

# Southern Region Convening Planning

## Alphabetical listing

Lionel J. "Bo" Beaulieu	Director, Southern Rural Development Center	MI
Thelma Burris	Director, Southwest – Va Rural Center	VA
Megan Cohen	Program Manager, Rural Maryland Council	MD
Bill Crawford	The Montgomery Institute	MI
Ellen Matthews Davis	USDA Rural Development – Virginia State Director	VA
Gerald Dial	Executive Director, Alabama Rural Action Commission	TX
Walter Harris	Executive Director, SC Economic Rural Development Council	SC
Cheryl Hinckley	Texas Rural Partners, Inc.	TX
Jody Levin	Principal, Levin Strategic Resources, LLC	WY
Dr Oliver McBride	Director, Crossroads Institute	VA
Rick Melchior	Digital Video Creative Center	TX
Vanessa Orlando	Executive Director, The Rural Maryland Council	MD
Stan Perry	Assistant Director – Webmaster, SC Economic Rural Development Council	SC
Mary Randolph	Executive Director, Wyoming Rural Development Center	WY
Mark Roberts	Executive Director, NC Dept of Commerce, Rural Development Programs	NC
Glen Sink	Executive Director, Council for Rural Virginia ... Va Rural Center	VA
Ward Stevens – Chair Council for Rural Virginia	Vice President/Development & Executive Director for Academic Affairs Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine	VA
Greg S. Taylor	Extension Specialist, Rural Economic Development	TX
Vicki Vaughn	Program/Business Manager. Southern Rural Development Center	MI

## Virginia serves as lead State Rural Development Council (SRDC).

Council for Rural Virginia Executive Director, Glen Sink, has represented the Southern region for planning and implementation of the Regional Convening at both the national and regional level.

It didn't take long for the work group to realized the Southern Region Convening was a "high profile" event. A demanding; yet, rewarding task!

### Three things were considered from the get-go.

1. What did we hope to achieve – what was our purpose?
2. How could we best achieve that purpose?
3. Who would step up and help lead the action?

**An Important Question Arose.** - How do we find the nucleus of a fourteen state region which covers a huge land mass?

**Charlotte, NC** was chosen as that nucleus, so how could we keep communication flowing with such a spread out group? Oh, what about broadband, could it solve the problem?



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**Logistics - Who would take care of logistics?** Site visits, negotiate contracts, and add that special touch to make the Convening a 'top notch' event? Wow, that's a lot of work!

**Mark Roberts, North Carolina**, accepted that responsibility and has done a champion job. He worked with the Harris Conference Center and the Wingate by Windham Hotel, and then went the extra mile to add the special touches. ***Thank you Mark!***

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**Program Planning - What about the program?** Fourteen states and everyone in the work group knew experts in each track . . . How to choose? Who would lead the program planning? **Walter Harris, South Carolina**, accepted that role. He collaborated with the full group to craft the best possible speaker roster. He tracked people down, worked with demanding schedules and brought the results back to the full group at each meeting. ***Thank you Walter!***

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**Planning** – All planning meetings took place via telecommunications . . . seems **“broadband”** was somewhere in that picture too! **Virtually**, this group of individuals worked across time, space, and organizational boundaries ... aided by webs of communication technology.

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**Registration was the next big issue.**

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**Bo” Beaulieu and Vicki Vaughn** to the rescue! Then, name badges – they’re so time consuming and creating the attendee data base . . . How in the world will we ever get that done? Again, **Vicki Vaughn and Abbie Misso!** Seems that Southern Rural Development Center (SRDC) has their act together! Talk about a ‘turn-key’ job, they’re doing it! In addition, **Bo** helped with speaker recommendations and selection - - - **Thank you Bo and Vicki!**

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**They say we need to have fun while we learn.**

Ok, that calls for **Oliver McBride** - - - **“Pass the Biscuits”!** Yep, Oliver will liven things up!

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**What’s Next** - What happens after this fantastic line-up of speakers, facilitators and scribes take the four Convening tracks through the two day process?

**Vanessa Orlando - MD** will wrap things up. She has a terrific plan to get to the root of why we’re having the Convening. A plan to weave the process throughout the event so she can put wheels on the great ideas surfaced by the attendees during the brainstorming sessions. **Thank you Vanessa!**

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After the Convening is over, PowerPoint presentations will be posted on the Convening Webpage <http://www.cfrv.org/2010SouthernRegion.htm> and on the PRA site. Connecting links will be shared.

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