



## From the Chair's Desk

Dear NRRIG Members,

I hope that this writing finds you well and that your fall semester is off to a productive start. In this newsletter, we reflect on the engaging slate of presentations our members contributed to the 2018 RSS meeting. We also look forward at our plans for supporting the continued growth of the Natural Resources RIG this year.

The Natural Resources RIG is one of the largest of the RSS research and interest groups, providing members a community of scholars deeply invested in the study of humans and their natural environments. From innovations in sustainable resource use, to management of public lands, to community resilience and adaptation, (and so much more!), our members' work provides a foundation of scientific evidence that moves data-driven decision-making forward. In this way, we serve our institutions, our communities, and our world.

RIG membership links individual scholars to a network of Rural Sociologists, facilitating collaboration, building relationships, and supporting the professional development of early career scholars. Here, we discuss our plans to pursue these objectives and celebrate the accomplishments of our members. We appreciate your participation as we put these plans into action.

**Amanda Buday**  
**NRRIG Chair, 2018-2019**

NATURAL  
RESOURCES  
RIG

Fall 2018  
Newsletter

## Recap: Best of the West mini conference



At this year's annual meeting, NRRIG helped organize a mini-conference focused on unique aspects of rural sociology in the West. This included perspectives on ecological, political, cultural, and economic features from the vantage points of land management agencies, extension professionals, journalists, and scholars. The first session brought together a panel of public land managers and journalists to discuss the Malheur Refuge occupation that took place in north-east Oregon in 2016. A second session saw panelists share presentations and thoughts on different elements of the rural West, including insights from Paul Larmer of *High Country News*. The closing session discussed wildfire and its impacts on rural communities through a range of presentations about collaboration, recovery, and access to resources given by extension professionals and academics. Dianna Bryant from the University of Central Missouri discussed rural community vulnerability to wildfire, while Chad Kooistra from Oregon State University (OSU) shared findings from a survey about public perceptions of landscape recovery. Emily Jane Davis of OSU outlined the role of Rangeland Fire Protection Associations for fire suppression in rural communities, while Glenn Ahrens of OSU Extension shared his experiences working with communities impacted by the 2017 Eagle Creek Fire. Thanks to everyone who spoke, and to all who attended this mini-conference! (Catrin Edgeley, NRRIG Co-Chair).



# Pondering Portland

We reached out to NRRIG session leaders, who gamely provided these notes about the sessions they chaired at the 2018 RSS meeting in Portland. Thank you for your contributions.



The presentations in the "**Resilience in Farm and Fishing Communities**" session connected resilience to adaptability, adaptations, and vulnerability across coastal and agricultural communities, urban groups, and the psychological consequences of social capital and health for optimism among rural populations. Candace May from South Dakota State University introduced a conceptual framework for understanding adaptability and resilience outcomes, which examined the differential capacity of groups and the institutions, policies and processes involved in shaping the adaptive responses of a Louisiana community to over a decade of hazards and disasters. Ashley Colby from Rizoma Field School introduced the notion of ecological embeddedness among subsistence food producers in urban areas, which redirects attention to local adaptive and innovative strategies among groups typically marginalized by the environmental movement. Stephan Gasteyer from Michigan State University and Matthew Sanderson from Kansas State University presented an innovative technique for measuring resilience to drought, which demonstrated uneven distributional consequences in vulnerability and ability to adapt by farm size. Zola Moon, representing colleagues from the University of Arkansas, explained how physical health and social capital resulted in higher measures of optimism, with health as the strongest predictor among mid-south rural populations (Candace May, South Dakota State University).



The "**Emerging Areas of Research and Data Application**" session featured three presentations that offered examples of innovative methods for understanding natural resource management. These included participatory collaborative workshops to identify landowner needs and interests, and the visualization and synthesis of secondary data focused on wind turbine siting. One presenter reflected on the possibilities for sharing and re-using the types of qualitative data that emerge out of the first set of methods, and that could potentially be included in the types of analyses presented in the second (Kristal Jones, University of Maryland SESYNC).



The "**Fossil Fuels and Public Perception**" session featured quantitative and qualitative research exploring energy resources and the communities in which energy resources are extracted. The first presentation by Penn State graduate student Tom Mueller, "Moving Beyond Simple Support," examined using the results of a survey of rural Pennsylvania residents. The second presentation by Texas A&M graduate student Kate Willyard, "Who Is Burning Money and Throwing It In the Air?," used Freudenberg's concept of disproportionality to quantitatively explore the types of facilities and operators in the oil and gas industry prone to extreme pollution. The third presentation by Ohio State graduate student Anne Junod, "Community Perceptions of and Responses to Fossil Fuel by Rail," uses Foucauldian discourse theory to examine community perceptions of fossil fuel by rail. The final presentation by North Carolina State University graduate student Heather Sanchez, "Rifts, Shifts and Floods," used social metabolic theory to analyze the Dan River Spill. In general, the session featured innovative natural resources research by numerous young scholars. The future is bright (Katherine Willyard, Texas A&M University).

The presentations in the “**Land Management and Communities**” session inspired productive discussion. Dr. Kristi Fondren (Marshall University) and Richard Brinkman (Wenatchee Valley College) identified long-distance hiking subcultures on the Pacific Crest Trail (PCT) and Appalachian Trail (AT), and that the strong sense of community shared by long-distance hikers reflects finding *gemeinschaft* in a *gesellschaft* world. Mayra Sanchez Morgan and Dr. Audrey Mayer, both of Michigan Technological University, illustrated the problems that have resulted from a top down approach to protected areas in Punta Allen, Mexico, and the need for a bottom up or co-management approach that actively involves the local people. Through responsive interviews and reflexive ethnography, Dr. Braden Leap and Dr. Diego Thompson from Mississippi State University argued that solidarity and collective identity inform responses to socio-ecological disruptions, leading to cooperative efforts toward sustainability in both Sumner, Missouri, and Nueva Helvecia, Uruguay (Richard Brinkman, Wenatchee Valley College).

Our session on forest fire, “**Forest Restoration and Community Resilience,**” went quite well. All four presenters were there to present. We had three presenters who focused on the role of community resilience in forest restoration or defensive (against wildfires) efforts in the United States. The final paper also addressed issues of resilience in restoration efforts, but it dealt with these issues at a more macro scale, e.g. at the level of the nation state. In this respect the session broached some issues of continuing importance at multiple scales to rural sociologists (Thomas Rudel, Rutgers).

During the closing session of the conference, NRRG sponsored a session entitled “**Lessons Learned: Policy Changes and Innovative Responses**” that spanned four diverse presentations that examined the confluence of policy change amidst public controversy and the subsequent sociological research opportunities. Penn State’s Grace Wildermuth presented on the controversial ethane facility being constructed in western Pennsylvania; Ohio State’s Jeffrey Jacquet presented on a decade of Marcellus and Utica Shale Development; Oregon’s Nancy Shurtz presented on overlooked aspects of the new tax reform law and implications for amenity-led community development; and Oregon State’s Sarah Brown presented on comparisons between Hungary and the US’s approach to funding amenity-led and rural community development (Jeffrey Jacquet, Ohio State University).



# NRRIG 2018 Award Winners

## **Who Is Burning Money and Throwing It In the Air?: A Quantitative Analysis of Disproportionality of Texas Oil and Gas Extraction Facility**

The NRRIG Graduate Student Paper Award provides \$100 to defray the costs of attending the RSS Annual Meeting and acknowledges high-quality scholarship that advances knowledge in environmental or natural resource sociology.

Willyard's paper analyzes the relationship of venting and flaring at oil and gas extraction facilities to facility characteristics, operators, and the surrounding political environment. Her research uses a unique and impressive dataset that Willyard compiled from publicly available records maintained by the Texas Railroad Commission, as well as USEIA and ACS data. Willyard's research has important policy implications, suggesting that a targeted approach to leverage change among the few companies flaring natural gas at a high rate may be an effective strategy to addressing the public health threats posed by this industry practice. Willyard's work offers timely solutions for a critical public health problem faced by rural communities experiencing natural resource extraction.



NRRIG Grad Student Paper Award Winner, 2018  
Katherine Willyard



NRRIG Grad Student Travel Award Winner, 2018  
Amanda McMillan Lequieu

## **Constructing Risk: Isolation, Infrastructural Paternalism, and the Roots of Company Power over Rural-Urban Landscapes**

The NRRIG Graduate Student Travel Award supports graduate student participation at the RSS Annual Meeting, reimbursing student RIG members the cost of their registration fee (\$125).

The 2018 award recipient, Amanda McMillan Lequieu, presented her dissertation research, which investigates how, "spatial, market, and cultural processes of company paternalism present in two communities consequentially rendered them vulnerable to economic precarity." Additionally, McMillan Lequieu served as moderator for the session, "Identity Politics in Post-Industrial America."

We are grateful to be able to support graduate student participation in the annual meeting. Please encourage your students to apply for the Graduate Student Travel Award in 2019.

# The Road to Richmond



As we look forward to the 2019 RSS Annual Meeting in Richmond, VA, we hope to collaborate with other RIGs interested in capitalizing on the proximity of Washington, D.C. to recruit representatives from national non-profits, government agencies, and lawmakers to serve as speakers and panelists. We are also working to identify common interests in field trip activities, to facilitate pooling resources and keeping expenses manageable.

After paying our 2018 Annual Meeting Expenses, including the RIG field trip and our contribution to the Best of the West panels, we have an ending RIG account balance of \$297.53. Our records indicate that this is a slightly lower ending balance than the previous year at this time (\$400.00). We appreciate your timely renewal of your RSS and NRRIG memberships, which helps us anticipate the resources that will be available to support programming and fellowship activities at the annual meeting.

We are currently working to coordinate a mentoring network between early career and senior scholars of our RIG. Earlier this month, I contacted all full professors who are current NRRIG members and inquired about their interest in participating in mentoring activities. Most senior scholars are interested in holding a round table session at the 2019 meeting during which they will meet with early career scholars and provide advice about professional development. We will therefore pursue this option and will be in communication about professional development activities as we move forward.

Finally, expect to receive persistent communications from us requesting your nominations for the NRRIG William R. Freudenburg Award of Merit. This award recognizes exceptional contributions to the sociology of natural resources and the environment, acknowledging an outstanding legacy/collective body of work that has demonstrably impacted natural resource and environmental sociology. We received no nominations for this award last year, and will work to remedy this by directly contacting our long-standing members to solicit your nominations this year. Thanks in advance for your support of this endeavor.

# Member Announcements

## Natural Resource Scholars in the News

RIG Member Weston Eaton (Pennsylvania State University), reports that he and his colleagues are making headway with community partners on their USDA NIFA - funded project, "Securing Water for and from Agriculture through effective Community and Stakeholder Engagement." The project has been featured in two recent local media reports, representing exciting community collaboration by our members.

[Potter County to be Part of Farming, Water Study](#)

[Potter County Part of National Agricultural Study](#)

## Calls for Papers

The 6th Annual Rural Studies Student Conference at Penn State is seeking abstract submissions for this year's conference, "Insurgent Sociology: Public Social Science Research in the 21st Century," which will take place in University Park, PA on November 2, 2018. **Abstracts Due: October 15.**

**Submit Abstracts to:** [psururalstudiesconference@gmail.com](mailto:psururalstudiesconference@gmail.com).

[View More Information Here](#)

## Professional Opportunities

The Department of Fish and Wildlife Conservation at Virginia Tech is pleased to announce a search for an Assistant or Associate Professor in Fish or Fisheries Conservation and Management. Social scientists who work in this field are encouraged to apply as we are casting a wide net with this search.

[View Full Add Here](#)

## Recent Publications

Crowley, Morgan, Kara E. Shannon, **Isaac Sohn Leslie**, Andrea Jilling, Cameron D. McIntire, and Emily Kyker-Snowman. 2018. "Sustainable Beef Production in New England: Policy and Value Chain Challenges and Opportunities." *Agroecology and Sustainable Food Systems* 42: 1-25.

Dokshin, Fedor A. and **Amanda Buday**. 2018. "Not in Your Backyard! Organizational Structure, Partisanship, and the Mobilization of Nonbeneficiary Constituents against "Fracking" in Illinois, 2013-2014. *Socius* 4: 1-17.

**Easton, Weston M.**, Morey Burnham, C. Clare Hinrichs, & Theresa Selfa. 2018. "How do sociocultural factors shape rural landowner responses to the prospect of perennial bioenergy crops?" *Landscape & Urban Planning* 175: 195-204.

**Greenberg, Pierce**. 2018. "Coal Waste, Socioeconomic Change, and Environmental Inequality in Appalachia: Implications for a Just Transition in Coal Country." *Society & Natural Resources* 31(9): 995-1011.

**Leslie, Isaac Sohn** and Monica M. White. "Race and Food: Agricultural Resistance in U.S. History." Pp. 347-64 in *Handbook of the Sociology of Racial and Ethnic Relations*, edited by Pinar Batur and Joe Feagin. New York: Springer.

Singh, Ajay S., Brian MacGowan, **Jessica D. Ulrich-Schad**, Michael O'Donnell, Heidi Klotz, and Linda S. Prokopy. 2018. "The influence of demonstration sites and field days on conservation practices adoption." *Journal of Soil and Water Conservation* 73(3): 274-281.



# Meet Your NRRIG Leadership

## Chair: Amanda Buday



I am an assistant professor of sociology at Fort Hays State University. My research examines the politics of energy development in rural communities. I also conduct applied research on municipal water conservation, funded by an Undergraduate Research Experience program at FHSU, and work with the Docking Institute of Public Affairs to assist non-profit organizations in Kansas with strategic planning. I teach sociology of families and coordinate the women's and gender studies certificate program at Fort Hays, and am fortunate to work with an inspiring and industrious group of Great Plains undergrads.

## Co-Chair: Catrin Edgeley



I am an incoming Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of Idaho, based in the Department of Natural Resources and Society. My research focuses on community diversity and wildfire, looking specifically at how different populations across the West approach evacuation and recovery after fire events. Through this, I am working closely with several rural communities to explore how wildfire management and policy can be tailored to better address local needs. I am originally from the UK, where I studied Geography at Durham University with a focus on human interactions surrounding environmental hazards and risk. I am pleased to be stepping into the position of co-chair with Amanda after finishing my term as Grad Student Rep for NRRIG last year.

## Grad Student Rep: Mary Sketch



I am finishing up my Masters at Virginia Tech in the Department of Fish and Wildlife Conservation. My research focuses on human dimensions of private land conservation in the West. I am working on a project with the Intermountain West Joint Venture looking at rancher motivations related to working wet meadow conservation. The second component of my research is in connection to the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) in the Playa Lakes region with the objective of gaining an understanding of the motivations and needs of landowners in regard to the incentive program.