
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, Becky 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, Josh Fergen, Stephanie Teixeira-Poit, Wylin Wilson, Antonio Paniagua Guzman, Madeline Verno
9:15 AM - 10:30 AM	Gender & Rural Identity Location: Reynolds Speakers: Zoë 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 Rehbindler, 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 Robinette, Sarah Immordino
10:45 AM - 12:00 PM	Energy Transitions & Resource-Dependent Communities Location: Mendenhall/Bellamy Speakers: Josh Fergen, Greta Asay, Jeffrey Jacquet, Wes 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 Lequeieu, Annie 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
12:00 PM - 1:00 PM	International Development and Studies RIG Business Meeting Location: Mendenhall/Bellamy
12:10 PM - 1:00 PM	Rural Policy RIG Business Meeting Location: Biltmore/Hope
1:15 PM - 2:30 PM	Keynote Address: Plenary 1 Location: Chimney Rock Speakers: Lauren Sudeall, Elizabeth Chambliss
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: RYanne Pilgeram, 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 Robinette
2:45 PM - 4:00 PM	Rural Politics and Ideology Location: Smith Chair: Annie Eisenberg ; Speakers: Nancy Shurtz, Hiba Hafiz, Max Breiling

2:45 PM - 4:00 PM

Race, Equity & Institutions

Location: Cameron

Speakers: Kayleigh Ward, 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: Reynolds

Speaker: Morgan Montanez

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 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, Annie 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: Josh 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: Biltmore/Hope

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: Francisco Alfredo Reyes Rocha, Hui-Ju Kuo, Samantha Wyman, Gloria Mangoni, 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, Allie 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 (Ada) 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, Allie 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, Julia Terhune, Ayse Akyildiz, Presley Powers, James Collins, 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: Chimney Rock & Blowing Rock

Saturday, August 01, 2026

8:00 AM - 9:00 AM	Breakfast Location: Hotel Lobby
9:00 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 Speakers: Greta Asay, 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

Speakers: Hannah Hendricks, Kayla Alvis, 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

Speakers: Morgan Montanez, 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

CANCELED! 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: Wes 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, 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, Annie Eisenberg, Jeffery Jacquet, 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