figure 1: U.S. Jobs, by Sector, 1959-2003**



Economic Report of the President, Table B-46

Source: Economic Report of the President, 2007.

### Employment versus Output

Figure 2 shows a breakdown of employment in various service categories for 2006. Several service sectors employ as many persons as the manufacturing sector. However, when using economic *output* rather than *jobs* as a measure, the performance of manufacturing appears to be one of dramatic success rather than decline. Indexed to 1959, goods output, i.e. manufacturing, in the U.S. actually increased nearly six-fold by 2006 even though the number employed in manufacturing remained essentially flat. In contrast, while service sector employment increased (3.3 times) over the time period, the sector's output increased by only 4.5 times. Thus, while the productivity of service sector employees has increased since 1959, the productivity of manufacturing workers has increased by a significantly greater extent.

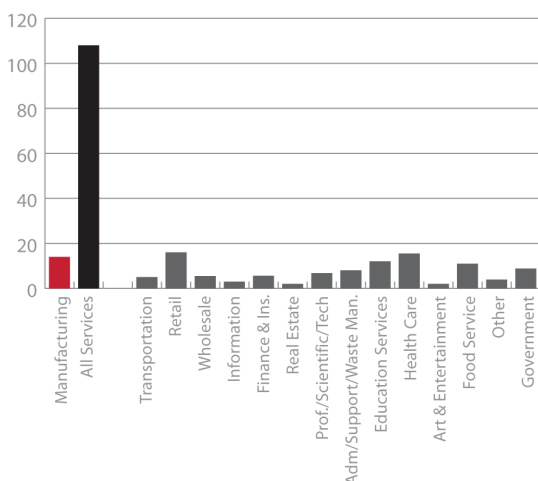
### "Good-paying" jobs

Considering recent average wage levels, Figure 3 shows the mean hourly wage rates for all manufacturing and all services as well as for major service categories in May, 2006. Several large service categories

<sup>1</sup><http://www.clevelandfed.org/research/trends/2007/0307/02ecoact.cfm>



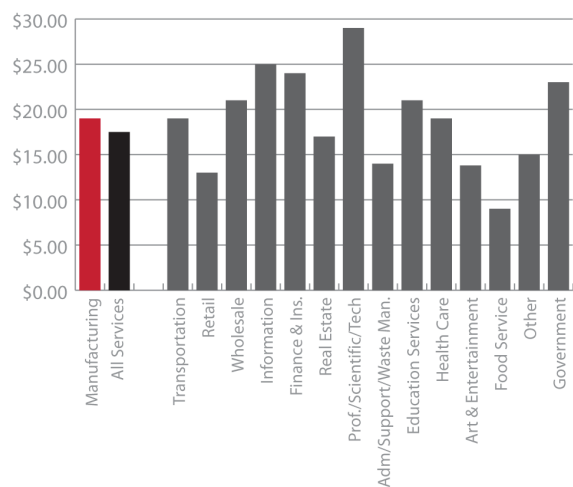
**Figure 2: Number of U.S. Employees (million) by Sector and Service Category, 2006**



Source: Economic Report of the President, 2007

show average wages above manufacturing, such as Education and Professional/Scientific/Technical. Other service industry categories generate average wages far below the average for manufacturing; Food Service, Arts and Entertainment, Waste, and Retail Trade are the most notable. However, there are enough workers in high wage service sectors that the average service wage is only 90 cents below the average manufacturing wage. While 90 cents is significant, it does not signal a fundamental national crisis.

**Figure 3: Average Hourly Wages, by Employment Sector and Service Category, 2006**



Source: U.S. Dept. of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, May 2006 National Industry-Specific Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates

Although the precise nature of the relationship between productivity and wages is contested, common belief holds that wages do, or at least should, reflect productivity. This is no doubt one reason for the attention given 'good-paying' manufacturing jobs. And in fact, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) data show that manufacturing wages have grown faster than service sector wages (7.4 fold vs. 6.1 fold increase between 1964 and 2008). However, detailed BLS wage data paints a more complex portrait of the landscape of pay. Both average wages and the rate of growth of wages of some service sector industries have exceeded that of many manufacturing sectors over both shorter (1990-2008) and longer (1964-2008) time spans. Education and health, professional and business, financial, information, and a variety of miscellaneous "other" services have been standouts in the rate of wage growth.

### Better understanding services

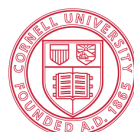
In the wake of major changes stimulated by new technology, globalization, and outsourcing, services have begun to receive more sustained attention. With this attention has come the need to revisit fundamental questions having theoretical, practical, and policy importance: what are the essential, distinguishing characteristics of services? How should they be categorized? What makes them economically significant?

Most of us considering services "know one when we see it". For a more systematic consideration, however, this is hardly adequate. Economists have long used several criteria to define a service activity, but the criteria are being rethought. In 1997, the US and other North American governments extensively revised their system of "industrial classification" in no small part because it was recognized that the older system failed to "reflect the structure of the economy" that was now dominated by the nongoods producing sectors.

New criteria that have been proposed range widely. One—does it produce or modify a material good—is prefigured in Adam Smith's observation that "*The labour of the menial servant does not fix or realize itself in any particular... commodity. His services generally perish in the very instant of their performance, and seldom leave any trace or value behind them.*" Other criteria rely on detailed analyses of whether/how the activity is linked to businesses, households, or other intermediaries. Application of certain criteria has led some leading researchers to question the usefulness and even possibility of making the traditional distinction between manufacturing and services. They argue that a growing range of manufactured products—computers, iPods, even elevators—are increasingly "useless without embedded services".

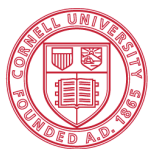
Whatever the definition, and whether we like it or not, service sector employment dominance appears to be here to stay. Accepting this and making the most of it poses challenges for many economic development planners, researchers, politicians and the public. Policymakers, practitioners and others should cross check their assumptions and practices against 21st Century realities. Many jobs situated in the service sector pay well and are desirable goals of economic development policy. Many services are central to both individual well-being and economic sustainability. Policy that ignores the implications of these observations does so to the detriment of us all. ▲

For more on this topic, see our book review: James E. Pratt and David L. Kay. "The Handbook of Service Industries, edited by John R. Bryson and Peter W. Daniels", *Growth and Change*, 39(4):670-673, December 2008.



Cornell University

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# Research & Policy Brief Series

ISSUE NUMBER 30/JULY 2009

## Emerging Trends in the Marcellus Shale\*

By Jeffrey Jacquet and Richard Stedman, Cornell University

### What is the Issue?

The Marcellus Shale is a geologic shale bed that extends across much of Pennsylvania (PA) and southern New York State (NYS), and is estimated to contain one of the world's largest deposits of natural gas. Despite reduced natural gas commodity prices in the fall of 2008 and the current economic recession, natural gas development continues in many areas of PA. In particular, Bradford and Susquehanna counties, just south of the NYS border, have experienced some of the most intense drilling in all of the Marcellus Shale. Energy companies plan to nearly double the number of drilling rigs by the end of the year, with more increases projected in the years to follow. Given the larger current economic considerations, this development illustrates the attractiveness of market proximity and the quality of Marcellus Shale gas, and portends what may lie ahead for NYS.

Development of the Marcellus Shale natural gas requires "unconventional" extraction methods. The increased depth, horizontal drilling techniques, and hydraulic-fracturing are much more industrial, labor-intensive, and time-intensive than the conventional, shallow-gas drilling historically used in the region. Well drilling activity typically requires about 5 acres of land, plus nearby locations for pipeline and compressor stations, with truck and machinery activity similar to that of a heavy industrial site. The active drilling process can last for 45 days or longer at each drilling rig location. Hydro-fracturing can require 3 million or more gallons of water per well, requiring extensive water withdrawal and disposal practices.

In addition to these environmental and land use issues, there are potential social and economic impacts. Significantly larger workforces than shallow gas drilling are required, and areas of intense development can require thousands of temporary workers. And, compared to shallow gas wells, the royalties from producing gas wells can provide land owners with much larger incomes. Given all of these issues and the pace and scale of

development occurring in PA, the Marcellus Shale has the potential to create significant environmental, land use, economic, and social changes in the communities of NYS's southern tier.

While development activity in PA is increasing rapidly, the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has put an effective "moratorium" on Marcellus Shale development within NYS as the agency completes a review of the state's regulatory policy towards these unconventional drilling methods. The DEC's policy document, called the Supplemental Generic Environmental Impact Statement (or SGEIS) is expected to be released in final form by the fall of 2009.

### Emerging Trends

Despite the current moratorium on development, a number of important trends are emerging across NYS in response to Marcellus Shale development scenarios. These trends suggest additional research questions.

#### *The Emergence of Landowner Coalitions and other Advocacy Groups*

A number of citizen based groups are forming in response to Marcellus gas exploration. One particular type of group is landowner coalitions. Individual landowners have historically faced informational and

other disadvantages in their one-on-one negotiations with gas companies. More recently, large coalitions of rural landowners have formed across southern NYS for the purpose of bargaining collectively with energy companies over leasing contracts. These coalitions, many representing hundreds of landowners controlling tens of thousands of acres, represent a historically unprecedented level of collective action among rural residents in NYS. While the majority of coalitions have not yet signed leases with energy companies, they have been central to the education of local



An example of a Marcellus Shale well development site, (Upshur County, WV.)

Used with permission. Copyright West Virginia Surface Owners' Rights Organization (WV SORO), [www.wvsoro.org](http://www.wvsoro.org).



residents. With vast acreages under their influence, these coalitions may potentially exert greater control over the development of the Marcellus Shale than local, state, or federal governments. However, it is unclear what influence these coalitions might have on environmental impacts and land use during and after the energy development process, and what their role might be after leases are signed.

Impacts extend beyond property owners. Other local advocacy groups have formed to express their concerns over potential environmental impacts, as well as negative economic impacts, increased inequality, the pace and magnitude of gas exploration, and procedural justice. These groups have organized community forums, hosted experts, provided materials, and lobbied government officials on these issues. As with the landowner coalitions, the current moratorium provides time for these advocacy groups to clarify their positions, and organize their membership.

### *State and Local Regulation*

Many questions will remain unanswered until the DEC releases their final SGEIS and accompanying rules governing this kind of gas development technology. On the environmental side, the DEC could either leave current regulations untouched or implement much stricter environmental standards. However, the full scope of their authority over many aspects, including socioeconomic concerns, is currently unknown. The DEC has indicated their intention to analyze potential socioeconomic impacts, including cumulative impacts, impacts to community character, and local government participation. Possible regulation in this area could alter development procedures and local government control. Some local governments have asked the DEC and the state legislature for local controls such as enhanced notification procedures, detailed information on the presence of hazardous materials, authority over storm water and erosion control, participation in the state environmental impact review process (SEQR), and a portion of the proceeds of a severance tax to offset local expenses. The ability of these potential controls to be engaged through the SGEIS process is unknown. Some may require additional legislative action, and state legislators are looking into these and other regulations.

State and local regulatory authority over gas development is most clearly articulated within the NYS Environmental Conservation Law (ECL), specifically, Section 23-0303, which states that the state regulations “shall supersede all local laws and ordinances relating to the regulation of the oil, gas and solution mining industries; but shall not supersede local government jurisdiction over local roads or the rights of local governments under the real property tax law”. This is a strong contrast to the ‘home rule’ tradition of NYS, where local jurisdictions typically have a great deal of control over local land use. As is often the case when new controversies arise, the interpretation of this law is being debated within New York legal circles. The precise boundary of local government authorities over “local roads” or “real property tax law” has not been concretely litigated. The Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, ruling on the bounds of a nearly identical Pennsylvania law, found that local governments have the ability to

reasonably regulate the location of natural gas development within a land-zoning regime, but are not able to regulate the methods of the extraction process. The decision is being watched closely by NYS officials, as it illustrates the breadth of interpretation available within a similar law.

### *Community Task Forces*

A number of counties and municipalities in southern NYS have created community task forces to gather information and prepare local governments for impacts from natural gas development. Using the time afforded by the SGEIS review process, these task forces can determine the areas with the greatest potential for development, update ordinances, industrial permitting fees, and roadway inventories, differentiate local jurisdictions, educate residents on the development process and applicable laws, and monitor impacts to local government agencies from natural gas development. Sullivan County, NYS has recently published a report on potential impacts to their location<sup>1</sup>, and Penn State University has published a primer on the organization of a natural gas community task force.<sup>2</sup>

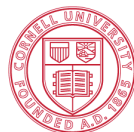
### *Future Research*

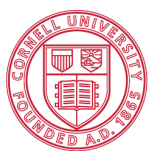
Continued pressure for the development of NYS’s energy resources and the uncertainty of its impacts highlights the need for new research on the social, economic, and environmental impacts of such developments, and effective mitigation measures. Two Cornell University-funded projects are underway that will emphasize the socio-economic impacts of energy development in the region. Each will examine how changes to such areas as land use, economic inequality, municipal preparedness, environmental quality, and citizen participation may affect human communities both positively and negatively. The results of these research projects will be linked to ongoing research on the environmental impacts of development. Especially because of the potential scale of change that may be experienced with aggressive energy development, it is critical to understand the full range of affected people and environments in these efforts. Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) and the Community and Rural Development Institute (CaRDI) are committed to working with partners to help ensure as high a level of information, discourse, and policy-making on this topic as possible. For more information and links to resources on this topic, please visit the Cornell Cooperative Extension Natural Gas Leasing website at <http://gasleasing.cce.cornell.edu>.

\*Issue #30/July 2009 is a joint publication between Cornell University’s Human Dimensions Research Unit and the Community & Rural Development Institute. Support for this Research and Policy Brief has been provided by the Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development, and by the Cornell Economic Development Administration (EDA) University Center.

<sup>1</sup> Sullivan County Task Force, 2009. *Preparing for Natural Gas Development: Understanding Impacts and Protecting Public Assets*. Available online: <http://www.co.sullivan.ny.us/documentView.asp?docid=768>

<sup>2</sup> Penn State Cooperative Extension, 2008. *Marcellus Shale Exploration and Development: Organizing a Community Task Force*. Available Online: <http://gasleasing.cce.cornell.edu/documents/ua451.pdf>





Cornell University  
Human Dimensions Research Unit



Department of Development Sociology  
Cornell University

# Research & Policy Brief Series

ISSUE NUMBER 31/SEPTEMBER 2009

## Living with Wildlife on the Rural-Urban Interface\*

By **Dan Decker, Heather Wieczorek Hudenko, Bill Siemer and Paul Curtis**, Cornell University; **John Major and Lou Berchielli**, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation

### What is the Issue?

New York State (NYS) is home to hundreds of species of wildlife. Interactions with wildlife such as white-tailed deer, black bear, Canada geese, and coyotes are common for residents of rural, exurban, and urban-rural interface communities. Most of these interactions are positive, but some may have negative economic, aesthetic, health, and safety impacts. Although regional NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) offices partner with communities by providing technical advice, issuing necessary permits, and providing referrals to other agencies or the private sector, it's not their focus, nor do they have the resources, to deal with wildlife management solutions at an individual community level. Community residents and local institutions need to assume responsibility and play multiple roles in identifying and implementing effective approaches to achieve peaceful human-wildlife coexistence in partnership with state and federal agencies.

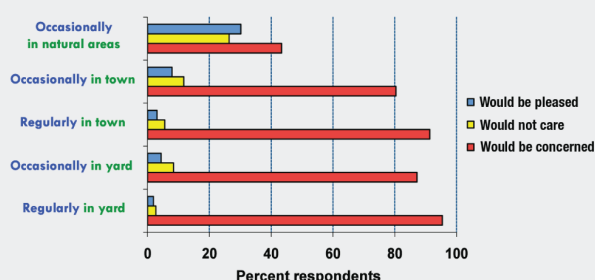


### Example: The Case of Coyotes

Residents of many NYS communities may have the opportunity to see coyotes near their homes. Their reactions may range from enjoyment to concerns about coyote encounters with pets or people. Understanding how people feel about the presence of coyotes and what they perceive as a "problem" interaction can inform a community about how best to respond to coyotes in their midst.

A recent study in Westchester and Saratoga Counties found that there was a general awareness of coyotes in the communities, with many residents having observed them first hand. Overall, coyote presence in natural areas was acceptable, but when coyotes were sighted in "human habitats," such as in town or in private yards, they became a concern (Figure 1). To provide information about living with coyotes in Westchester County, local and state groups and agencies collaborated to develop a coordinated communication strategy. While the partners had different orientations and responsibilities, they identified common objectives that focused on promoting tolerance and avoiding problematic interactions with coyotes. Communication and education campaigns of this kind may foster appreciation of coyotes, to encourage risk-reducing behaviors, and facilitate sustainable coexistence between coyotes and humans over time.

**Figure 1: Residents' reactions to potential coyote presence in their area, based on proximity and frequency**



Source: Living with Coyotes in Suburban Areas: Insights from Two New York State Counties. 2008. H. Wieczorek Hudenko, W.F. Siemer, and D.J. Decker. HDRU Publ. 08-8. Dept. of Nat. Resour., Coll. Ag. and Life Sci., Cornell Univ., Ithaca, NY. 67pp.

### Lessons Learned<sup>1</sup>

A community's ability to live with wildlife can be improved by learning from the experiences of others who have addressed this issue. Based on case studies from across NYS, we outline characteristics of human-wildlife interactions and related community responses.

- *People turn to local resources when confronted with wildlife issues, either for information or for services that can provide assistance.*
  - If wildlife are perceived to present a safety threat, local police, animal control officers, or public safety departments are contacted.
  - If a nuisance problem is encountered by homeowners, they seek information from Cooperative Extension and assistance from local Nuisance Wildlife Control Operators (NWCs).
  - If a group of residents find they share a common problem, they contact local government officials and seek a community-level response.
- *A variety of perspectives can be expected in community wildlife issues.* Institutions and entities important to engage include:
  - Local government
  - NYSDEC, regional wildlife office (<http://www.dec.ny.gov/about/50230.html>)
  - Law enforcement (e.g., police, department, public safety departments, animal control officers)
  - News and other media representatives (e.g., local public access TV stations, websites)
  - Cornell Cooperative Extension (<http://www.cce.cornell.edu/>)

<sup>1</sup>Research upon which this Brief is based was funded primarily by NYSDEC (Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Project WE-173-G) and the Cornell University Agricultural Experiment Station.



- USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service—Wildlife Services (<http://www.aphis.usda.gov/ws/statereports/newyork.html>)
- Environmental planner, county planning department
- Managers of nature centers, parks and protected areas (e.g., municipal, county, state, and private land trusts and conservancies)
- NWCOS (>1000 statewide; check local yellow pages for “wildlife control” or “pest management”)
- Local hunting and conservation clubs
- Nongovernmental organizations (e.g., animal welfare and animal rights organizations, land trusts)
- Grass roots organizations established due to perceived community issue
- *Attitudes about wildlife in a community can change over time.* For example, the number of residents who say they are concerned about deer in their neighborhood may increase significantly as they experience or hear about ornamental plant damage and vehicle collisions. Conversely, a study found that landowners with more experience with black bears had higher tolerance for their presence than landowners with little experience.
- *Primary impacts associated with wildlife in a community can change over time—dated studies about community preferences can be misleading.* For instance, concerns about deer in communities historically have tended to focus on impacts associated with vehicle collisions and plant damage, but over the last decade wildlife-associated disease risk, such as human cases of Lyme disease, has been a growing concern.
- *Stakeholders who have experienced wildlife-related benefits often express higher tolerance for negative human-wildlife interactions.* Studies on a range of human-wildlife issues have demonstrated that people who hunt, fish, feed and watch wildlife are more willing to accept negative impacts such as minor property damage.
- *Personal experience with wildlife influences wildlife-related risk perception.* Studies suggest that non-confrontational encounters with a species such as black bear tend to lower concern and risk perception. Conversely, a more consequential encounter, such as with a coyote that threatens, injures, or kills a pet, may elevate concern about a risk previously not recognized.
- *Input from both informants and community residents is preferable.* Input from a few community members who are most deeply involved in wildlife issues (i.e., informants) may not be representative of the community overall. Informant input should be augmented with a systematic survey and community engagement to gain understanding about public awareness, beliefs, attitudes, and risk perceptions useful for management decision-making and communication efforts.
- *Stakeholders want to give input, but one size does not fit all.* Some residents may be happy to participate in only a survey while others may want to write to the village board or attend a public meeting to express their views. Some may be willing to commit to participating in a citizen task force so that they may study the issue and influence management decisions.
- *Public desire to resolve a wildlife concern does not mean consensus about solutions will emerge easily.* Most community wildlife controversies focus on proposed methods for dealing with problems. Community members frequently disagree over the methods to address wildlife issues. For instance, selectively removing individual animals that have become food conditioned or habituated to humans to the extent that they pose a threat may solve a local problem. Nevertheless, lethal removal of wildlife often faces resistance. Even in a situation where community members agree that some action is needed, disagreement among the interested parties may delay solutions (e.g., legal challenges, town ordinances, letter writing campaigns).
- *Communities need to consider long-term planning horizons for program implementation.* Wildlife such as deer, Canada geese, and beaver may

maintain home ranges in urban areas for many years and resist changing their behaviors, considerable time may be required before the effects of management are seen. Similarly, people's behaviors that contribute to conflicts often take time (perhaps a generation) to shift. Thus, strategies that commit adequate effort and funding over the long-term are required to gain solutions.

- *Local news media are important in framing a community wildlife issue, and can be helpful in informing community members about the issue.* Local print, TV, web, and radio outlets help inform residents' about human-wildlife interactions in the community, as well as management decisions and strategies.
- *An information and education effort alone may do little to reduce community residents' behaviors that cause problems with wildlife.* Education interventions generally are helpful, but used alone typically yield only modest and temporary behavior change across a community. Usually a combination of activities directed at the target animals, laws, enforcement, landscape modification, and public information and education is required.

## Community Involvement, Support & Partnerships

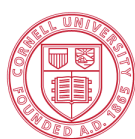
Community involvement is critical to decision making about wildlife issues. A variety of opportunities for community input and engagement should be developed to connect citizens with wildlife agencies, local information sources, local sources of assistance, and various interest groups. Engaging community actors early in the development of wildlife management education and policy will lead to more widely acceptable strategies over the long term. Clear *objectives* are necessary before discussing actions. Consensus on the need for management is not always accompanied by agreement on acceptable methods. If possible, partnerships and agreements about protocols for dealing with human-wildlife conflicts should be developed before conflict occurs. NYSDEC, USDA-APHIS Wildlife Services and local NWCOS should be engaged as partners in protocol development as they have invaluable experiences to share and roles to play. Having policy tools in place (e.g., ordinances, agreements with cooperators, accepted protocols) will position a community to deal effectively with issues that inevitably arise as humans and wildlife attempt to coexist.

Community-based wildlife management is a complex undertaking. Community deliberation and effective partnerships are key elements of success. Proactively planning for management is the best way to improve a community's ability to live with wildlife on the urban-rural interface.

## Resources:

- Cornell Cooperative Extension website: <http://wildlifecontrol.info/Pages/default1.aspx>
- Decker, D. J., T. B. Lauber, and W. F. Siemer. 2002. Human - Wildlife Conflict Management: A practitioner's guide. Northeast Wildlife Damage Management Research and Outreach Cooperative. Ithaca, New York.
- Decker, D. J., D. B. Raik, and W. F. Siemer. 2004. Community-based suburban deer management: A practitioner's guide. Northeast Wildlife Damage Management Research and Outreach Cooperative. Ithaca, New York.
- Siemer, W. F., D. J. Decker, P. Otto, and M. L. Gore. 2007. Working through black bear management issues: A practitioners' guide. Northeast Wildlife Damage Management Research and Outreach Cooperative. Ithaca, New York.

\*Issue #31/September 2009 is a joint publication between Cornell University's Human Dimensions Research Unit and the Community & Rural Development Institute.





# Research & Policy Brief Series

ISSUE NUMBER 32/NOVEMBER 2009

## How schools can help communities in NYS \*

By John W. Sipple, Hope Casto, and Robin M. Blakely, Cornell University

### What is the issue?

Schools play multiple roles in communities of all sizes. Schools not only meet a community's educational needs, but they provide employment, social, cultural, and recreational opportunities for residents<sup>1</sup>. In the smallest and most remote communities, schools are often considered *the* civic institution and quite possibly the only economically viable institution in town. However, with the current budget crisis in New York State, school districts - particularly smaller districts in rural areas - face increased pressure to achieve cost savings through shared services and consolidation. Such constraints may affect the ability of these schools to serve their multiple roles and important functions in their local communities. Conversely, there may be opportunities for smaller school districts to weather the storm if those roles and the interests of local residents are better understood in cost/benefit calculations. Are New Yorkers satisfied with the public education in their communities? How can local schools best help their community? What additional services could schools offer to help their local community?

To better understand these issues, we analyze data from 1,100 respondents to the 2009 Empire State Poll and CaRDI Rural Survey, telephone surveys conducted by the Survey Research Institute at Cornell University. We examine responses to a series of questions about public schools in New York State communities, comparing answers among downstate urban, upstate urban, and rural New York State respondents.

### Satisfaction with local schools

We begin by asking about the general level of satisfaction with the public schools in local communities. Respondents were asked the question: "Thinking about availability, cost, quality and any other considerations important to

**Figure 1:** How satisfied are you with the public education in your community?

	NYS Total	Downstate Urban	Upstate Urban	Rural
Dissatisfied	24.6%	29.6%	17.2%	16.4%
Neutral	14.0%	14.7%	15.3%	10.6%
Satisfied	61.3%	55.7%	67.5%	72.9%

Source: 2009 Empire State Poll and CaRDI Rural Survey, Cornell University

you, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the public education in your community?" More than half (61.3 percent) of New Yorkers report being satisfied with the public education in their communities, but this varies dramatically across the state. Downstate urbanites report the lowest levels of satisfaction (55.7 percent) while rural New Yorkers are the most satisfied (72.9 percent), a 17 point difference.

### How schools help communities

Survey respondents were also asked the following question: "Local communities can be helped/served/supported in many ways by their local school districts. How can your local school district best help your local community?" Of the three choices offered, the majority of New Yorkers feel that their local school district can best help their community by better preparing students for college (60.3 percent), although this figure varies across the state (see Figure 2). Two-thirds of downstate urbanites hold this view, as well as over half of their upstate urban counterparts. Less than half (46.4 percent) of rural New Yorkers agree, a 20 point difference from downstate urbanites. Rural respondents were more likely than their urban counterparts to view schools' as most helpful when they better prepare students for local employment. About a quarter of rural and upstate urbanites felt that their local school district was already helping and did not need to do anything differently, compared to only about one out of seven downstate urbanites who felt this way.

<sup>1</sup>Lyson, Thomas A. 2002. "What does a school mean to a community? Assessing the social and economic benefits of schools to rural villages in New York. *Journal of Research in Rural Education* 17:131-137.

**Figure 2:** How can your local school district best help your local community?

	NYS Total	Downstate Urban	Upstate Urban	Rural
Better preparing students for college	60.3%	66.7%	52.2%	46.4%
Better preparing students for local employment	20.4%	18.5%	20.7%	28.4%
Not doing anything different (already helping)	19.2%	14.8%	27.1%	25.2%

Source: 2009 Empire State Poll and CaRDI Rural Survey, Cornell University

### What additional services can schools offer?

When asked what other services school districts could offer that would better serve their local communities, about half of New Yorkers identified pre-school and healthcare services as the most helpful (see Figure 3). Among upstate urban respondents, pre-school services were more frequently cited, while among rural respondents healthcare services appeared to be more important<sup>2</sup>. Rural New Yorkers were most likely to feel that local school districts would best help their community by remaining the same.

**Figure 3:** Among the following choices that could be offered by your local school district, which one would best help your community?

	NYS Total	Downstate Urban	Upstate Urban	Rural
Pre-school services	27.7%	29.4%	28.0%	20.2%
Healthcare services	25.5%	27.2%	20.4%	26.9%
Services for children from immigrant families	6.4%	7.9%	3.3%	4.9%
Services for parents	14.6%	15.6%	14.7%	11.7%
Stayed the same	16.6%	14.3%	19.9%	21.5%
None of these	9.3%	5.6%	13.7%	14.8%

Source: 2009 Empire State Poll and CaRDI Rural Survey, Cornell University

### Discussion and Policy Implications

The majority of New Yorkers are satisfied with the public education in their community and see their local schools as most helpful in preparing students for college.

In addition, a significant share of respondent feel that local school districts could best help their community by offering pre-school and healthcare services. However, some distinct differences emerge between rural and urban views of local schools.

Rural residents were more focused on the need for schools to prepare students for local employment rather than for college, and were least likely to report that pre-school services would be helpful to their local community. Rural residents may be more focused on the immediate need for jobs, local economic development, and access to healthcare, and hence less focused on the longer-term investments of pre-school and college educations, particularly as a significant share of those students who leave the rural community for college do not return. This may serve to undercut long-term economic stability – intentional or otherwise – but also captures the catch-22 of many rural communities.

Upstate New Yorkers (rural and urban) are also more satisfied than their downstate counterparts with the current services that schools offer in their community. While this signals a degree of satisfaction with the *current* educational system, it may also signal an increasing isolation of the rural communities (and their children) from the pathway to greater economic and social success.

It is clear from these findings that schools have the potential to provide more than educational services for children in a community, and that many New Yorkers view these services in a positive light. In mid-October, New York Governor David Paterson outlined his plan to reduce the state budget deficit by \$3 billion, a plan which includes significant midyear cuts to NYS school districts (including school-based health centers) and municipalities. These cuts further reinforce the need for school districts and municipalities to partner on providing key community services. Rural people are the most satisfied with the public education in their communities, and many do not want to see changes in what their schools offer. Ironically, however, in the current economic, social and political environment it is small rural schools that may face the greatest pressure to change<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>2</sup>This issue is a joint publication between CaRDI and the New York State Center for Rural Schools (<http://www.nyrruralschools.org>).

<sup>3</sup>See the CaRDI publication on "School Consolidation: What do New Yorkers Think?" at: <http://devsoc.cals.cornell.edu/cals/devsoc/outreach/cardi/publications/upload/11-2009-RNYM.pdf>

