



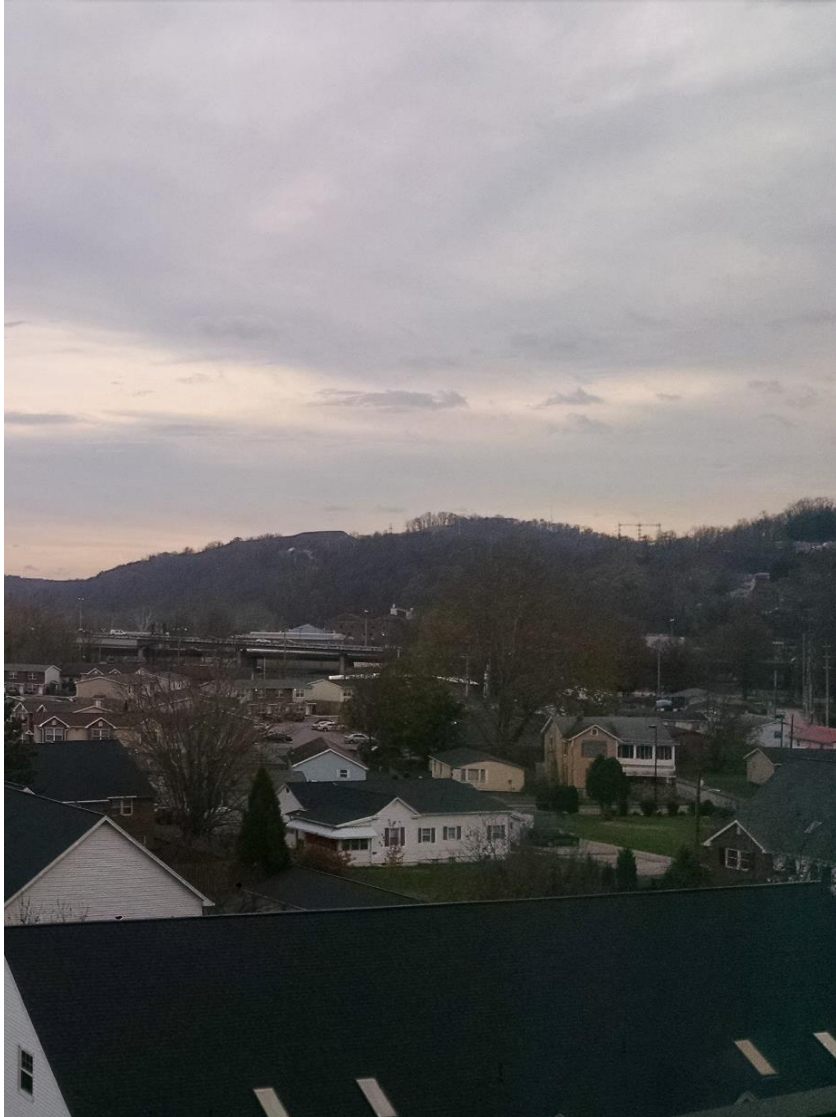
Prestonsburg Recreational Complex, located on a reclaimed strip mine in Kentucky (Big Sandy ADD)

# Emerging Opportunities for Economic Diversification in Coal-Reliant Regions



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**NADO Research Foundation**  
**April 5, 2016**

# Presentation Agenda



- Quick Background
- Coal-Reliant Communities  
Innovation Challenge
- Lessons Learned
- Economic Diversification  
Strategies
  - Southwest Virginia
  - Southeast Kentucky
  - Western Michigan
  - Northwest New Mexico

# NADO's mission:

To strengthen local governments, communities, and economies through the regional strategies, partnerships, and solutions of the nation's regional development organizations

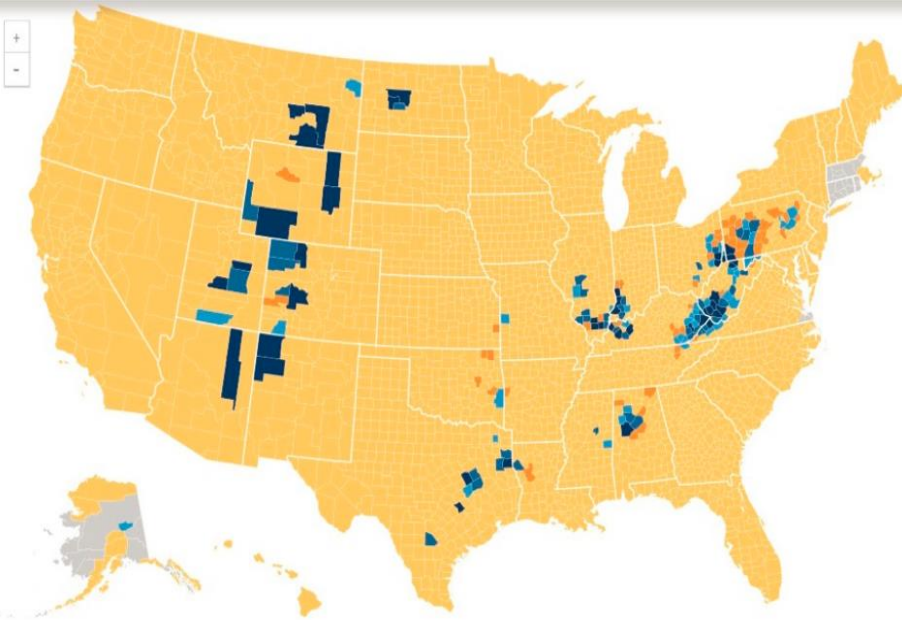


National membership organization for the network of over 520 **regional development organizations** (RDOs) throughout the U.S.

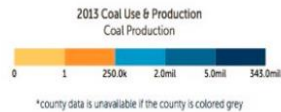
RDOs are also known as "Councils of Governments," "Area Development Districts," "Regional Planning Commissions," "Economic Development Districts," and other local names



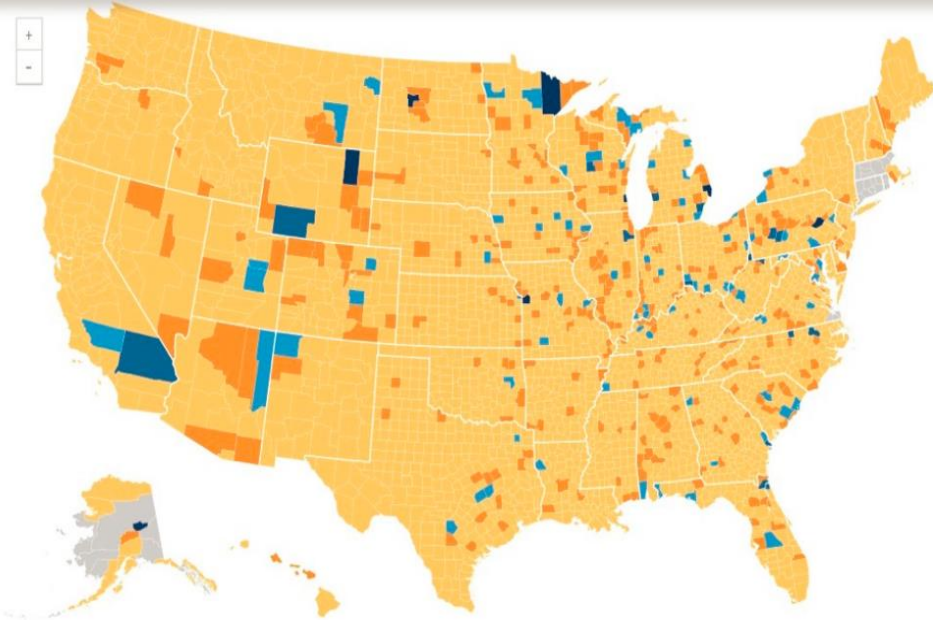
# A National Scope



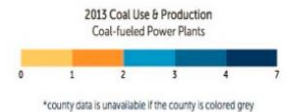
Source: NACo Analysis of U.S. Energy Information Administration Data, 2013



## Coal Producing Counties



Source: NACo Analysis of U.S. Energy Information Administration Data, 2013



## Coal Power Plant Counties

# Economic and Social Impacts

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



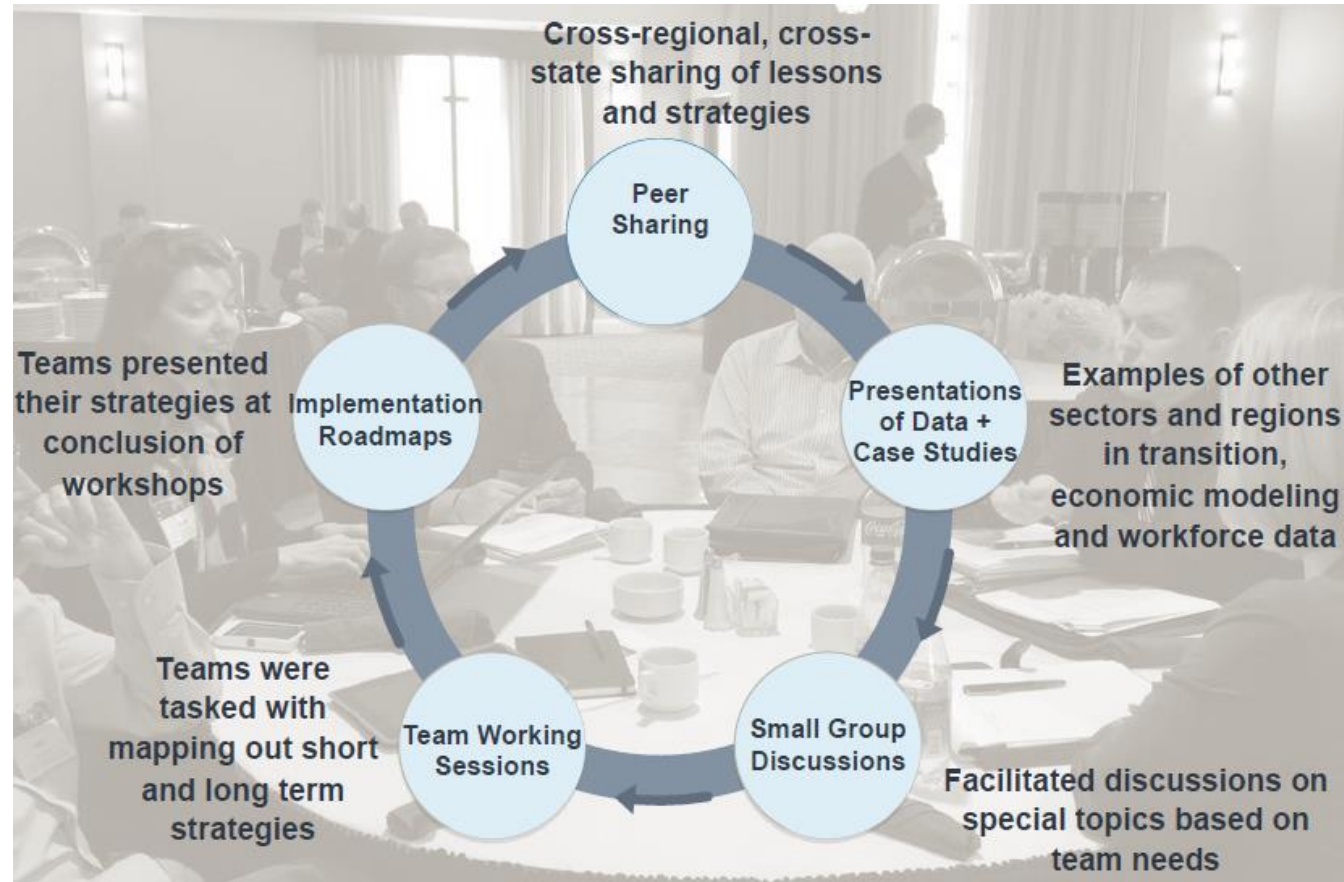
**I can't show 'em what I did.  
And they can't say, "Well, I can do that."**

# Coal-Reliant Communities Innovation Challenge

September 2014 – March 2016

## GOAL

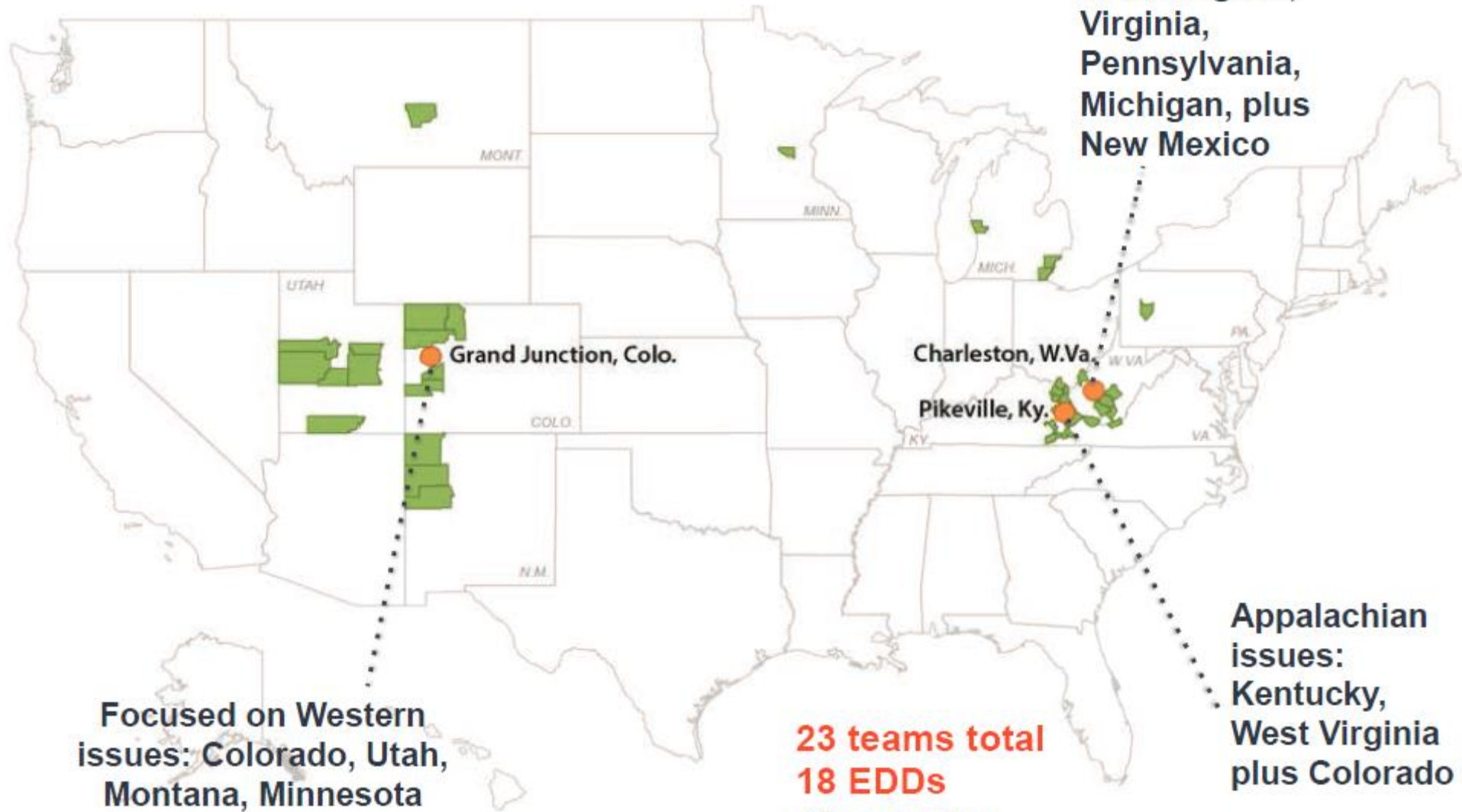
To boost the innovative potential of places dependent on the coal industry that are seeking to grow and diversify their economies, create jobs and explore emerging opportunities



**COAL-RELIANT COMMUNITIES INNOVATION CHALLENGE**

# Participants

Appalachian and Upper Midwest:  
West Virginia,  
Virginia,  
Pennsylvania,  
Michigan, plus  
New Mexico



Focused on Western  
issues: Colorado, Utah,  
Montana, Minnesota

Appalachian  
issues:  
Kentucky,  
West Virginia  
plus Colorado

**23 teams total**  
**18 EDDs**  
**42 counties**  
**200+ people**



# Key Themes

- Economies in Transition
- Changing Nature of Work
- Creating Great Communities
- Investing in Place
- Building Regional Resilience



# Building Regional Resilience



# Key Ingredients

- ✓ Leadership
- ✓ Partnerships
- ✓ Courage
- ✓ Respect



# Economic Diversification Snapshots



Flickr User: Taber Andrew Bain

Giles County, Virginia

Middlesboro, Kentucky



US EPA

# Economic Diversification Snapshots

## Muskegon, Michigan



## San Juan County, New Mexico

**“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

# For Additional Information

[NADO.org](http://NADO.org)

[DiversifyEconomies.org](http://DiversifyEconomies.org)

[NACo.org/InnovationChallenge](http://NACo.org/InnovationChallenge)

[#ReadyToDiversify](https://twitter.com/ReadyToDiversify)



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# NADO

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