



Session 3 Summary: Examining Our Current Demographics



Our third **Stronger Economies Together (SET)** event brought **46 participants** from throughout the tri-county region to Republic on May 19, 2012.

Our presenter was **Patrick Jones, PhD**, Executive Director for the Institute for Public Policy and Economic Analysis at Eastern Washington University. Patrick walked the group through the Northeast Washington Trends website which includes regional data from well-known sources. The goal of this site is create more vibrant communities by providing easy access to current data to anyone anytime. The site can be accessed at www.northeastwashingtontrends.org

SET gives us a chance to increase our knowledge and resources but also to strengthen our regional economic development strategy and action plan.

Tamer Kirac, from TEDD also shared a useful data site: <http://headwaterseconomics.org/tools/eps-hdt>

One comment from a participant: "I hope that data will play a significant role in the decision making process as opposed to very subjective and possibly uninformed opinions."

The participants in the work session chose one of the following topics and were challenged to develop a scenario for an economic development opportunity.

- **The labor force participation rate is very low.** If we want to change this, what actions are needed to bring more people into the labor force?
- **Manufacturing is among the top four sectors**, by employment, in two of the counties, and in those two counties it is the highest-paying sector. If we want to increase manufacturing jobs, how can we?
- **Tourism expenditures per capita in the tri-counties is below the state average, how can we better partner with the Tribes?** What are the constraints and opportunities for future tourism development?
- **There are many agriculture related businesses in the three counties.** What is needed to increase success in this sector?
- **Many rural areas are becoming a destination for retirees.** Do we want this to occur in our region? If so, what are the consequences? If not, or if that doesn't seem possible, what are the constraints?
- **Home-based businesses and entrepreneurs are a growing segment of the tri-county economic base.** What is needed to build on this trend?

They were asked to include the following items to support their scenarios: regional assets, demographic trends, challenges, a budget and a timeline.

Visit the TEDD website: www.teddonline.com/stronger-economies-together to see all the handouts, work session results, PowerPoint presentations, list of attendees and the current CEDS.



We enjoyed having the meeting at **K Diamond K Ranch**, which had beautiful views, a wonderful space to work in and a great lunch.

Next session we will review Tri County Economic Development's Mission and Vision and then start prioritizing our regional goals. Join us in another absolutely gorgeous part of our region – at the **Camas Center for Wellness** in Usk, WA. Contact Krisan LeHew at 690-8400 or krisan@wsu.edu to RSVP or learn more about the program.

