

From Data to Action WR-STAT: Baseline Survey & Other Tools

Presented by,
WRDC Researchers
Dr. Nadeeka Weerasekara & Dr. Shengrong Hu



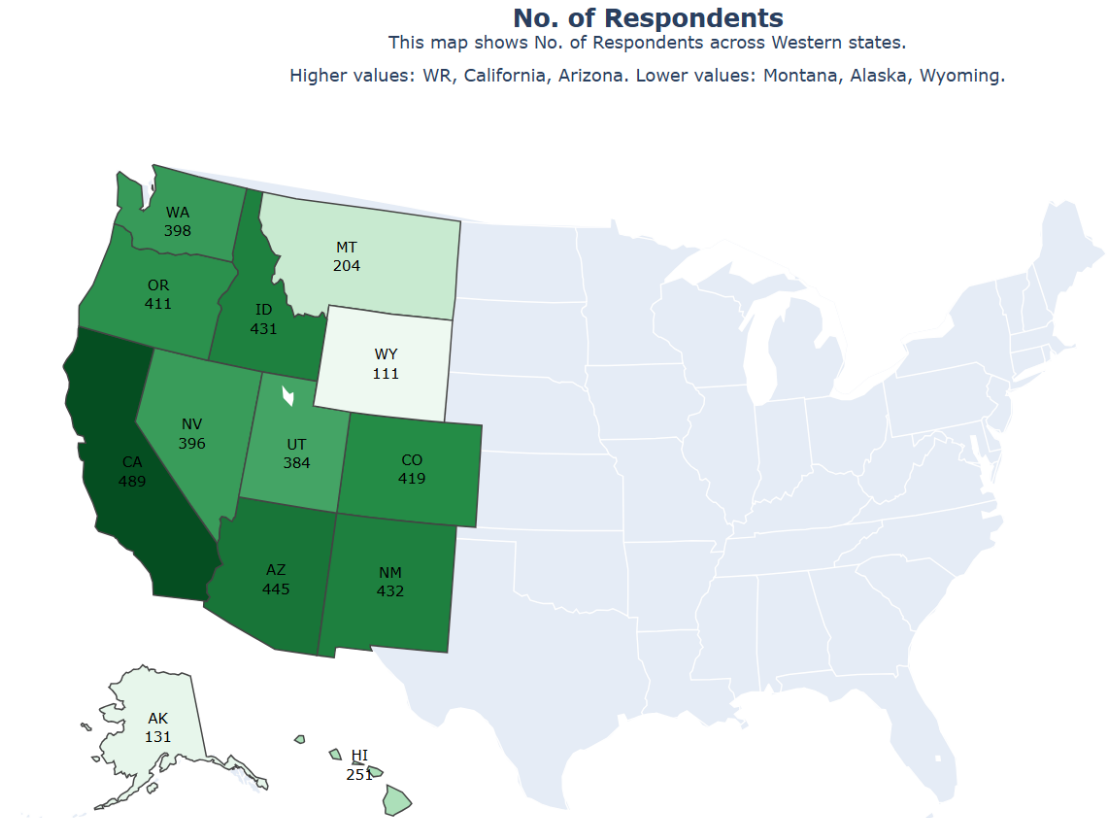
What can community data tell us that we don't already know?

- Your community already has stories
- Survey data can help us see the patterns behind those stories



Meet the Western Baseline Survey

- Western Baseline Survey is a collaborative initiative of the Regional Rural Development Centers (RRDCs)
- Motivation of the initiative: “How do we move from measuring community conditions to improving community well-being?”



Community Capital Framework

The Seven Community Capitals



Source: Chart developed by the Purdue Center for Regional Development



- Community well-being depends on multiple forms of capital, not just economic conditions
- The survey is built on the Community Capital Framework (Flora et al., 2004)

From Framework to Measurement

- Focuses on **the conditions and experiences that shape people's quality of life**
- NCRCRD first initiated the survey in 2022-multiple dimensions of community well-being
 - Household demographics
 - Income and economic security
 - Workforce participation
 - Entrepreneurship
 - Caregiving
 - Housing
 - Broadband access
 - Migration and staying behavior
 - Civic engagement
 - Community belonging
 - Health
 - Food security
 - Well-being
 - Environmental concerns

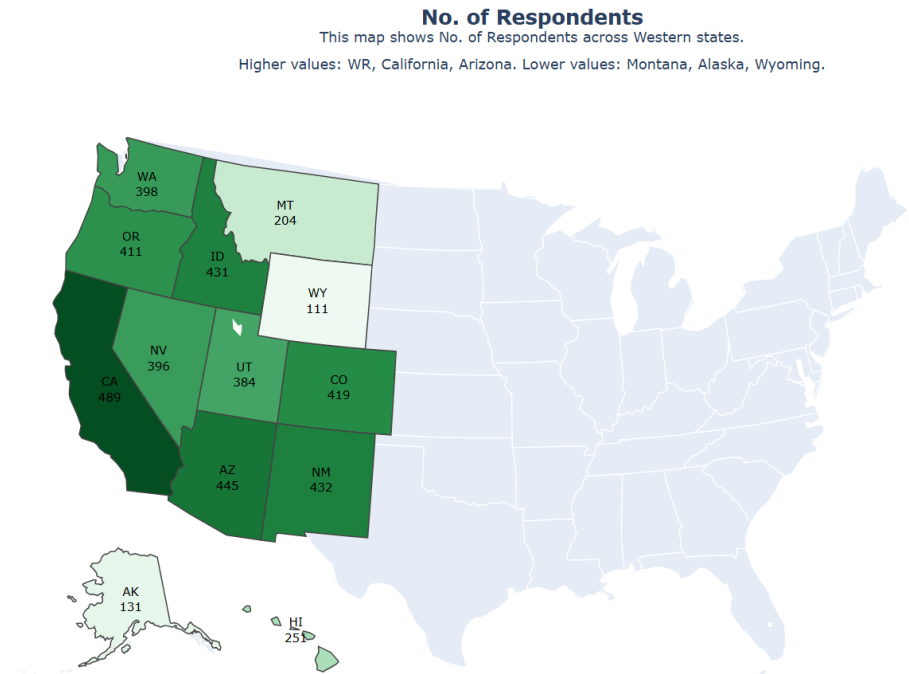
From Framework to Measurement

- In 2025, the WR-STAT survey was conducted for the first time across the Western region, covering 13 states: Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawai'i, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming.

4,502	13	20-min
• Households across the Western region	• States in the Western region	• Online-survey fielded in 2025

Sampling

- The design of the Baseline Survey 2025 sample was based on quota sampling nested within states, focusing on household types, gender, age, rural/urban location, and race/ethnicity
- Oversampled the rural population



DATA

Explore the Data

Access the publicly available data on PURR

Publications:

[Western Region Household Data. WR-Stat: Baseline Survey 2024](#)

4-Region Household Data: [PURR - Publications: 4-Region Household Data. 4R-Stat: Baseline Survey 2024](#)



DATA

At a glance

WR-Stat: Baseline Survey 2024 Respondent Demographics (N = 4,502)

Residence* (% of respondents)	
Rural	19.96%
Urban	80.04%

Gender (% of respondents)	
Male	48.66%
Female	51.34%

Mean Age (years)	
Region	50
Rural	49
Urban	50

Higher Education* (% of respondents)	
Region	75.67%
Rural	62.88%
Urban	79.20%

Mean Income (\$)	
Region	\$85,841
Rural	\$70,867
Urban	\$89,840

*Note: Rural areas were defined as areas that include open and/or sparsely populated countryside and towns of less than 5,000 inhabitants. Urban areas consist of suburban areas, towns, and cities with 5000 inhabitants and more-Census Bureau

Higher education encompasses a wide range of educational opportunities beyond high school.

What data captures?

- Created 14 indices, following NCRCRD format
- Grouped using the “Livability Framework”
- Focuses on **the conditions and experiences that shape people's quality of life**



LIVABILITY

The livability framework highlights how interconnected factors unite to drive community vitality and elevate quality of life.



Grouping 14 indices

Economic Environment	Human/Health & Wellness	Engagement & Socio-Cultural Environment	Natural Environment
• Financial Stress Index • Recovery-Friendly Index • Institutional Trust Index	• Mental Health Index • Loneliness Index • Food Security Index • Social Balance Index	• Community Trust Index • Civic Engagement Index • Welcoming Community Index • Community Equity Index	• Pollution Index • Extreme Weather Events Index

COMMUNITY SATISFACTION- Community Satisfaction Index

Group 1: Economic Environment

Indicator 1: Financial Stress Index

- Measures how financial difficulties impact the emotional, physical, and social well-being
- Includes nine survey questions → 1- Minimum Stress; 5-Maximum Stress

Western Region	Rural	Urban	Idaho	ID-Rural	ID-Urban
• 2.71	• 2.85	• 2.68	• 2.89	• 2.69	• 2.96

Group 2: Health & Wellness

Indicator 1: Mental Health Index

- Measures 3 common psychological symptoms: lack of interest in activities, depression, and anxiety over a three-month period
- 4-Minimum symptoms; 1-Maximum symptoms

Western Region	Rural	Urban	Idaho	ID-Rural	ID-Urban
• 3.15	• 3.04	• 3.17	• 3.14	• 3.13	• 3.14

Group 3: Engagement & Socio-Cultural Environment

Indicator 1: Community Trust Index

- Measures interpersonal trust across six community contexts, including neighbors, coworkers, religious communities, local businesses, educators, and healthcare providers
- 5-Maximum trust, 1-Minimum trust

Western Region	Rural	Urban	Idaho	ID-Rural	ID-Urban
• 3.89	• 3.78	• 3.93	• 4.02	• 3.80	• 4.07

Group 4: Natural Environment

Indicator 1: Pollution index

- Measures personal concern about four pollution types: air quality, water body contamination, drinking water safety, and litter/waste issues
- 1-Minimum concern; 4-Maximum concern

Western Region	Rural	Urban	Idaho	ID-Rural	ID-Urban
• 2.52	• 2.40	• 2.54	• 2.48	• 2.21	• 2.55

Overall Community Satisfaction

- Measures resident satisfaction across fifteen community dimensions, including healthcare, education, housing, employment, recreation, and environmental quality
- 5-Maximum Satisfaction; 1-Minimum Satisfaction

Western Region	Rural	Urban	Idaho	ID-Rural	ID-Urban
• 3.75	• 3.55	• 3.81	• 3.86	• 3.52	• 3.94

REGIONAL OVERVIEW

= Regional index score
 = Regional leader
 = Area of concern



INDICES: REGION & STATE

	WR	Alaska	Arizona	California	Colorado	Hawaii	Idaho	Montana	Nevada	New Mexico	Oregon	Utah	Washington	Wyoming
Financial Stress Index	2.71	2.61	2.59	2.58	2.69	2.23	2.89	2.83	2.69	2.94	2.71	2.76	2.84	2.66
Recovery-Friendly Index	0.66	0.72	0.73	0.59	0.65	0.59	0.62	0.61	0.71	0.61	0.72	0.63	0.78	0.53
Community Satisfaction Index	3.75	3.84	3.68	3.89	3.70	3.76	3.86	3.73	3.73	3.67	3.66	3.75	3.83	3.65
Pollution Index	2.52	2.24	2.55	2.55	2.50	2.29	2.48	2.38	2.52	2.69	2.50	2.56	2.62	2.37
Extreme Weather Events Index	2.42	2.06	2.49	2.42	2.38	2.11	2.44	2.34	2.50	2.64	2.32	2.49	2.48	2.42
Civic Engagement Index	2.19	2.03	2.26	2.24	2.22	2.33	2.14	2.18	2.30	2.19	2.11	2.15	2.10	2.23
Community Trust Index	3.89	3.94	3.80	3.99	3.82	3.98	4.02	3.89	3.81	3.79	3.88	3.97	3.89	3.98
Community Equity Index	3.75	3.88	3.66	3.86	3.61	3.82	3.86	3.71	3.80	3.70	3.64	3.77	3.82	3.63
Welcoming Community Index	3.68	3.84	3.55	3.87	3.54	3.76	3.73	3.58	3.73	3.66	3.58	3.69	3.71	3.53
Institutional Trust Index	3.51	3.58	3.36	3.77	3.30	3.61	3.68	3.56	3.44	3.42	3.36	3.50	3.57	3.56
Mental Health Index	3.15	3.2	3.19	3.29	3.12	3.38	3.14	3.06	3.20	3.02	3.03	3.08	3.07	3.22
Loneliness Index	2.40	2.44	2.39	2.49	2.38	2.54	2.36	2.32	2.49	2.32	2.30	2.39	2.39	2.42
Food Security Index	0.33	0.39	0.29	0.33	0.30	0.22	0.34	0.37	0.31	0.36	0.36	0.36	0.37	0.33
Social Balance Index	4.17	4.22	4.21	4.13	4.26	4.33	4.18	4.25	4.29	3.91	4.23	4.22	4.00	4.13
No. of Respondents	4,502	131	445	489	419	251	431	204	396	432	411	384	398	111

Rural-Urban Overview-State-wise

		WR	Alaska	Arizona	California	Colorado	Hawaii	Idaho	Montana	Nevada	New Mexico	Oregon	Utah	Washington	Wyoming
Financial Stress Index	Urban	2.68	2.38	2.52	2.55	2.68	2.19	2.96	2.66	2.69	2.93	2.73	2.76	2.82	2.62
	Rural	2.85	3.14	3.05	2.98	2.80	2.42	2.69	3.07	2.68	2.98	2.71	2.74	2.92	2.76
Recovery-Friendly Index	Urban	0.65	0.76	0.73	0.58	0.66	0.60	0.59	0.69	0.71	0.61	0.73	0.62	0.77	0.54
	Rural	0.67	0.50	0.78	0.71	0.60	0.58	0.76	0.44	0.74	0.65	0.66	0.70	0.81	0.44
Community Satisfaction Index	Urban	3.81	3.91	3.72	3.94	3.74	3.82	3.94	3.82	3.74	3.73	3.69	3.81	3.92	3.66
	Rural	3.54	3.69	3.43	3.41	3.56	3.56	3.52	3.59	3.61	3.50	3.57	3.46	3.57	3.63
Pollution Index	Urban	2.54	2.22	2.55	2.55	2.54	2.30	2.55	2.34	2.54	2.70	2.54	2.57	2.65	2.57
	Rural	2.40	2.24	2.57	2.56	2.34	2.21	2.21	2.43	2.43	2.61	2.34	2.40	2.55	1.94
Extreme Weather Events Index	Urban	2.43	2.03	2.49	2.40	2.40	2.08	2.52	2.32	2.51	2.62	2.34	2.47	2.50	2.58
	Rural	2.38	2.24	2.52	2.59	2.34	2.17	2.15	2.36	2.44	2.69	2.22	2.57	2.44	2.06
Civic Engagement Index	Urban	2.19	2.02	2.29	2.24	2.21	2.34	2.13	2.17	2.34	2.12	2.11	2.13	2.08	2.19
	Rural	2.19	2.11	2.08	2.21	2.21	2.31	2.15	2.20	2.00	2.37	2.11	2.26	2.12	2.33
Community Trust Index	Urban	3.93	3.99	3.82	4.04	3.82	4.01	4.07	3.95	3.80	3.85	3.89	4.00	3.98	3.96
	Rural	3.77	3.82	3.72	3.44	3.85	3.87	3.80	3.79	3.90	3.61	3.84	3.82	3.69	4.01
Community Equity Index	Urban	3.78	3.80	3.67	3.91	3.62	3.84	3.90	3.82	3.81	3.70	3.64	3.81	3.90	3.64
	Rural	3.64	4.05	3.55	3.40	3.59	3.74	3.72	3.55	3.75	3.67	3.63	3.59	3.58	3.61
Welcoming Community Index	Urban	3.71	3.84	3.58	3.92	3.54	3.78	3.77	3.67	3.73	3.70	3.60	3.72	3.80	3.56
	Rural	3.53	3.85	3.38	3.44	3.52	3.73	3.59	3.45	3.73	3.52	3.51	3.53	3.46	3.45
Institutional Trust Index	Urban	3.55	3.67	3.34	3.81	3.30	3.70	3.78	3.64	3.41	3.52	3.37	3.56	3.65	3.61
	Rural	3.35	3.34	3.46	3.35	3.31	3.33	3.32	3.43	3.63	3.13	3.34	3.16	3.42	3.43
Mental Health Index	Urban	3.17	3.26	3.23	3.33	3.09	3.43	3.14	3.08	3.19	3.06	3.03	3.11	3.09	3.30
	Rural	3.03	3.09	2.97	2.82	3.17	3.21	3.13	3.03	3.27	2.88	3.00	2.92	2.98	3.05
Loneliness Index	Urban	2.41	2.53	2.43	2.50	2.37	2.55	2.36	2.31	2.48	2.33	2.28	2.39	2.40	2.48
	Rural	2.34	2.24	2.17	2.34	2.38	2.47	2.35	2.33	2.59	2.27	2.36	2.38	2.33	2.30
Food Security Index	Urban	0.32	0.35	0.25	0.31	0.30	0.19	0.34	0.36	0.31	0.36	0.34	0.34	0.35	0.31
	Rural	0.39	0.49	0.52	0.49	0.27	0.30	0.33	0.39	0.32	0.38	0.42	0.43	0.44	0.37
Social Balance Index	Urban	4.18	4.35	4.29	4.18	4.27	4.30	4.07	4.22	4.30	3.90	4.23	4.25	4.03	4.08
	Rural	4.12	3.91	3.78	3.55	4.19	4.48	4.57	4.30	4.21	3.95	4.20	4.03	3.87	4.23
No. of Respondents	Urban	3,564	93	371	442	333	191	337	121	345	327	312	322	296	76
	Rural	889	36	70	42	79	56	91	83	49	102	95	58	92	34

What's Coming Next?

- **Regional Report**

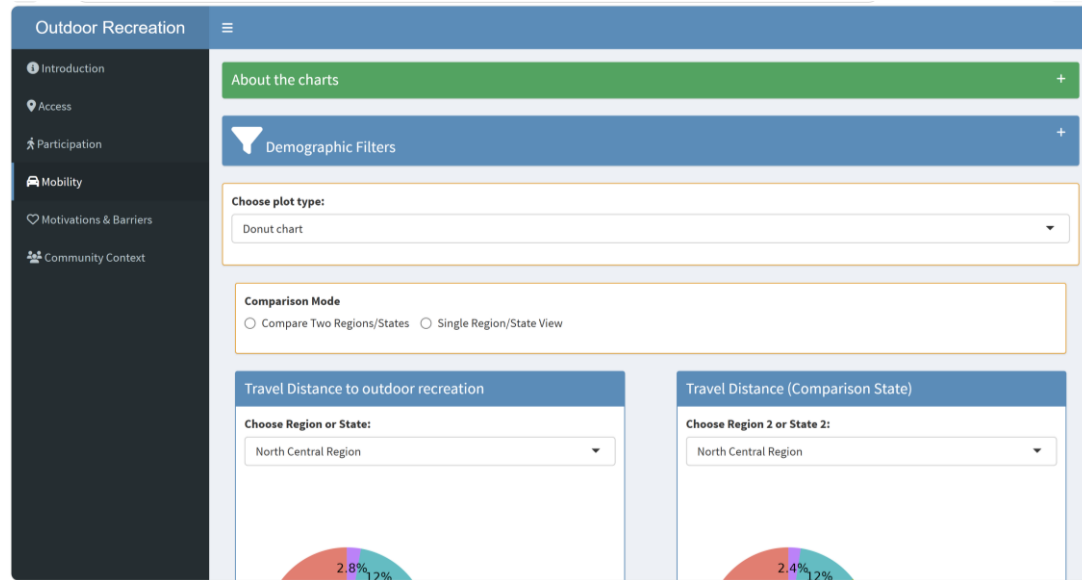
A comprehensive overview of findings from the Western region.

- **Thematic Reports**

Focused reports exploring key topics and issues in greater depth.

Applications of the Baseline Survey

Outdoor Recreation Dashboard- University of Minnesota Tourism Center



Forthcoming Research

- Environmental pollution and well-being
- Housing stress and well-being

More Data Tools – WRDC Data Section

- Find data without knowing its name
- **Topic** — housing, health, broadband...
- **Geography** — national, state, county, place, tract...
- **Source** — Census, USDA, universities...

The section will be online soon :)

Data backbone

- A few large public datasets support many community questions:
 - American Community Survey (ACS)
 - Census Population Estimates
 - Bureau of Economic Analysis Regional Accounts
 - Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW)
 - Census of Agriculture
 - National Agricultural Statistics Service QuickStats

Many tools have done the first analysis

- Many tools have already built the table, trend, and map for you
 - A finished local economic profile: [BEARFACTS](#)
 - Community maps and reports: [Wildfire Risk to Communities](#)
 - County benchmarks and trends: [County Health Rankings & Roadmaps](#)
 - Where workers live and work: [OnTheMap](#)
 - ...

One question, several ways to use the data

- Take population as an example. Suppose we're interested in "What's actually happening to our population?"
 - For report: [StatsAmerica USA Counties in Profile](#), [Census QuickFacts](#) or an [ACS profile](#) for current numbers and characteristics
 - For presentation: An [ERS population-loss](#) or retirement-destination map, or a [Net Migration](#) chart
 - For further analysis: Download [Census](#), [ACS](#), or Net Migration data for custom analysis

How do you plan to use the data?

Thank you!

Questions and discussion

Contact: wrdc@uidaho.edu

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