



On October 1, 2024,
Outdoor Reaction Roundtable
(ORR) is hosting the first-ever
**National Leadership Forum on
Rural Development in
Pittsburgh, PA.**

With the support of the Richard King Mellon Foundation, Outdoor Recreation Roundtable (ORR) is convening leaders (recreation businesses, NGOs, CDFIs, federal and state agencies, rural practitioners, academics, and industry partners) from across the country in Pennsylvania to identify funding priorities, organizing principles, and local strategies for rural economic development through outdoor recreation.

This is part of ORR's ongoing efforts to uniquely convene industry leaders and government officials to provide a space for thought-leadership and cross-sector inspiration. The event is invite-only with sessions at the Richard King Mellon Foundation's Auction House followed by a reception and dinner at The Art Room. On October 2, the event includes an optional field tour to Johnstown, PA.

We would like to thank the Pennsylvania Office of Outdoor Recreation and the PA Wilds Center for Entrepreneurship for their partnership on this event.

Attendance is offered to state and government officials if their ethics rules permit. This invitation is non-transferable and for the invitee only.



Accommodations

AC Hotel Pittsburgh Downtown
1126 Smallman St, Pittsburgh, PA 15222



Attire

Forum: Business Casual
Field Day: Casual



Weather

65-75°F



Transportation

Pittsburgh International Airport



Venues

- Monday Reception: 5:30 p.m.
Level 7 at the AC Hotel
1126 Smallman St, Pittsburgh, PA 15222
- Tuesday Forum: 9:00 a.m.
Richard King Mellon Foundation
The Auction House, 42 21st Street – Suite 201
Pittsburgh, PA 15222
- Tuesday Reception and Dinner: 5:30 p.m.
The Art Room
2010 Smallman St, Pittsburgh, PA 15222
- Wednesday Field Tour: 7:00 a.m.
Johnstown, PA



Pre-Reading (optional)

Outdoor Recreation Roundtable
[Rural Economic Development Toolkit](#)



National Leadership Forum on Rural Development

Monday, September 30, 2024 - Event Logistics

We are looking forward to hosting you at the **National Leadership Forum on Rural Development** on Tuesday, October 1 in Pittsburgh, PA. All the details you'll need to know regarding the schedule and access to events can be found on the following pages.

Please note that there are four events being held in four separate locations. All Pittsburgh venues are walkable or easily accessible via rideshare:

- Opening Reception (9/30, AC Hotel at [Level 7 Rooftop Bar](#))
- Forum (10/1, Richard King Mellon Foundation HQ, (The Auction House))
- Dinner (10/1, The Art Room)
- Field Day to Johnstown, PA (10/2, Leaving from AC Hotel)



Logistics – National Leadership Forum on Rural Development (Opening Reception)

Date: Monday, September 30, 2024

Venue: AC Hotel at [Level 7 Rooftop Bar](#), 1126 Smallman St, Pittsburgh, PA 15222

Time: 5:30pm- 7:30pm

ARRIVAL INFORMATION

Arriving by Rideshare

Enter 1126 Smallman St, Pittsburgh, PA as destination.

Arriving by Car

Guests are encouraged to use the public parking lot directly across from the hotel or metered spots.

CHECK IN AND REGISTRATION

Arrive to the AC Hotel and take the elevator to the 7th Floor. All attendees planning to attend reception will get their credentials at Level 7. Anyone who cannot make it to the reception can receive their credential at the venue for the Forum October 1st.

DINNER OFFERING

We will be serving heavy appetizers and drinks for the reception. If you prefer a sit-down meal after the reception, some nearby restaurants are below:

DiAnoia's Eatery - 2549 Penn Ave, Pittsburgh, PA 15222

Eleven - 1150 Smallman St, Pittsburgh, PA 15222

VENUE ACCESSIBILITY

The venue is wheelchair accessible, with ramps and elevators available for ease of movement. If you have any specific accessibility needs related to the venue, please inform us in advance, and we'll do our best to accommodate you.



National Leadership Forum on Rural Development

Tuesday, October 1, 2024 - Event Logistics



Logistics – National Leadership Forum on Rural Development (Main Event)

Date: Tuesday, October 1, 2024

Venue: Richard King Mellon Foundation HQ (The Auction House)
The Auction House, 42 21st Street – Suite 201 Pittsburgh, PA 15222

Time: 9:00am – 5:30pm

ARRIVAL INFORMATION

Arriving by Rideshare

Enter 42 21st Street – Suite 201 Pittsburgh, PA 15222 as destination.

Arriving by Car

Parking is located to the right of entrance and across the street.

SECURITY INFORMATION

Please use the door at 42 21st Street. There will be signage in front of the door indicating where to enter.

CHECK IN AND REGISTRATION

There will be a staff member at the door checking names and escorting attendees up to the conference. This event is invite-only and only people on the registration list will be welcomed.

VENUE ACCESSIBILITY

The venue is wheelchair accessible, with ramps and elevators available for ease of movement. If you have any specific accessibility needs related to the venue, please inform us in advance, and we'll do our best to accommodate you.



Logistics – National Leadership Forum on Rural Development (Dinner)

Date: Tuesday, October 1, 2024

Venue: The Art Room 2010 Smallman St, Pittsburgh, PA 15222

Time: 5:30pm – 8:30pm

ARRIVAL INFORMATION

Venue is located within walking distance, across the street from Richard King Mellon Foundation Headquarters.

SECURITY INFORMATION

Only invited guests will be allowed to attend.

CHECK IN AND REGISTRATION

Please sit at the table assigned on your credential.

DINNER OFFERING

We will be serving appetizers and drinks for the first hour of the reception, and a seated 3-course dinner with meat and vegetarian options following the reception.

VENUE ACCESSIBILITY

The venue is wheelchair accessible, with ramps and elevators available for ease of movement. If you have any specific accessibility needs related to the venue, please inform us in advance, and we'll do our best to accommodate you.

National Leadership Forum on Rural Development

Wednesday, October 2, 2024 - Event Logistics



Logistics – National Leadership Forum on Rural Development (Field Day)

Time: 7:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

FIELD DAY INFORMATION

- 1) The bus will leave the AC Hotel promptly at 7:00 AM—please plan to be in the lobby with time to spare.
- 2) All airport travelers should have their luggage with them on the bus throughout the day.
- 3) Participants will receive boxed breakfasts upon boarding the bus and we will stop in Johnstown for lunch.
- 4) At the conclusion of the day, the bus will stop briefly at the AC Hotel before continuing to the Pittsburgh International Airport.
- 5) Packing reminders: Warm clothes/rain gear in case of inclement weather, personal water bottles.

- 7:00 a.m. Depart Pittsburgh
- 9:00 a.m. Quemahoning Family Recreation Area (Restrooms available)
- 10:20 a.m. Incline and Downhill Trails
- 11:15 a.m. Central Park
- 11:45 a.m. Lunch and Local Speakers at Stone Bridge Brewing (Restrooms available)
- 12:15 p.m. Depart Johnstown
- 2:15 p.m. Small group disembarks at AC Hotel
- 3:00 p.m. Arrive at Pittsburgh International Airport

The Johnstown Incline Plane

711 Edgehill Dr, Johnstown, PA 15905

Central Park

507 Main St, Johnstown, PA 15901



Quemahoning Family Recreation Area

Quemahoning Dam Rd, Hollsopple, PA 15935



Richard King Mellon Foundation – The Auction House
42 21st Street – Suite 201, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15222

- 9:00 a.m. **Breakfast & Networking**
- 9:45 a.m. **Welcome**
Chris Perkins – Vice President of Programs, Outdoor Recreation Roundtable (ORR)
Sam Reiman – Director, Richard King Mellon Foundation
- 10:00 a.m. **The Power of Outdoor Recreation: Connecting with Americans about the Value of Time Outside**
Drawing from his experiences producing *America Outdoors with Baratunde Thurston*, Baratunde Thurston will deliver an inspiring, unifying, and nuanced keynote that relays anecdotes on the role of outdoor recreation in promoting healthy and vibrant communities across the United States.
Baratunde Thurston – Emmy-nominated host, producer, writer, and public speaker
Q&A with ORR President Jessica Wahl Turner
- 10:40 a.m. **Fireside Chat with Under Secretary for Rural Development Dr. Basil Gooden and I Ling Thompson**
I Ling Thompson, the first CEO of the Foundation for America's Public Lands, will guide a conversation with U.S. Department of Agriculture Under Secretary for Rural Development Dr. Basil Gooden about the state of rural America, key rural development opportunities to tap into, and lessons from effective communities from around the country to learn how outdoor recreation and rural economies can thrive together.
Dr. Basil Gooden – Under Secretary for Rural Development, U.S. Department of Agriculture
I Ling Thompson – CEO, Foundation for America's Public Lands
- 11:00 a.m. **Recipes for Successful and Resilient Economic Transitions**
Panelists will discuss the financial, cultural, and social components of integrating recreation for resilience and diversification into communities that have historically relied on other industries. How can communities effectively embark on the process of moving into a new economy while remaining true to their historic values and identity? What is the balance between supplementing current industries versus supplanting long-time industries? What tensions tend to emerge? How can communities prioritize projects that are authentic to their needs?
Nathan Ohle – President and CEO, International Economic Development Council (Moderator)
Dr. Silas Chamberlin – Principal, Firefly Outdoor + Economics
Tawny Wilson – Director of Advancement and Impact, Oweesta Corporation
Matt Dunne – Founder and Executive Director, Center on Rural Innovation
Rob Riley – President, Northern Forest Center
- 11:40 a.m. **Stories of Place: Old Fort**
Jason McDougald and Stephanie Swepson-Twitty will tell the story of the Old Fort Trails Project in and around the Pisgah National Forest in North Carolina. The Trails Project is born of the idea that change is possible when citizens come together to collaborate for meaningful and lasting change.
Jason McDougald – Executive Director, Camp Grier
Stephanie Swepson-Twitty – President and CEO, Eagle Market Streets Development Corporation
- 11:45 a.m. **Planning for Housing, Affordability, and Local Wealth Creation**
The surge of interest in outdoor recreation has brought with it a surge of not just visitation but also new transplants to recreation communities across the country, who bring with them new ideas, traditions, and wealth that may be in alignment or in conflict with local communities. In addition, a national housing shortage is more acute in recreation destinations, pricing out long-time locals and displacing the workforce. How do we handle the influx of attention in a way that maximizes local and equitable wealth creation, affordable housing opportunities, and community-driven visioning? What is the right balance between new ideas and investment and historic culture and values? How can we keep multi-generational families trained and educated in the community and avoid brain drain?
Larry Selzer – President and CEO, The Conservation Fund (Moderator)
Janice Ikeda – Executive Director, Vibrant Hawai'i
Dr. Megan Lawson – Economist, Headwaters Economics
David Lipsetz – President and CEO, Housing Assistance Council
Sara Moffat – Senior Advisor, Bureau of Land Management
- 12:25 p.m. **Lunch**
- 1:15 p.m. **Fireside Chat with Lucas St. Clair and Tony Pipa on Vision and Values**
Tony Pipa will interview Lucas St. Clair about the process of establishing the Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument, his emphasis on community input and vision, and the path ahead for this former timber and paper region.
Tony Pipa – Senior Fellow, Center for Sustainable Development, Brookings Institution (Moderator)
Lucas St. Clair – President, Elliottsville Foundation, and Board Chair, Trust for Public Land

Richard King Mellon Foundation – The Auction House
42 21st Street – Suite 201, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15222

- 1:45 p.m. **Stories of Place: Athens County, OH**
Jessie Powers will tell the story of the Outdoor Recreation Council of Appalachia, who are working to form a collaborative entity that expands recreational opportunities within Appalachian Ohio while cultivating a diverse, resilient, and prosperous rural economy to sustain inclusive growth.
Jessie Powers – Executive Director, Outdoor Recreation Council of Appalachia
- 1:50 p.m. **Funding Recreation Infrastructure**
Core to the success of any recreation-based economic development strategy is high-quality infrastructure to support an influx of participation and build lifelong relationships with recreation destinations. Yet rural communities are challenged by limited funding and planning bandwidth to support this development. Where should a community with limited public funding start? How can they ensure diversified funding mixes to support long-term success, including for maintenance of recreation infrastructure. How does traditional infrastructure like roads, bridges, utilities, and broadband fit into the mix?
Tee Thomas – CEO, Quantified Ventures (Moderator)
Curan Bonham – Program Officer, Richard King Mellon Foundation
Ryan Chao – President, Rails to Trails Conservancy
Tom Gilbert – President, Pennsylvania Environmental Council
Meryl Harrell – Deputy Under Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment, U.S. Department of Agriculture
- 2:30 p.m. **Break**
- 2:50 p.m. **Activating Communities**
This panel is dedicated to the strategies — both technical and cultural — that build support for a vision within a community and help increase momentum over time. What are strategies to ensure that the end products look like the community they are hoping to serve, and who needs to be at the table to ensure that new recreation opportunities are having meaningful impacts across the community?
Dr. Danny Twilley – Assistant Vice President of Economic, Community, and Asset Development for the Brad and Alys Smith Outdoor Economic Development Collaborative at West Virginia University (Moderator)
Steph Bertaina – Senior Policy Analyst, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and Program Lead, Recreation Economy for Rural Communities
Chris Estes – Co-Executive Director, Aspen Institute Community Strategies Group
Sandi Marra – President and CEO, Appalachian Trail Conservancy
Brian Vincent – Mayor, Farmville, Virginia
- 3:30 p.m. **Stories of Place: Wind River Reservation**
Alexandra Calloway-Nation will tell the story of the Wind River Indigenous-based Economy Recompete Plan, a recent recipient of U.S. Economic Development Administration funding to provide jobs and improve lives via infrastructure and business investments.
Alexandra Calloway-Nation – Fellow, U.S. Economic Development Administration Economic Recovery Corps
- 3:35 p.m. **New Horizons for Outdoor Recreation**
A lineup of forward-thinkers from the recreation economy and beyond will highlight the state of the recreation economy, share their takeaways from the Forum, and dig into some lingering questions of the day: What role do outdoor recreation businesses play in ensuring resilient rural communities? Where will people live and how will they recreate in the future? How will rural economies evolve in new ways in the coming decade?
Dr. Nathan Reigner – Director, Pennsylvania Office of Outdoor Recreation (Moderator)
Marc Berejka – Divisional Vice President, Community Advocacy & Impact, REI Co-op
Glenn Hughes – President, American Sportfishing Association
Shauneequa Owusu – Chief Strategy Officer, ChangeLab Solutions
Kim Wootton – Vice President, Commercial Strategy, KOA
- 4:15 p.m. **Stories of Place: PA Wilds**
Ta Enos will tell the story of the success of the PA Wilds Center for Entrepreneurship, which is working to establish the PA Wilds region as a sustainable outdoor recreation destination by integrating conservation and economic development in a way that strengthens and inspires communities.
Ta Enos – Founder and CEO, PA Wilds Center for Entrepreneurship
- 4:20 p.m. **Wrap-Up**
- 5:30 p.m. **Reception**
The Art Room – 2010 Smallman St, Pittsburgh, PA 1522
- 6:30 p.m. **Dinner**
The Art Room – 2010 Smallman St, Pittsburgh, PA 15222