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## Idaho welcomes national rural development leaders; virtual conference set for October 14-15, 2021

**BOISE**—Leaders from a dozen states will come together to explore solutions to rural America’s most pressing challenges. The Idaho Rural Partnership (IRP) is hosting Partners for Rural America for a wide-ranging conversation addressing rural housing, economic development, growth, community engagement, and other topics.

“We’re excited to work with our national partners, even virtually.” notes IRP Executive Director Jon Barrett. “The last time the group visited Idaho was in 2005, and partners take turns hosting annual meetings and local tours.” Barrett adds the conference was initially planned as an in-person event in Twin Falls in August with tours of Magic Valley communities and businesses, and went virtual due to the COVID-19 surge. “We’ve all had to adapt our work in rural communities and with each other.”

The conference is set for **October 14-15** and runs from **9:00am–1:00pm MDT** both days. Early bird registration is \$15 through October 8; after October 8 registration will move to \$25. Details and a registration link are at: [irp.idaho.gov](http://irp.idaho.gov). This event is open to anyone interested in learning from and sharing ideas with rural leaders and advocates in Idaho and other states. The group will present and discuss the following plenary topics:

- Rural population and growth trends
- Broadband and the digital economy
- Housing challenges and solutions
- Rural recovery and resiliency
- Community engagement and leadership development

Idaho State Senator and Rupert City Administrator Kelly Anthon will be a featured presenter.

Thanks to the Idaho Department of Commerce, Idaho Power, Bayer Crop Science, and Southern Idaho Tourism for conference sponsorship. For information on rural development resources, networks and initiatives, visit Idaho Rural Partnership at [irp.idaho.gov](http://irp.idaho.gov), Partners for Rural America at [partnersforruralamerica.org](http://partnersforruralamerica.org), and the Western Community Assessment Network [communityreview.org](http://communityreview.org).

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