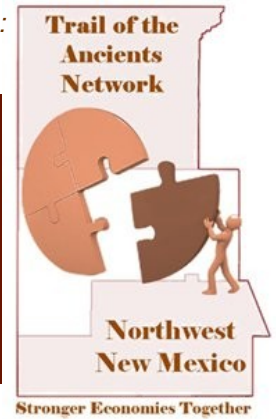


*A Rural Focus on Northwest New Mexico:  
Cibola, McKinley & San Juan Counties*

# Stronger Economies Together—Trail of the Ancients Network Newsletter

May 2014 Issue

[www.theprosperitycollaborative.com](http://www.theprosperitycollaborative.com)

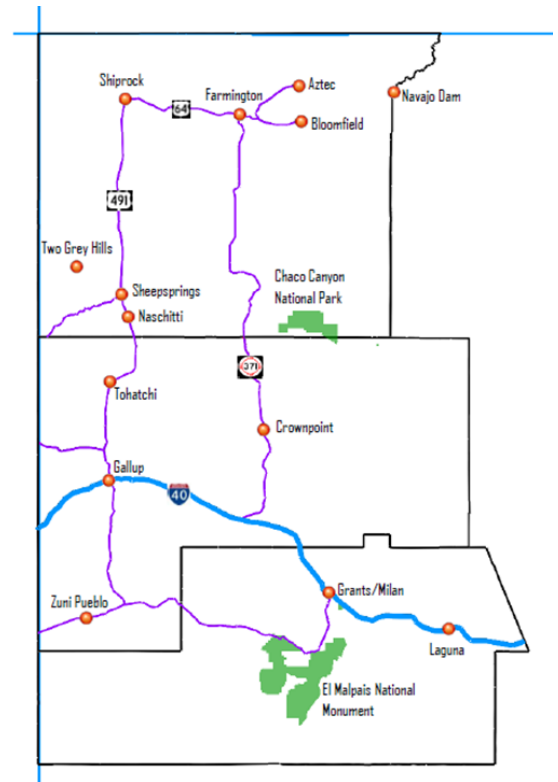


## What is SET?

SET or Stronger Economies Together, is intended to **strengthen the capacity of communities/counties in rural America** and foster a **working collaborative** in developing and implementing an **economic development blueprint** (a high quality plan) that **strategically builds on the current and emerging economic strengths** of their region. The New Mexico Rural Development office under the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) selected our three county region of Northwest New Mexico as a “SET” region.

Our SET initiative is being organized around the rural corridors that make up the “Trail of the Ancients” Scenic Byway (hence the “**Trail of the Ancients Network**”, map to the right) with study/action groups in San Juan, McKinley, and Cibola Counties and quarterly mass regional meetings where all participants from each county come together. Together, participants will move through 8 modules that will guide in the development of the plan. The final product will be a high quality plan that focuses on economic development strategies for rural areas of Northwest New Mexico. This in turn will be used to help secure funding from federal, state, and even local sources to move projects forward.

The SET initiative will also form the foundations of a Rural Leadership & Development Academy in our region, and SET participants will be the founding members. At the end, founding members (who attend 7 of the 8 modules) will be given certificates signed by NMSU Vice-President for Economic Development Kevin Boberg. Additional benefits include networking opportunities and access to the latest economic data, demographics, and data trends.



## For More Information About SET Contact:

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## Module 1: Building A Strong Regional Team

In late April, the Trail of the Ancients Network team was off for three days of work sessions that were held in Shiprock, Zuni, and Grants. This first Module, “**Building a Strong Regional Team**” was partly introductory and part discussion about how to build a strong regional team. Facilitators, Michael Patrick from NMSU and Council of Governments Director Jeff Kiely, discussed SET and expectations of participants and the final result, a **high-quality plan** that could be used to access additional resources to move initiatives and projects forward.

However, other benefits began to emerge, as the plan would also compliment and/or affect many other on-going plans that are currently being updated... plans like the **Northwest New Mexico Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)**. The Plan (**High Quality Plan** generated from the SET process) would become part of the CEDS as the rural agenda. The **High Quality Plan** might also affect the updates of the regional and state **Water Plans**, the **Long Range Transportation Plan** and other new **statewide CEDS** plans, **Interim Jobs Council** reports, and the **New Mexico Economic Development Department’s 5-year Plan**... all these plans including the **High Quality Plan** will all work to help focus and drive potential funding from federal, state, and local resources.



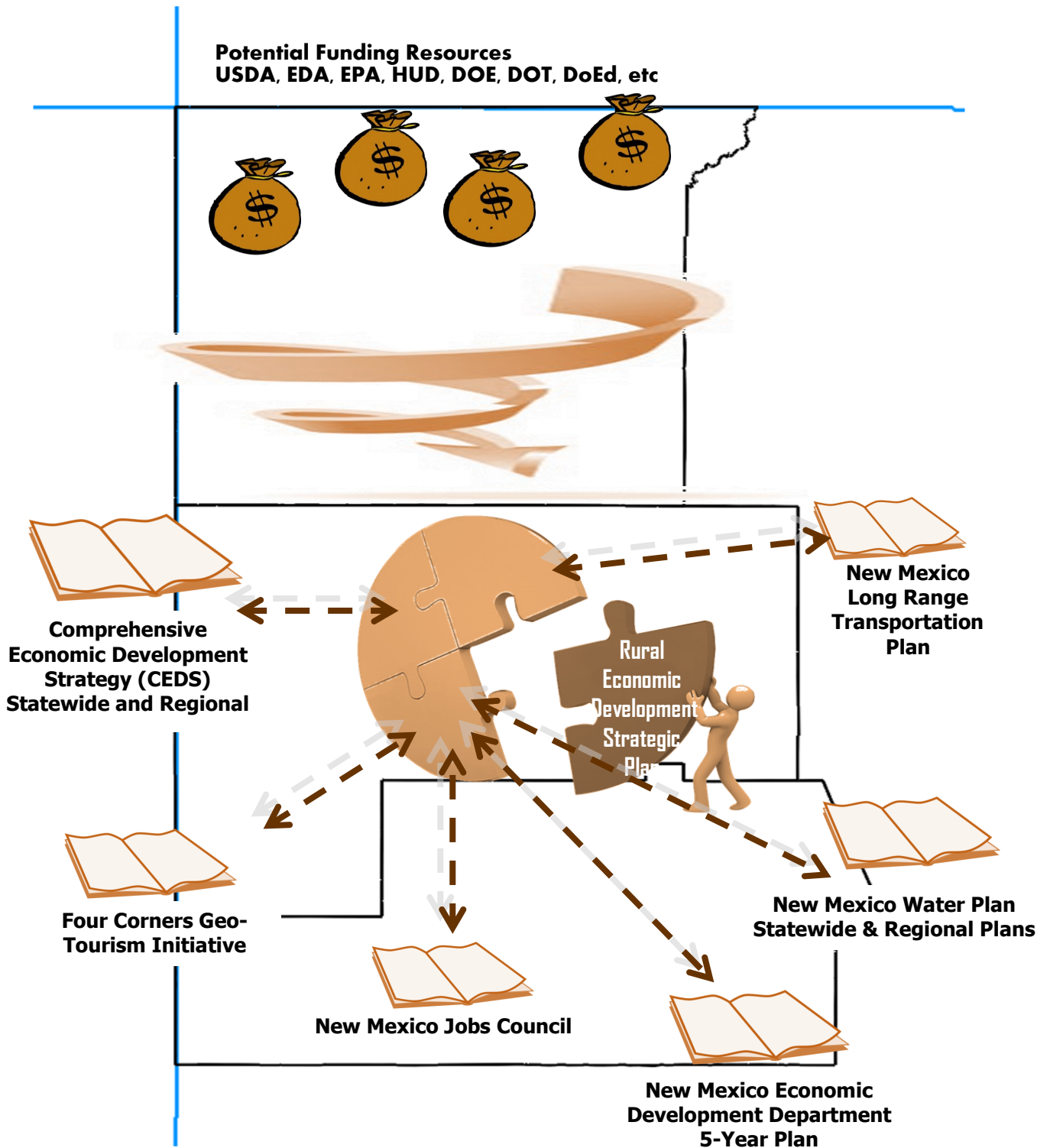
### Who else should participate in SET?

**Homework!!** Participants were asked who else should be in the SET discussions and process. Many organizations, agencies, and individuals were named such as folks from the energy sector and more input from faith-based groups in San Juan County, the entertainment industry and local artisans in McKinley County, and more small businesses and civic organizations in Cibola County. Long lists were generated at each site and participants were asked to invite those listed to the next SET work sessions.

**Crafting the perfect message!!** Participants were asked to help craft the message that would get to the heart of SET initiative and ways to entice others to become part of the SET and a motto (?) emerged... What do you think?



**Motto? Think Regionally, Act Locally...**



Second round of sub-region SET training sessions (Module 2) are scheduled for:

- Wednesday, May 28 from 3:00-6:00 pm Location: Dine College Campus in Shiprock, NM

- Thursday, May 29 from 8:30-11:30 am at the NMSU Grants Campus in Grants, NM,
- and from 1:30-4:30 pm at the UNM-Gallup, Zuni Campus in Zuni, NM