

Rosebud-Treasure Counties



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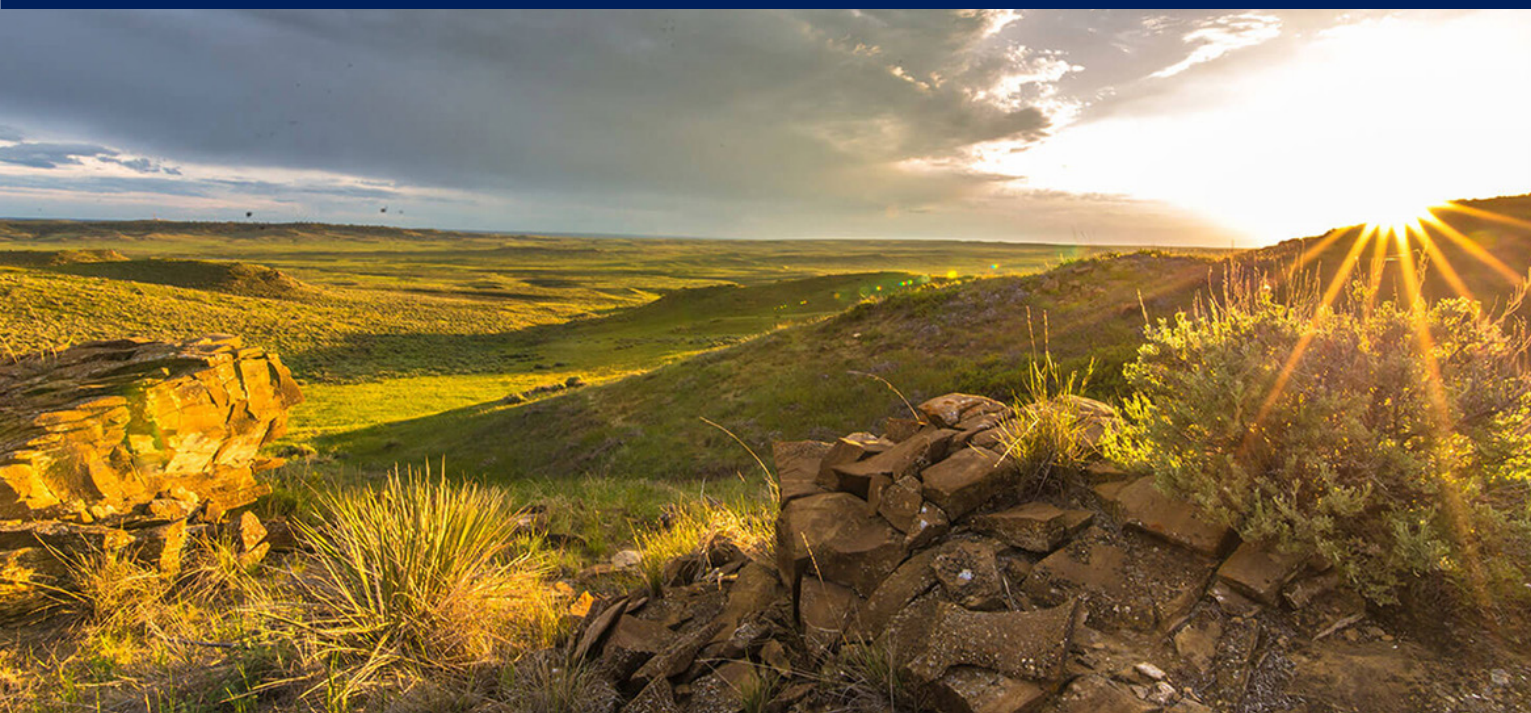


Photo by Nathan Satran.

Rosebud and Treasure Counties represent a diverse landscape and population, covering 6,000+ square miles. The two counties include three incorporated cities—Forsyth, Colstrip and Hysham—along with several additional communities and the Northern Cheyenne Reservation. The northern portion of both counties provide wide open prairies met by the Yellowstone River. The southern portion offers rugged, pine-covered hills. Farming, ranching, energy development and railroad make up the majority of the diverse economic drivers. MSU Extension in Rosebud and Treasure Counties is in large part funded by the taxpayers in both counties and your local and financial support is greatly appreciated.

Building Vibrant Futures for Rosebud and Treasure Counties

Montana's rural communities are facing uncertain futures, especially in Rosebud County. Locally, MSU Extension has engaged in a variety of programming efforts designed to assist in increasing community capacity. Leadership 29, a local, community-based leadership program, launched in 2019-2020 to great reviews. Through this program participants are gaining leadership skills while also developing a greater understanding of

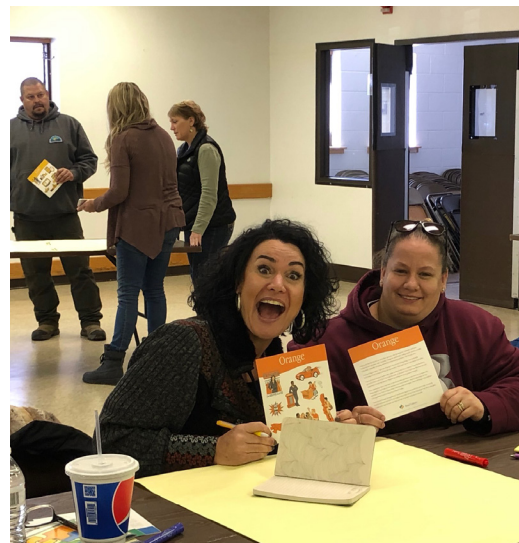
the larger county. "It's amazing to see what this community has worked so hard to achieve, things we've (different community) just taken for granted," noted one participant after touring a rural community in the county. The local leadership program has provided participants the opportunity to develop a new perspective on their own community as well as the other communities in the county. It's also building relationships and creating stronger ties between communities. Forsyth, through the work of the local community foundation and MSU Extension, joined the ReImagining Rural statewide initiative, where the focus is on supporting small-town leaders in building vibrant futures. From this effort, the community earned a \$2,000 grant from Montana Community Foundation to implement a variety of capacity building activities, starting with a newcomer's event, which will begin in 2021. Lastly, the Community Foundation of Northern Rosebud County (CFNRC), which is assisted by MSU Extension, recently announced the addition of a \$25,000 anonymous donation aimed at supporting the local swimming pool. The Foundation, which rose from an Extension program around 2008, has grown a permanent endowment to over \$500,000 and has reinvested over \$125,000 back into the local communities through project-supporting grants.

ServSafe Proves Vital During COVID-19

For over 20 years local restaurants, schools, daycares, stores and the like have relied on MSU Extension to provide food safety education through the ServSafe program. With the ongoing concerns of COVID-19, it's a training and resource that has proven to be vital to the local community's health, safety and economic security.

Rosebud County Public Health Director Shelly Schnitzmeier describes the importance of the training, "The ServSafe trainings have had a huge impact in our county, especially during this COVID-19 pandemic. The individuals that have taken the training have gained knowledge that is imperative in keeping people safe, very beneficial during this outbreak. The education that Public Health is currently doing to minimize the transmission of the disease, hand washing, having good hygiene and staying home when ill are vital lessons that the MSU Extension Agents have been teaching through ServSafe for years. ServSafe is an essential program, especially now that we face our new normal in this county." A local convenience store manager agrees, "rather than panic, we did the best we could to find the most correct disinfection possible and ways to protect both the customer and the employees. One of the other benefits was having the knowledge of where to go to find answers when we didn't know the answers."

Serving retail food service establishments in Rosebud and Treasure Counties as well as the Northern Cheyenne Reservation, it's easy to understand how over 300 individuals have completed the training throughout the years. The knowledge and practical skills gained have enabled restaurants to stay open and for all to minimize risks to the general public. ServSafe is just one example of how MSU Extension in Rosebud and Treasure Counties is assisting in ways to keep our communities alive, especially during these trying times.



Top: Leadership 29 participants working with the REAL COLORS program, by Jennifer Anderson;
Bottom: Leadership 29 participants hearing from local beet farmer Kim Nile, by Jennifer Anderson

Rosebud-Treasure Counties Staff



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