
Event Agenda

Rural Sociological Society

Wednesday, July 29, 2026

8:30 AM - 4:30 PM	Common Ground Ecovillage Field Trip
12:00 PM - 4:00 PM	Conference Check-in Location: Pre-Function Foyer
4:00 PM - 5:00 PM	Rural Law & Justice RIG Business Meeting Location: Cape Fear
5:30 PM - 6:30 PM	Keynote: Presidential Address Location: Chimney Rock Speaker: Jessica Schad ; Chair: Lisa Pruitt
6:30 PM - 8:00 PM	Presidential Reception Location: Atrium

Thursday, July 30, 2026

7:30 AM - 9:00 AM	Student & New Member Breakfast Location: Chimney Rock & Blowing Rock
7:30 AM - 9:00 AM	Breakfast Location: Hotel Lobby
8:00 AM - 4:00 PM	Conference Check-in Location: Pre-Function Foyer
9:15 AM - 10:30 AM	Food Systems, Markets & Supply Chains Location: Chimney Rock Speakers: Rick Welsh, Dara Bloom, Erin White, Haruhiko Iba, Rebecca Schewe, Mary Hendrickson
9:15 AM - 10:30 AM	International Development, Environment & Governance Location: Cameron Speakers: Sooyoung Choi, Saleh Ahmed, Nataliya Apanovich, Debarashmi Mitra, Guangqing Chi
9:15 AM - 10:30 AM	Rural Health Equity Location: Biltmore/Hope Speakers: Yang Li, Joshua Fergen, Stephanie Teixeira-Poit, Wylin Wilson, Antonio Paniagua Guzman
9:15 AM - 10:30 AM	Gender & Rural Identity Location: Reynolds Speakers: Zoe Chambliss, Matthew R. Filteau, Abe Neis-Eldridge, Alex Wenger
9:15 AM - 10:30 AM	Rural Population Change Location: Mendenhall/Bellamy Speakers: Ayse Akyildiz, Kenneth Johnson, Peter Nelson, Richelle Winkler, Terence Asitibasi
9:15 AM - 10:30 AM	Farmer Values, Autonomy & Collective Action Location: Smith Speakers: Daniel Tobin, Vitoria Cardoso, Gbenga Elufisan, Alex Rehbinder, Tom Gray, Edem Avemegah
10:30 AM - 10:45 AM	Break Location: Blowing Rock

10:45 AM - 12:00 PM	Farmer Wellbeing Location: Chimney Rock Speakers: Andrew Smolski, Florence Becot, McKayla R. Robinette, Sarah Immordino
10:45 AM - 12:00 PM	Energy Transitions & Resource-Dependent Communities Location: Mendenhall/Bellamy Speakers: Joshua Fergen, Greta Asay, Jeffrey Jacquet, Weston Eaton, Matthew Zinsli, Forrest Stagner
10:45 AM - 12:00 PM	Rural Health & Healthcare Location: Reynolds Speakers: Morgan Montanez, Raeven Chandler, Aidan Bridge, Shuai Zhou, Yang Li
10:45 AM - 12:00 PM	Place Identity, Resentment & Political Culture Location: Biltmore/Hope Chair: Presley Powers ; Speakers: Julie Keller, Amanda McMillan Lequieu, Ann Eisenberg, John Green
10:45 AM - 12:00 PM	Rural Poverty, Housing & Economic Hardship Location: Cameron Chair: Hannah Hendricks ; Speakers: Erin Gaede, Gregory Fulkerson, Darcy Sullivan, Ellie Martin, Matthew Brooks
10:45 AM - 12:00 PM	Youth, Education & Rural Cultural Life Location: Smith Chair: Kristi Lekies ; Speakers: Atsuko Kawakami, Leanne Avery, Kate McHale, Dallis Wallace
12:00 PM - 1:00 PM	Break - Lunch on your own
12:00 PM - 4:00 PM	Poster Set-up Location: Tanglewood & Pinehurst
1:15 PM - 2:30 PM	Keynote Address: Plenary 1 Location: Chimney Rock Speakers: Lisa Pruitt, Lauren Sudeall
2:30 PM - 2:45 PM	Break Location: Blowing Rock
2:45 PM - 4:00 PM	Conservation Programs and Practices Location: Chimney Rock Chair: Kaustubh Kumar ; Speakers: Kelly Wilson, Madison Harris, Douglas Jackson-Smith, Kristal Jones, Rick Welsh
2:45 PM - 4:00 PM	Global Livelihoods & Food Economies Location: Reynolds Chair: Christian Kelly Scott ; Speakers: Bernard Kwamena Cobbina, Lalaki Awudu, Apichaya Lilavanichakul, Robert Chiles
2:45 PM - 4:00 PM	Climate Adaptation and Policy Location: Mendenhall/Bellamy Speakers: Shristi Adhikari, Joseph Molnar, Lazarus Adua
2:45 PM - 4:00 PM	Rural Mental Health Location: Biltmore/Hope Chair: Darcy Sullivan ; Speakers: Joshua Grove, Nicholas Demerly, McKayla R. Robinette
2:45 PM - 4:00 PM	Rural Politics and Ideology Location: Smith Chair: Ann Eisenberg ; Speakers: Nancy Shurtz, Hiba Hafiz, Max Breiling
2:45 PM - 4:00 PM	Race, Equity & Institutions Location: Cameron Speakers: Julie N. Zimmerman, Meaghan Mingo, Kenisha Thomas, Sara Peters
4:15 PM - 5:30 PM	Poster Session + Reception Location: Tanglewood & Pinehurst + Blowing Rock
6:00 PM - 10:00 PM	Black Women Farmers Lead on Agrarian Justice - Field Trip

Friday, July 31, 2026

8:00 AM - 9:00 AM	Breakfast Location: Hotel Lobby
8:00 AM - 5:00 PM	Conference Check-in Location: Pre-Function Foyer
8:00 AM - 9:00 AM	Rural Race & Ethnicity RIG Business Meeting Location: Cape Fear
8:00 AM - 9:00 AM	Population RIG Business Meeting Location: Mendenhall/Bellamy
8:00 AM - 9:00 AM	SAFRIG Business Meeting Location: Biltmore/Hope
8:00 AM - 9:00 AM	Teaching and Curriculum RIG Business Meeting Location: Cameron
8:00 AM - 9:00 AM	Publications Committee Meeting Location: Kitty Hawk
9:15 AM - 10:30 AM	How Do We Sustain Ourselves and Move Forward Together? Location: Cameron Speakers: Kevin Alejandrez, Diego Thompson
9:15 AM - 10:30 AM	Leading from Culture: Realizing Justice through the Use of Indigenous Methodologies Location: Smith Speaker: Annie Jones
9:15 AM - 10:30 AM	Rural Sociologists and the Bureaucracy: Experiences and Recommendations for Research and Extension on Farm Stress Location: Mendenhall/Bellamy Speakers: Michael Schulman, Andrew Smolski, Kelli Russell, Florence Becot, McKayla R. Robinette
9:15 AM - 10:30 AM	Workshopping Ethics of Technology for Education Location: Reynolds Speakers: Andrew Smolski, Leland Glenna, Michael Branch, Alex Theophilus, Danielle Rhubart
9:15 AM - 10:30 AM	Rural Access to Justice and Community Justice Work Location: Chimney Rock Speakers: Elizabeth Chambliss, Rebecca Sandefur, Cassie Chambers Armstrong, Matthew Burnett, Daniel Ellman
9:15 AM - 10:30 AM	Author Meets Readers: The Case for Rural America Location: Biltmore/Hope Speakers: J. Tom Mueller, Jimmy Robinson, Paige Kelly, Ann Eisenberg, Angie Carter, Jennifer Sherman
10:30 AM - 10:45 AM	Break Location: Blowing Rock
10:45 AM - 12:00 PM	Agricultural Technology & Automation Location: Chimney Rock Speakers: Jordan Pantano, Alex Hernandez, Kaustubh Kumar, Jimmy Robinson
10:45 AM - 12:00 PM	Bioeconomy & Biotech Location: Smith Speakers: Lijing Gao, Robert Chiles, Bill Winders, Peyton Swanson
10:45 AM - 12:00 PM	Environmental Justice & Community Conflict Location: Biltmore/Hope Chair: Elizabeth Bennett ; Speakers: Landen Longest, Jack Stein, Lazarus Adua, Keahna Margeson

10:45 AM - 12:00 PM	Natural Amenities, Amenity Migration & Rural Places Location: Mendenhall/Bellamy Chair: Joshua Fergen ; Speakers: Laura Paul, David McGranahan, Danielle Schmidt-Larios, Alex Theophilus, Jennifer Sherman
10:45 AM - 12:00 PM	Rural Immigration and Immigrant Laborers Location: Cameron Speakers: Hazel Velasco Palacios, Nicandro Mandujano Acevedo, Natalie Garner, Sarah Walton
10:45 AM - 12:00 PM	Gender, Sexuality & Bodily Autonomy in Rural Contexts Location: Reynolds Chair: Abby Hogan ; Speakers: Brianna Dym, Willow Sipling, Hannah Haksgaard, Shelley Clark
12:00 PM - 1:00 PM	Break - Lunch on your own
12:00 PM - 1:00 PM	Office Hours with UNC Press Location: Pre-Function Foyer
12:00 PM - 1:00 PM	Community, Health, and Family RIG Business Meeting Location: Cape Fear
12:00 PM - 1:00 PM	YERV RIG Business Meeting Location: Kitty Hawk
1:15 PM - 2:30 PM	Farmer Identity and Inclusion Location: Cameron Chair: Kristal Jones ; Speakers: Hui-Ju Kuo, Francisco Alfredo Reyes Rocha, Samantha Wyman, Kerilyn Schewel
1:15 PM - 2:30 PM	Food Sovereignty and Food Security Location: Biltmore/Hope Speakers: Angie Carter, Ieva Sakelaite, Shelley Koch, Daniel Yuhasz, Mary Hendrickson
1:15 PM - 2:30 PM	Global Agroecology & Smallholder Transitions Location: Chimney Rock Speakers: Elizabeth Ransom, Alexandria Wilson, Daniel Tobin, Wandipa Mualefhe, Sooyoung Choi
1:15 PM - 2:30 PM	Water Resources, Quality & Aquaculture Location: Reynolds Chair: Alex Theophilus ; Speakers: Madelyn Verno, Samuel Baumer, Taylor Braswell
1:15 PM - 2:30 PM	Disaster Response, Community Resilience & Rural Change Location: Mendenhall/Bellamy Chair: Edem Avemegah ; Speakers: Siti Kusujarti, Shahrin Shahab, Alan Barton, Megan Hall, Tracey Farrigan
1:15 PM - 2:30 PM	Digital Infrastructure and Innovation Location: Smith Speakers: Kenneth Sherin, DuXixi Shen, Sam Mindes, Jia-Chi Liou
2:00 PM - 2:00 PM	Poster Take-Down Location: Tanglewood & Pinehurst
2:30 PM - 2:45 PM	Break Location: Blowing Rock
2:45 PM - 4:00 PM	Community Institutions & Civic Life Location: Biltmore/Hope Speakers: Kara Woods, Jocelyn McKinnon-Crowley, Paige Kelly, Mykayla Turner, Jonathan May
2:45 PM - 4:00 PM	Farming, Food Systems & Agricultural Sustainability Location: Chimney Rock Speakers: Kenneth Robinson, Deeptha Rao, Alexandria Wilson, Yoshihiro Uenishi, Stephen Bishop
2:45 PM - 4:00 PM	Rural Health and Mortality Location: Mendenhall/Bellamy Speakers: Jesse Shircliff, Kacey Clayton-Stiglbauer, Michael Topping, Maneesha Muriki, Laura Young

2:45 PM - 4:00 PM

Climate and Environment

Location: Cameron

Speakers: Ryan Thomson, Ayse Akyildiz, Presley Powers, Kathryn Foster, Winona Wood

2:45 PM - 4:00 PM

Families, Aging, and Community

Location: Reynolds

Speakers: Pierce Greenberg, Hannah Chow, Elizabeth Long-Meek, Edith-Marie Green, Zhihao Pan, Jude Edelman, Kelly Diaz

2:45 PM - 4:00 PM

Faculty-Led Travel Courses: Considerations, Challenges, and Opportunities

Location: Smith

Speakers: Michael Branch, Sonja Lindberg, Jennifer LaRose

4:15 PM - 5:30 PM

Plenary 2

Location: Chimney Rock

Speakers: Loka Ashwood, Nicholas Jacobs, Christopher Cooper, Cynthia Wallace

6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Celebrating RSS: Annual Awards Mixer

Location: Tanglewood & Pinehurst + Blowing Rock

Saturday, August 01, 2026

8:00 AM - 9:00 AM

Breakfast

Location: Hotel Lobby

8:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Conference Check-in

Location: Pre-Function Foyer

9:15 AM - 10:30 AM

RSS Business Meeting

Location: Chimney Rock

10:30 AM - 10:45 AM

Break

Location: Blowing Rock

10:45 AM - 11:45 AM

Keynote Address: Plenary 3

Location: Chimney Rock

Speakers: Reverend William J. Barber II, Ryan Thomson

11:45 AM - 12:30 PM

Book Signing

Location: Blowing Rock

Speaker: Reverend William J. Barber II

12:00 PM - 1:00 PM

Taco Bar

Location: Blowing Rock

1:00 PM - 2:15 PM

Land Use, Farmland Protection & Property

Location: Chimney Rock

Chair: Hannah Hendricks ; Speakers: Gwénaëlle d'Aumale, Kaitlyn Spangler, Elizabeth Bennett, Emma Scott

1:00 PM - 2:15 PM

Land, Place & Conflict

Location: Biltmore/Hope

Chair: Kelly Wilson ; Speakers: John Canfield, Zubair Barkat, Samuel Baumer, Adam Snitker, Danielle Schmidt-Larios

1:00 PM - 2:15 PM

Property Protection & Spatial Justice

Location: Cameron

Speakers: Ryan Thomson, Rebecca Shisler, Ayorinde Ogunyiola, Mike Ortosky

1:00 PM - 2:15 PM

Aging in Rural Places

Location: Reynolds

Chair: Greta Asay ; Speakers: Kayla Alvis, Hannah Hendricks, Ilona Matysiak, Matthew Brooks, Jeff Sharp

1:00 PM - 2:15 PM	Rural Policing Location: Smith Chair: Sarah Walton ; Speakers: Ted Forsyth, Brieanna Watters, Ella Siegrist, Julie Yingling
1:00 PM - 2:15 PM	Rural Work & Economic Inequality Location: Mendenhall/Bellamy Chair: J. Tom Mueller ; Speakers: Tim Slack, Jesse Shircliff, Emily Wornell, Amanda McMillan Lequieu
2:15 PM - 2:30 PM	Break Location: Blowing Rock
2:30 PM - 3:45 PM	Global Agriculture & Food Systems Location: Chimney Rock Speakers: Andres Mayorga, Charles Nutsugah, Loka Ashwood, Xu Yue
2:30 PM - 3:45 PM	Distance Education and Teaching Location: Cameron Speakers: Autumn Bland, Joben Sasis, Shari Moxley, Maria Boerngen
2:30 PM - 3:45 PM	LIVESTOCK OR LABORATORY? The Future of Meat in Southern Africa Location: Reynolds Speakers: Robert Chiles, Andrew Smolski, Bill Winders, Leland Glenna
2:30 PM - 3:45 PM	Exploring Emerging Rural Energy Developments and Impacts Location: Smith Speakers: Weston Eaton, Theresa Selfa
2:30 PM - 3:45 PM	Rural Communities in Trump 2.0 -- A Community Capitals Analysis Location: Biltmore/Hope Speakers: Stephen Gasteyer, Jan Flora, Mara Fridell
2:30 PM - 3:45 PM	Policy, Pedagogy, Narrative, and Play: Rural-Serving Institutions' Responses to Natural Disasters Location: Mendenhall/Bellamy Speakers: Wendy Pfrenger, Kristi Lekies, Ashleen Williams, Lynne Zummo, Devon Brenner, Tim Slack, Kristen Cuthrell
4:00 PM - 5:15 PM	Rural Teaching, Training, Research Methods Location: Reynolds Speakers: Michael Branch, Jeff Sharp, Hua James Qin, Hannah Haksgaard, Antonio Paniagua Guzman
4:00 PM - 5:15 PM	Teaching and Applying Theory to Rural Contexts Location: Cameron Speakers: Michael Branch, Shari Moxley, Gregory Fulkerson
4:00 PM - 5:15 PM	Expanding Your Data Toolkit: New and Underused Surveys for Rural Health and Aging Research Location: Chimney Rock Speakers: Shannon Monnat, Yifan Lou, Leif Jensen, William Copeland, Matthew Brooks
4:00 PM - 5:15 PM	Defining Rural - A Discussion with the National Center for Frontier Communities Location: Mendenhall/Bellamy Speakers: Morgan Montanez, Kayleigh Ward, Johannes Lencer
4:00 PM - 5:15 PM	Author-Meets-Critics for Gaventa and Schwartzman's Power and Just Transitions Location: Biltmore/Hope Speakers: Gabe Schwartzman, Rachel Terman, Loka Ashwood
4:00 PM - 5:15 PM	Community Schools in Rural North Carolina: Embodying Educational Justice through Place-Based Partnerships Location: Smith Speakers: Jennifer Seelig, Matthew Militello, Hipp Barclift, Jerry Johnson, Loni Crumb
5:15 PM - 5:15 PM	Meeting Adjourned