**CED5: Community Resiliency Disaster Preparedness Advisor**

**DESCRIPTION**

There is an integral connection between the concepts of community planning, disaster preparedness, and economic health. The CED Advisor will work at the intersection of these principles while actively engaging local and regional partners and agencies. The general disciplinary focus of this position is community economic development that will enhance community resilience with focus on three programmatic themes:

* Community planning and infrastructure development following devastating impacts of the recent wildfires as well as increasing preparedness for future disaster events.
* Enhancing individual, community and regional disaster resilience planning and recovery
* Strengthen economic resilience by fostering innovation, a diverse business community, and advance business planning to help businesses prepare, cope, and overcome future disaster events.

A minimum of a master’s degree in community development, land use planning, emergency or risk management, or related fields is required. Experience working in rural communities and natural resource-based economies is highly desirable**.**

**JUSTIFICATION**

Plumas, Lassen, and Sierra Counties are known for vast forest resources, natural beauty, and close-knit rural communities. While there are approximately 2.8 million acres of potentially productive forest land in Plumas, Sierra, and Lassen Counties, much of this land base has become vulnerable to extreme wildfire. In 2020 and 2021, the Dixie, Beckwourth, and North Complex fires burned approximately 1.4 million acres and consumed 3,800 structures across the region. Beyond the destructive impact to homes and communities, the area’s economic industries based on forest resources, agriculture, and summer tourism have also been very negatively impacted.

This situation creates both threats and opportunities for future businesses as well as community housing and planning development. Silver-bullet solutions are unlikely to be implemented and inaction will only exacerbate decline in economic development and community resilience. This area advisor position represents a positive opportunity both economically and environmentally to impact the region by strengthening the connection between communities, working landscapes, and natural resource-based economies.

While ANR has long had been working with clientele to help them prepare and recover from disasters such as fire, flooding, pest outbreaks, drought, and Covid-19 through their individual disciplines such as agronomy, forestry, natural resources, and nutrition, as well as working on community development and rural assistance, all these disaster related areas have been addressed by UC ANR separately This position offers the opportunity to integrate across UC ANR disciplines to focus specifically on disaster resilience.

Cooperative extension systems across the country are becoming more integrated into the front lines of disaster planning, preparation, and recovery. The pace of disasters in California, especially in forested regions, has greatly increased in the new millennium mega-fire era. Communities lost to wildfire in the last four years include Coffee Park, Paradise, Greenville, and Grizzly Flats. Many additional communities throughout the region are at risk and there is a great need for assistance in developing resilience to disaster at the individual, community, and regional level.

This position will contribute to UC ANR's goals of 1) promoting economic prosperity in California, particularly through enhanced community economic development, 2) protecting California’s communities and businesses, and 3) building climate-resilient communities and ecosystems.

**EXTENSION**

The advisor is responsible for the development, implementation, and evaluation of extension education programs that will have positive impacts on community resilience, disaster preparedness, and economic resilience via business planning. The position will assist residents, business owners, forest, range and agricultural landowners, food networks, communities, and local government by developing and extending science-based practices for disaster preparedness, response, and recovery.

**RESEARCH**

The candidate would address key questions in areas community resilience and disaster preparedness such as the following: 1. How do communities assess their preparedness at the home, community, and regional landscape scale? 2. What aspects of community planning are most critical in preparing for fires, floods, drought, and other disasters in rural landscapes? 3. How can small businesses prepare and remain viable through unexpected disaster events, and what are the key practices that successful business employ? 4. What are economically viable wood product industries that can also help reduce fuels and fire risk?

**ANR NETWORK**

The advisor will work with UC ANR networks that encompass several fields including the the UC Davis college of Veterinary Medicine and their Volunteer Emergency Response Team, the Woody Biomass Utilization group (Daniel Sanchez) at UC Berkeley, the California Communities Program Team, and the Forest and Rangeland Systems Program Team and the Climate Change Program Team. This position will also be supported by CE specialists in Community Economic Development at UC Davis (Keith Taylor), Forest Economics (Bill Stewart) and Gabrielle Maier (Veterinary Medicine). AES researchers at UC Davis (Agriculture & Resource Economics, and Agriculture Sustainability Institute), and UC Berkeley Department of Agriculture & Resource Economics, and Environmental Science, Policy and Management will be important collaborators.

**EXTERNAL NETWORK**

There are abundant partnership opportunities with organizations and agencies including the Extension Disaster Education Network (EDEN), Sierra Business Council, Sierra Institute, Plumas Corp, Sierra Nevada Conservancy, Sierra Economic Development District, Sierra Small Business Development Center, Rural Community Assistance Corporation, US Economic Development Administration; Small Business Administration, USDA Rural Development, Office of Emergency Services, county governments, resource conservation districts, Firewise Communities and Fire Safe Councils.

**SUPPORT**

The advisor will be provided with an office, telephone, internet, office supplies, clerical and administrative support, access to a county vehicle, and travel support. Start-up funds will be provided.

**OTHER SUPPORT**

It is expected that research support will come from competitive grants in collaboration with partnering organizations and ANR colleagues, as well as grants from USDA (NIFA, WSARE), and local community groups.

**HEADQUARTERS AND COVERAGE AREA**

The area advisor will be based in the UC Cooperative Extension Office for Plumas/Sierra Counties located in Quincy, CA. Programmatic coverage will be provided to Plumas, Sierra, and Lassen Counties. The new CED Advisor will collaborate locally with a team of advisors and staff working in forestry, livestock production, forage crops, natural resources, and 4-H Youth Development.

The Area Advisor will report to the Plumas/Sierra County Director.

**DEVELOPED AND PROPOSED BY**

Dan Sanchez (UCCE Specialist, UC Berkeley), Glenda Humiston (UCANR Vice President), Steve Frisch (CEO, Sierra Business Council), David Lile (UC ANR Lassen/Plumas County Director), Chandra Richards (UCCE Agricultural Land Acquisitions Academic Coordinator), Susie Kocher and Ryan Tompkins (UCCE Forestry Advisors)