



Strengthening Economies in Our Nation's Coal-Reliant Communities

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New Partners for Smart Growth
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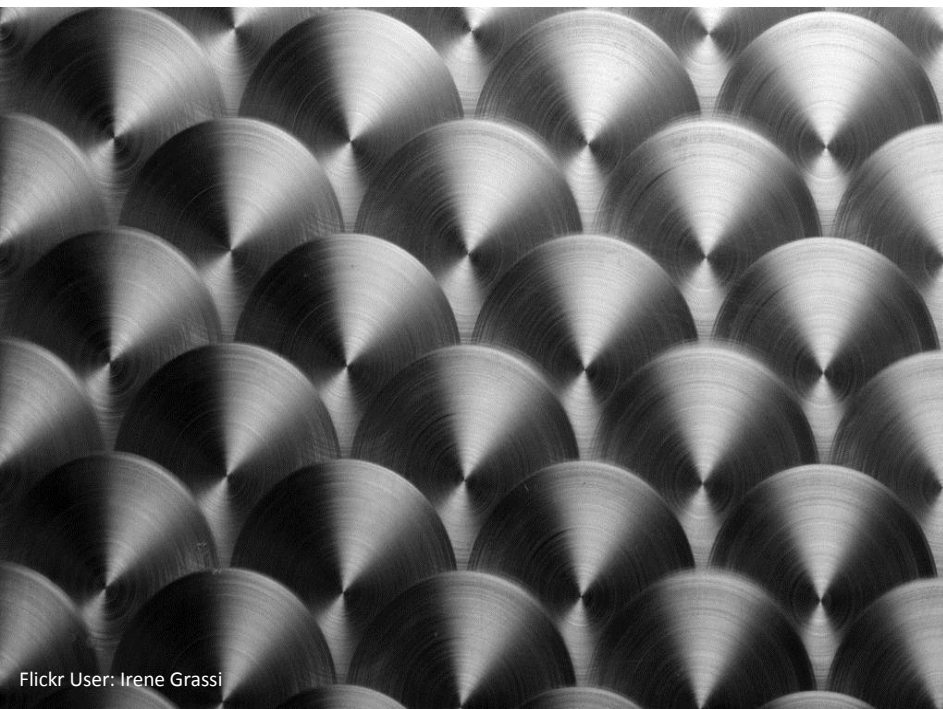




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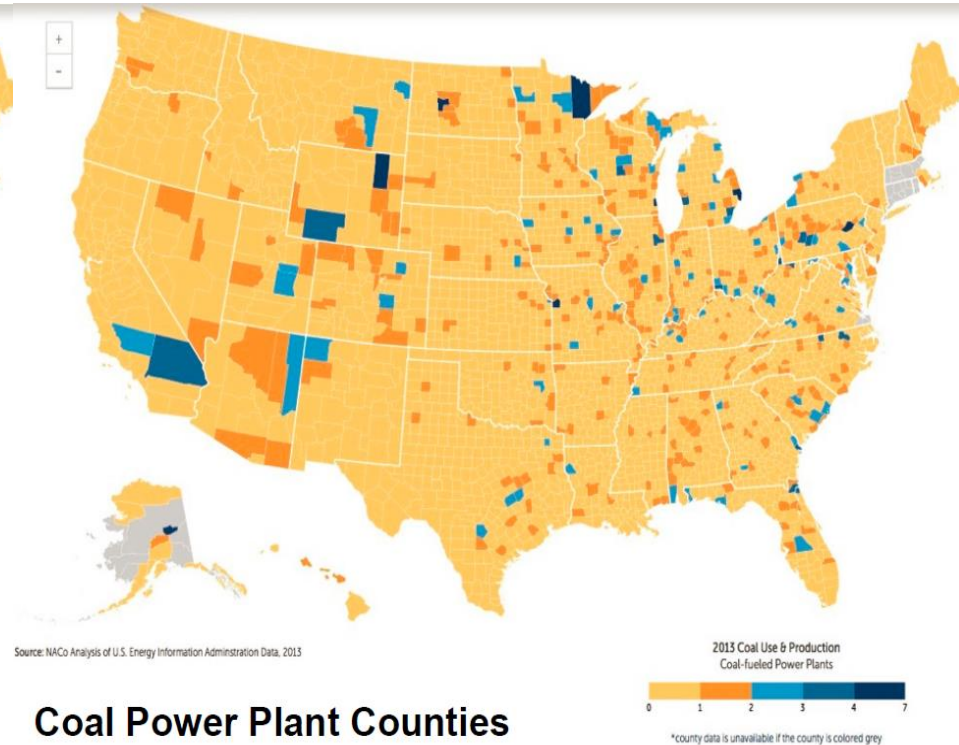
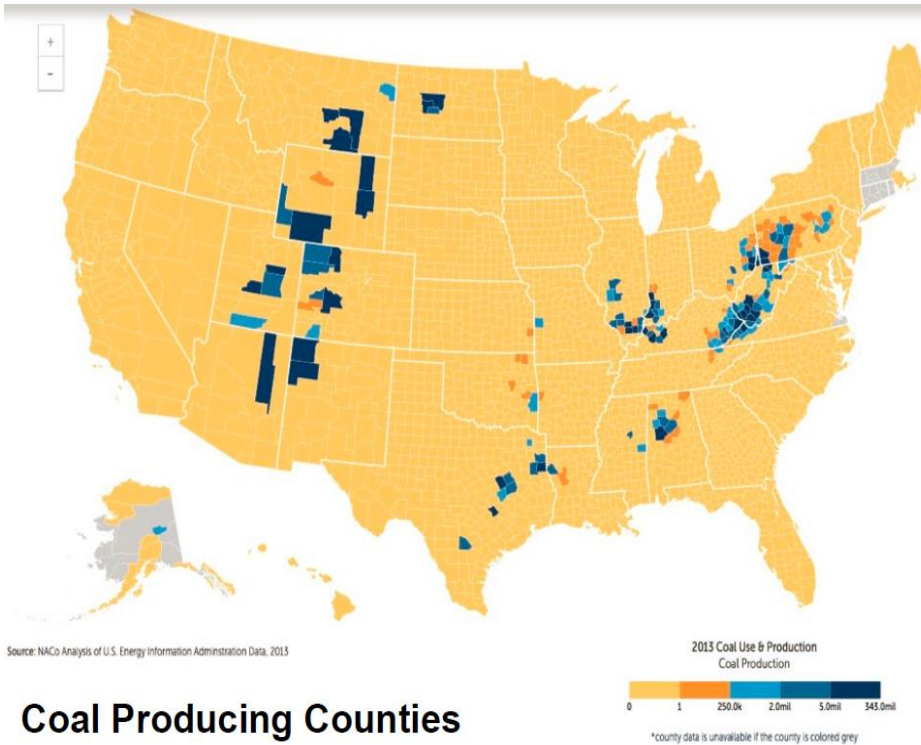


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A National Issue



Coal's Decline Leads to Economic and Social Challenges

- Loss of high-paying jobs
- Loss of indirect jobs
- Declining tax base
- Poverty and health outcomes
- Challenge to community identity
- Sense of loss and grief



Flickr User Scott Clarke

Counties and Regions Seek to Diversify their Economies



**"We need to be prepared for the future,
because we don't know what the future
holds for the coal industry."**

Rich Fink, former coal miner and retired Armstrong County, PA Commissioner

Snapshots of Economic Diversification in Coal Country

Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (Southwest Virginia)



Fred Coeburn pilots a
Phantom 2 drone.
Photo courtesy Mountain
Empire Community College

Outdoor Recreation (Central Pennsylvania)



Photo Credit: SEDA COG

Mine Reclamation (Eastern Kentucky)



Photo Credit: Big Sandy ADD

Broadband Infrastructure (Southwest Colorado)

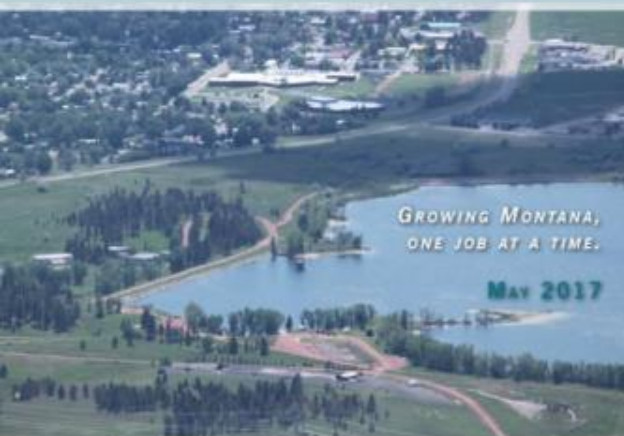


Photo Credit: Proximity Space

Diversification Planning (Southeast Montana)



COLSTRIP ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION STRATEGY



DIVERSIFICATION GOALS AND STRATEGIES

The diversification goals and strategies are a result of synthesized data and input collected from Colstrip's three public input strategy sessions (two in December 2016 and one in March 2017), along with guidance from SEMDC, industry experts and proven case studies from across the United States. These are designed to give firm direction and intent to the community-driven working groups, while still being flexible enough to react to changing local, regional, national, and international demands and opportunities. Multiple assumptions have been accounted for in development of these goals and strategies, including the permitted use industrial space made available by the removal of Units 1 and 2, use of the railroad, etc. These assumptions have not been confirmed and will be a key step in pursuing many of the initiatives outlined in this document.

As mentioned in the executive summary, there is no silver bullet or one-size-fits-all solution when it comes to economic diversification. The solution to the economic shifts in Colstrip will need to be ongoing and multi-faceted with active community, regional, state, and industry involvement. It is suggested to identify a champion for each goal and to establish a stakeholder working group (three to five people) for each strategy.

Following are the identified goals and strategies recommended to capitalize on existing and potential resources in the Colstrip area in an effort to diversify the economy and address economic sustainability and growth.

- Goal 1: Coal, Energy, and Renewable Technology
- Goal 2: High Tech Industry and Entrepreneurship
- Goal 3: Manufacturing
- Goal 4: High Skilled Labor
- Goal 5: Agriculture and Outdoor Recreation/Tourism
- Goal 6: Quality of Life

TERMINOLOGY



GOALS are specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and time-based elements that will meet or enhance the outlined diversification need in the community. Goals outline the mission at-hand and provide guidance over the life of the project.



STRATEGIES are a menu of options that support success of the larger goal. This component of the plan will provide a more refined and detailed vision of what the community is hoping to accomplish and provides guidance to members of working groups.



TASKS are actionable items or stepping stones that need to be accomplished to attain each strategy and goal. This section is laid out in a checklist format to easily track who is assigned to which tasks and which tasks are completed.

Ten of the twelve primary employers, by employee count, in Colstrip are shown below. This chart clearly identifies that a great majority of jobs in the community are coming from power generation and mining.

Colstrip, MT Employment Count

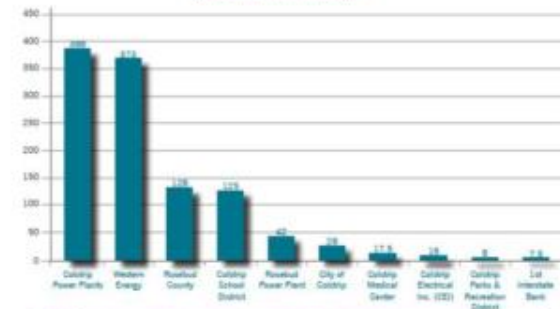


Figure 2-10: Colstrip has several active clusters, but employment resides heavily within the mining and power generation industries. The major employers in the area did not report employee counts, but employ multiple people in the community: Powell Roads and Town Farms.

In-Demand Skill Sets

- Welders
- Craftsmen
- Engineers
- System Operators
- Heavy Machinery Operators
- CDL Licensed Professionals
- Project Managers/Foremen
- Professionals to Lead Apprentices Programs
- Technical Repair
- Mechanics

When Units 1 and 2 close and the economy transitions, there will be excess labor skilled in union trades. In an effort to prepare and retain this group of laborers, it is critical that Colstrip work closely with the local unions to identify opportunities to retrain and redeploy these community members.

A majority of the diversification goals outlined in this plan include opportunities to retrain and redeploy the skill sets outlined in this chart.

Most of the dislocated workers will be able to seek employment in regionally-present industries such as pipeline, heavy construction, manufacturing, and transportation. A key challenge will be addressing the unavoidable wage gap.

Key Actions to Support Economic Diversification

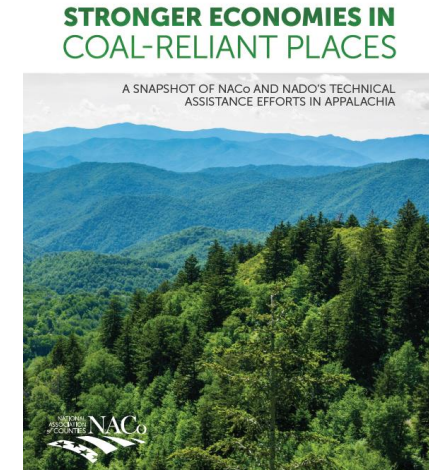
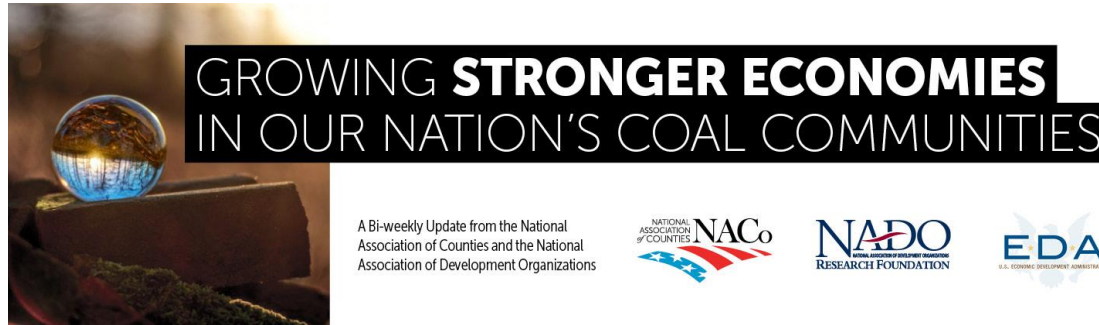
Cooperate

Observe

Adapt

Leverage

Resources from the NADO Research Foundation and the National Association of Counties



RESOURCES FOR
TRANSITIONING **ECONOMIES**

www.diversifyeconomies.org

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“It’s amazing what you can do as a community if you don’t worry about who gets credit for it.”

Matt Wender, Fayette County, West Virginia Commissioner



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS

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