



PROGRAM GUIDE

2023 NACo

WESTERN INTERSTATE REGION CONFERENCE

MAY 17-19
WASHINGTON
COUNTY, UTAH



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ABOUT WIR

THE WESTERN INTERSTATE REGION (WIR) SERVES AS THE COUNTY ADVOCATE FOR PUBLIC POLICY ISSUES FACING THE WEST.

WIR is affiliated with the National Association of Counties (NACo) and is dedicated to the promotion of western interests within NACo. These interests include public lands issues (including use and conservation), community stability, economic development and the promotion of the traditional western way of life.

Its membership consists of the state associations of counties in 15 western states, including Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington and Wyoming. In 2022, Minnesota became the first Associate Member of WIR.

WIR is dedicated to promoting a clearer understanding of challenges facing county officials of the 15 western states and serves as a valuable resource for exchanging information about western county governments for NACo, Congress, the administration and to all county officials.

The WIR Board has established the following goals:

- » Promote responsible land management in the West
- » Pursue equitable payment for county expenses associated with public lands not subject to property tax
- » Sustain the western quality of life
- » Promote county officials as conveners

WELCOME NOTES

WELCOME TO THE 2023 WIR CONFERENCE

“



Washington County is honored to host you for NACo's 2023 Western Interstate Region (WIR)

Conference! This will be an important educational experience for us all as we meet with colleagues and hear from experts about the crucial issues facing the West. I also hope you have a chance to enjoy all that Greater Zion has to offer—from our excellent dining scene to the distinctive geography. Welcome to Southern Utah! ”

Commissioner Adam Snow

Chairman, Washington County, Utah
Board of Commissioners

“



On behalf of the Western Interstate Region (WIR) Board of Directors, welcome to NACo's 2023 WIR

Conference! This conference offers many unique resources, opportunities to network with fellow county officials and an unbeatable host location. I look forward to learning with you about the innovative solutions western counties have to offer. ”

Judge Dan Joyce

President, Western Interstate Region
Judge, Malheur County, Ore.

GENERAL CONFERENCE INFORMATION

The 2023 WIR Conference will take place at the Dixie Convention Center in Washington County, Utah. All sessions and events will take place on the first floor of the convention center, unless otherwise noted.

1835 S. Convention Center Drive
St. George, Utah 84790

REGISTRATION

The conference registration desk is located directly inside the North Lobby of the Dixie Convention Center, which is down the Grand Concourse hallway from the Main Lobby. It will be open during the following hours:

Wednesday // 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Thursday // 7:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Friday // 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

BADGES

All conference attendees must register and wear their badges at all times to gain admission to official conference sessions and social events.



PROGRAM

WEDNESDAY, MAY 17

7:30 AM - 8:15 AM

Green Spring

PUBLIC LANDS TRUST FUND TRUSTEES MEETING

8:00 AM - 5:00 PM

*Registration Desk
North Lobby*

REGISTRATION OPEN

9:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Garden Room

WIR BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Speakers for the WIR Board of Directors meeting include:

- **Hon. Adam Snow**, Chairman, Washington County, Utah Board of Commissioners
- **Redge Johnson**, Director, Utah Public Lands Policy Coordinating Office
- **Hon. James Gore**, Supervisor, Sonoma County, Calif.
- **Kevin Cann**, Vice President, Golden State Natural Resources
- **Travis Brammer**, Conservation Fellow, Ruckelshaus Institute
- **Michele Weaver**, Utah State Director, USDA-Rural Development
- **Troy Timmons**, Policy Director, Western Governors Association
- **Hon. Tammy Pearson**, Commissioner, Beaver County, Utah
- **Eryn Hurley**, Director, Government Affairs, National Association of Counties
- **Craig Sullivan**, Executive Director, County Supervisors Association of Arizona

12:00 PM - 1:00 PM

Main Lobby

LUNCH ON YOUR OWN

1:00 PM - 5:00 PM

Sunbrook C

ENVIRONMENT, ENERGY AND LAND USE AND AGRICULTURE AND RURAL AFFAIRS POLICY STEERING COMMITTEES MOBILE TOUR: WASHINGTON COUNTY WATER CONSERVANCY DISTRICT

Founded in 1962 at the request of local property owners, the Washington County Water Conservancy District manages, conserves, develops and stabilizes water supplies within this rapidly growing county. With the county's water supply limited to the Virgin River, the District's work and mission are critical to the present and future economic and conservation needs of Washington County. This tour will include visits to some of the critical diversion dams and reservoirs that produce more than 60 million gallons of water per day for 200,000 residents in rural and urban communities. ***Policy steering committee members are given preference for joining these tours, followed by a first-come, first-serve basis for additional attendees.***

1:15 PM - 5:00 PM

Entrada A

PUBLIC LANDS POLICY STEERING COMMITTEE MOBILE TOUR: RED CLIFFS NATIONAL CONSERVATION AREA

The Red Cliffs National Conservation Area (NCA) comprises nearly 46,000 acres at the convergence of the Mojave Desert, Colorado Plateau and Great Basin. Located just outside of St. George, the NCA encompasses critical habitat for the Mojave Desert tortoise and other vulnerable species. Learn how Washington County worked with federal agencies to better manage this NCA to benefit the species, environment and local community. ***Policy steering committee members are given preference for joining these tours, followed by a first-come, first-serve basis for additional attendees.***

6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Don's Garage

2158 W 1800 N

St. George, UT 84770

NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF REPUBLICAN COUNTY OFFICIALS (AFFILIATE) RECEPTION

Hosted in a classic car museum, NCRCO will host a reception for Republican county officials not attending the WIR and NACo Board Reception. Entertainment and food will be provided.

6:30 PM - 8:30 PM

Entrada Golf Club

NACo BOARD AND WIR BOARD RECEPTION (INVITATION ONLY)

Buses for the reception will load between 6:00 and 6:15 p.m. at the Main Lobby of the Dixie Convention Center. Buses will loop back and forth throughout the evening, with the final bus departing Entrada at 8:30 p.m.

THURSDAY, MAY 18

7:30 AM - 5:00 PM

REGISTRATION OPEN

*Registration Desk
North Lobby*

8:30 AM - 10:00 AM

OPENING GENERAL SESSION

Ballroom CDEF

- **Hon. Deidre Henderson**, Lieutenant Governor of Utah
- Video message from **Hon. Spencer Cox**, Governor of Utah
- **Hon. Adam Snow**, Chairman, Washington County, Utah Board of Commissioners
- **Hon. Tommy Beaudreau**, Deputy Secretary, U.S. Department of the Interior
- **Ryan Riddle**, Fire Warden, Iron County, Utah
- **Robert Stephen**, CEO, RSC

10:15 AM - 11:45 AM

WEATHERING WEATHER WHIPLASH: ENSURING SUSTAINABLE WATER SUPPLY IN THE FACE OF RECORD DROUGHT AND FLOODING

Auditorium

For more than two decades, the boom-and-bust cycle of Western drought and flooding has jeopardized the quality of life for residents and reduced economic opportunities in rural areas. To meet these challenges, the federal government has established new programs to conserve water supplies, while state and local leaders and private sector partners have implemented innovative solutions to amend water and dam management plans, capture stormwater for groundwater recharge, institute water reuse plans and utilize advanced forecasting to inform actions. This workshop will feature government leaders and private sector stakeholders to discuss the current drought and flood outlook, share resources to secure and grow water supplies, and discuss how intergovernmental partnerships are necessary to reduce the negative impacts of this long-term challenge for the West.

- **Nick Williams**, Power Manager for the Upper Colorado Basin, Bureau of Reclamation
- **Megan Syner**, Hydrology, Meteorology, and Climate Services Branch Chief or the Western Region, National Weather Service
- **Wade Garrett**, Vice President of Advocacy and Strategic Relations, Utah Farm Bureau Federation
- **Marty Ralph**, Director, Center for Western Weather and Water Extremes, Scripps Institution of Oceanography

Moderator:

- **Hon. James Gore**, Supervisor, Sonoma County, Calif.

10:15 AM - 11:45 AM

Entrada A

BUILDING ECONOMIC RESILIENCE: REBOUNDED FROM ECONOMIC SHOCKS

Join the U.S. Economic Development Administration and county partners for a conversation on how local innovation, industry clusters and equitable partnerships can serve as keys to economic resilience. This session will examine how coal communities are facing economic transitions, recovering and responding to business closures, and learning lessons from natural disaster events.

- **Jen Wakeland**, Strategic Development Director, Beaver County, Utah
- **Stuart Clason**, Regional Growth Coordinator for Carbon and Emery Counties, South Eastern Utah Association of Local Governments
- **Hon. Richard Crouch**, Supervisor, Mills County, Iowa
- **Jamie Hackbarth**, Economic Development Representative – Utah, U.S. Economic Development Administration

10:15 AM - 11:45 AM

Sunbrook C

STRATEGIES AND SOLUTIONS TO GUARANTEE RETIREMENT SAVINGS INCOME FOR COUNTY EMPLOYEES

Employees face an uncertain future: 61 percent report preparing for retirement makes them stressed, and 79 percent say they do not know enough about investing to ensure their savings will last through retirement. Employees are increasingly looking to employers for income solutions – a financial product that would guarantee income for life. This workshop will focus on proven strategies and solutions available to county employees through 457(b) Supplemental Retirement Plans.

- **Eric Glinsky**, Defined Contribution Specialist, Nationwide
- **Doug Ewing**, Vice President, Nationwide Retirement Institute

12:00 PM - 1:15 PM

Ballroom CDEF

ALL ATTENDEE LUNCHEON

Keynote Speaker:

- **Dr. Dave Schramm**

Known as “Dr. Dave” on campus and across the country, Dave Schramm is a professor and family life extension specialist at Utah State University in the department of Human Development and Family Studies. In 2016, he took a position at Utah State University and was soon appointed by Governor Gary Herbert to serve on Utah’s Commission on Marriage. Dr. Dave regularly presents to professional, academic and business audiences on creating positive cultures both at work and throughout our lives.

1:30 PM - 2:45 PM

Auditorium

PREVENTING AND MITIGATING WILDFIRES IN YOUR COUNTY

Western counties have faced growing threat from wildfire over the past two decades with approximately 7.6 million acres burned in 2022. This workshop will include a presentation on current landscape conditions, information on threat reduction and recovery resources available to counties, and discussions of successful, real-world intergovernmental partnerships to improve forest health.

- **Robyn Heffernan**, National Fire Weather Science and Dissemination Meteorologist, National Weather Service
- **Brian Ferebee**, Chief Executive of Intergovernmental Relations, U.S. Forest Service
- **Peter Muller**, Officer, Fiscal Federalism Initiative, Pew Charitable Trusts
- **Faith Berry**, Fire Program Specialist, U.S. Fire Administration
- **Kyle McCormick**, Hazard Mitigation Specialist, Federal Emergency Management Agency

Moderator:

- **Hon. Tammy Pearson**, Commissioner, Beaver County, Utah

1:30 PM - 2:45 PM

Entrada A

SOLAR ENERGY ON FEDERAL LANDS: UNDERSTANDING THE PROCESS, POTENTIAL AND PITFALLS FOR YOUR COUNTY

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) announced in December 2022 its plans to update the 2012 Western Solar Plan and to expand its reach into five additional states: Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington and Wyoming. In the 10 years since, counties have seen the growth of solar farms and experienced the positive and negative economic and environmental impacts. In this workshop, explore how the new BLM Solar Plan can extend solar energy into western counties, the benefits of solar, how to mitigate any negative impacts of solar installations and the potential consequences for your community.

- **Hon. Joe Dabulskis**, Judge, Sherman County, Ore.
- **Hon. Stan Summers**, Commissioner, Box Elder County, Utah
- **Jeff Stewart**, President, The Shipley Group and NEPA Tools

Moderator:

- **Hon. John Espy**, Commissioner, Carbon County, Wyo.

1:30 PM - 2:45 PM

Sunbrook C

LEVERAGING RESOURCES FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL RESILIENCY

This workshop will bring together officials from the U.S. Department of Defense's Readiness & Environmental Protection Integration (REPI) Program and leaders from counties neighboring military installations. During this session, participants will learn how REPI Program partnerships in the West play a critical role in strengthening local capacity to address base security and environmental resiliency, including opportunities to leverage REPI funding to match other federal funds.

- **Hon. Matt Ryan**, Supervisor, Coconino County, Arizona
- **Kristin Thomasgard**, Program Director, REPI, U.S. Department of Defense
- **Astor Boozer**, Regional Conservationist for the West Region, Natural Resources Conservation Service, USDA

1:30 PM - 4:00 PM

Garden Room

NACo BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

3:15 PM - 4:45 PM

Sunbrook C

SECURING THE ELECTRIC GRID IN THE FACE OF EXTREME WEATHER AND THE GROWTH IN RENEWABLE ENERGY

Extreme weather events and natural disasters in recent years have impacted the ability to deliver electricity to county residents and maintain the security and resiliency of grid infrastructure. The rapid increase in wind and solar development also brings new and unique challenges, including a lack of storage capacity and transmission lines to bring electricity to markets. Panelists will discuss the new resources available through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and the Inflation Reduction Act to promote grid reliability, as well as efforts by state governments and private industry to improve related infrastructure.

- **Kristen Frick**, Grid Deployment Office, U.S. Department of Energy
- **Tad Greener**, Regional Economic Competitiveness Officer, Utah Office of Energy Development
- **Rohit Nair**, Director of Standards Engineering and Grid Modernization, Rocky Mountain Power
- **Greg Brophy**, Colorado Director, The Western Way

Moderator:

- **Hon. Wes McCart**, Commissioner, Stevens County, Wash.

3:15 PM - 4:45 PM

Entrada A

LEADING IN TIMES OF CRISIS

When disaster strikes your county, the community looks to its county officials for leadership and guidance. How you handle the situation sets the tone for the immediate response and future recovery. This workshop will focus on building skills relevant to resilient leaders, including calmly leading through crisis and the importance of adaptability. With these traits, county officials will be better prepared to lead through crisis and help communities emerge from any crisis together and stronger.

- **Hon. Bill Truex**, Commissioner, Charlotte County, Fla.
- **Debra Lucero**, Chief Administrative Officer, Plumas County, Calif.
- **Dr. Dave Schramm**, Professor, Utah State University

6:30 PM - 8:30 PM

Dixie Center Lawn

CONFERENCE-WIDE RECEPTION

Join Washington County and the Greater Zion Visitors Bureau for a closing reception on the lawn of the Dixie Convention Center! The reception will include food, live entertainment and lawn games.

FRIDAY, MAY 19

8:00 AM - 12:00 PM

*Registration Desk
North Lobby*

REGISTRATION OPEN

8:30 AM - 9:00 AM

Ballroom CDEF

WIR ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

The Annual Business Meeting is open to all attendees and will include the election and installation of WIR Officers.

9:00 AM - 10:30 AM

Ballroom CDEF

CLOSING GENERAL SESSION

Presentation of the Dale Sowards Award

- **John R. Modlin**, Chief Patrol Agent, Tucson Sector, U.S. Border Patrol
- **Mordechai Pavlovsky**, Medical Director, Aetna
- **Jennifer Fielder**, CEO, American Lands Council

10:45 AM - 12:00 PM

Entrada A

PROMOTING PRECISION AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY TECHNOLOGIES IN YOUR COUNTY

Farmers, ranchers and land managers across the country have been leveraging exciting technological advances to maximize productivity. Join this workshop for a comprehensive survey of how new technologies and infrastructure such as expanded broadband access, remote sensing, and digitalization can improve agricultural output and land management strategies. Attendees will also learn how county governments encourage the adoption of these techniques in our communities and our own operations.

- **Hon. Tarryl Clark**, Commissioner, Stearns County, Minn.
- **Jonathan McFadden**, Research Economist, U.S. Department of Agriculture
- **Neil Chapman**, Wildland Fire Management Captain, Flagstaff Fire Department
- **Keith Hambrick**, Invasive Species Coordinator, Utah Division of Forestry, Fire and Lands

10:45 AM - 12:00 PM

Sunbrook C

BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE COUNTY WORKFORCE WITH FEDERAL FUNDING

The challenge of attracting workers is not new to many county governments – especially those in rural areas. The private sector and urban centers draw many potential candidates away from county service, and the pandemic only exacerbated the problem. Nevertheless, the recent influx of federal dollars presents counties of every size a new opportunity to compete for high-quality employees. Learn how your county can leverage recent federal investments to address county workforce shortages.

- **Michele Lieberman**, County Manager, Alachua County, Fla.
- **Dallin Kimble**, County Administrative Officer, Mariposa County, Calif.
- **Mack McDonald**, Chief Administrative Officer, San Juan County, Utah
- **Jeffrey Thomas**, Director, Advisory Services, KPMG

10:45 AM - 11:45 AM

Entrada B

NACo BOARD OF DIRECTORS NEW MEMBER ORIENTATION

12:15 PM - 1:00 PM

Ballroom CDEF

BOX LUNCH AVAILABLE

SAVE THE DATES



2023 ANNUAL CONFERENCE & EXPOSITION

TRAVIS
C O U N T Y

AUSTIN,
TEXAS

JULY
21 *thru* 24

REGISTER TODAY! www.NACo.org/Annual

2024 NACo Legislative Conference // February 10-14 // Washington, D.C.

2024 Western Interstate Region Conference // May 8-10 // Mariposa County, Calif.

WIR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Hon. Daniel Joyce // President

Judge

Malheur County, Ore.

Hon. John Espy // First Vice President

Commissioner

Carbon County, Wyo.

Hon. Wes McCart // Second Vice President

Commissioner

Stevens County, Wash.

Hon. Greg Chilcott // Immediate Past President

Commissioner, Ravalli County, Mont.

NACo EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Hon. Denise Winfrey // President

Board Member, Will County, Ill.

Hon. Mary Jo McGuire // First Vice President

Commissioner, Ramsey County, Minn.

Hon. James Gore // Second Vice President

Supervisor, Sonoma County, Calif.

Hon. Larry Johnson // President

Commissioner, DeKalb County, Ga.

Hon. Joe Briggs // West Region Representative

Commissioner, Cascade County, Mont.

Hon. Tracy Graham // Central Region Representative

Commissioner, Audrain County, Mo.

Hon. Ron Berry // South Region Representative

Commissioner, Roane County, Tenn.

Hon. Mark Poloncarz // Northeast Region Representative

County Executive, Erie County, N.Y.

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Councilmember
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North Central District
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Judge/Executive
Boone County, Ky.

Mr. Rick Moorefield

County Attorney
Cumberland County, N.C.

Ms. Cragin Mosteller

External Affairs Director
Florida Association of Counties

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