

County Gap Session Results Summary October 2003

What are the needs of NH residents, businesses and organizations and how important are they?

Common Needs/Issues:

- **Economic:**
 - **Affordable access to: housing, communication, childcare, health care**
 - **Workforce development & training**
 - **Broader, more secure job base & higher wages and benefits**
 - **Taxation - fix tax structure, school funding, hidden costs/fees**
 - **Education around financial planning and property transfer**

- **Civic Participation:**
 - **Leadership development**
 - **Volunteer development**
 - **Participation in voting, committees/decisions**
 - **Community network development**

- **Health & Human Services & Support Systems:**
 - **Child & adult care**
 - **Quality health care**
 - **Drug and alcohol treatment**
 - **Transportation**
 - **Decreasing public funding**
 - **Parenting education**
 - **Senior services**
 - **Healthy lifestyle education**

- **Support for Youth:**
 - **Career development/workforce development**
 - **Financial management education**
 - **Employment opportunities**
 - **Retention in communities**
 - **Involvement in communities/decision making**
 - **Reduce school drop out rate**
 - **Activities for out of school time**
 - **Healthy lifestyles**
 - **Teen programs**

- **Environmental Protection/Conservation:**
 - **Land management**

- **Education around sustainable living/natural surroundings**
- **Preservation of open lands (including working landscapes) for example forest & farms.**
- **Water quality**
- **Land use planning**
- **Population growth impact**

- **Agriculture**
 - **Agriculture is not valued enough**
 - **Understanding our agricultural roots**
 - **Marketing products, lifestyle & occupation**
 - **People don't see the connection between what is purchased and what is grown locally**
 - **Support for agricultural producers and related industries**

County-specific needs (not covered above):

Carroll:

- Consumer education

Coos:

- Unfulfilled communications potential – Internet access & telecommunication
- Support of working forest & value-added products

Cheshire:

- Youth obesity

Grafton:

- Promoting medical careers

Hillsborough:

- Diversity issues – growth

Rockingham:

- Diversity issues – growth

Surprises – things we didn't see that we might have expected to:

Carroll:

- parenting issues
- forestry issues

Coos:

- land-use

Grafton:

- forestry issues

Merrimack:

- only county where tobacco cessation **was** mentioned

All counties

- No homeland security mentioned anywhere
- No strong emphasis on tourism
- No food safety issues

What should Extension do over the next two years and beyond to address these issues?

Economic

- Help to start small businesses and then train welfare recipients to take on the operation
- Promote “buying local”
- Bring groups together around affordable housing and land conservation to bring about research and models
- Research and share best practices around affordable housing
 - Incentives for developers to build affordable housing
- Extension should work more fully with businesses
- Offer seminars related to economic development for communities
- Small business career fair
- Educating citizens about different options for taxing and funding (myths/realities – sales and property tax)
- Promote manufacturing of value-added products
- Linking business to schools (school to work, internships, etc)
- Unbiased training for zoning and planning boards
- Extension should take the lead for “smart growth”
- Resource inventory to attract businesses
- Small business development workshops
- Conduct money management programs
- Master gardeners as resource to ag businesses
- Get people involved in wildlife management to explore careers
- Connect UNH students with careers through Extension

Civic Participation

- Increase volunteer training
- Encourage community service through programming
- Help provide information regarding public policy
- Develop a course for 6th grade students on how government is funded
- Help develop community leaders and good neighbors
- Leadership training

- Using kids and 4-H to get parents involved in the community
- Promote civic engagement through current programs
- Set up action groups to deal with issues
- Community profiles for more communities (systematic follow-up available locally)
- Develop neighborhood projects to increase citizenship
- Address social capital issues – getting more people involved in community
- Identify common issues in neighboring towns and link together (i.e. water issues)
- Expand and better promote 4-H Clubs

Health & Human Services & Support Systems

- Promoting healthy lifestyles and responsibility for your own health care
- Create a comprehensive directory of resources and disseminate
- Peer outreach type program for families
- Facilitate health education for under-insured
- Build service partnerships (agencies)
- Help facilitate grants
- Expand programming for the elderly (health care, money management, nutrition)
- Coordinate agencies that provide transportation for young families and elderly in rural areas
- Assess community needs
- Incorporate into the various activities, important social messages like prenatal care.
- Helping to set up volunteers in schools to coordinate other volunteers
- Increasing exercise in schools
- Continue the “academy programs” – alternative sentencing
- Social marketing to increase consumption of fruits and vegetables – seasonable healthy eating
- Promote health care cooperatives

Support for Youth

- Service learning opportunities
- Encourage kids to look at 4-H and FFA for career development
- Continue focus on 4-H clubs and expand and promote
 - 4-H involvement in schools
- Target at-risk youth who might not be drawn to 4-H
- Share the 4-H model with other youth organizations
- Farm to school programs
- Workforce prep – skills for youth
 - Job shadowing, job fairs, apprenticeships
 - Small entrepreneurial options for teens
 - Clearing house for youth job opportunities
 - Extension-run internships
- Help identify local opportunities for youth

- Expand “youth as partners” training
- Have a youth forum around youth issues
- Recognize good kids, make them role models and get them involved
- Support development of community centers
- Partner with other agencies to address issues
- Provide training and programs for college students to work with youth
- Connect more fully with schools
- Intergenerational programming
- Let others know what is going on with youth services
- Hands-on learning activities

Environmental Protection/Conservation

- Increase public awareness about conservation easements
- Increase public awareness about sustainability
- Encourage new land owners to develop a plan before clear cutting
- School education around environmental issues
- Outdoor education to youth
- Maintain focus on economy while maintaining open space and planned growth
- Education on need for water protection

Agriculture

- Support to dairy industry – profitability, business skills, BMP’s, marketing
- Source of food to consumer (Farm to table) - consumer education
- Helping farmers think outside the box and communicate with each other (using new technology)
- Educate farmers on the support services available
- Network with new and beginning farmers groups
- Local courses for homeowners on gardening, lawn care, etc
- Support Agro-forestry
- Community gardens
- Research solutions for small farm issues
- Set up farmer group displays at farm and garden shows
- Educate consumers through nutrition education
- Teach and research water quality
- Work with county farms as educational sites

Extension “system alignment”

- If you plan to do something new, redefine Extension at the state level to insure consistency state-wide with specific resources in each county identified
- Extension needs to reach people who don’t know that they may have an interest in the issue
- Improve the way Cooperative Extension does public relations – promote yourselves better, give a better perception to public of what Cooperative Extension does

- Promote more widely and promote what you do more widely
- Promote things other than agriculture and/or 4-H
- Get a volunteer in every town to help promote Extension
- Better connect UNH faculty and research with county needs
- Need to group issues that overlap and use the team approach where possible
- Extension should stay involve with participants to help them understand that most help is free
- Don't stretch yourselves too far-don't try to do too much

Unique county responses

Carroll – increased education to child care providers

Coos – County-wide community profile on telecommunication, cellular systems, high speed Internet, etc.

Coos- Tourism programs

Cheshire – develop neighborhood park for increased citizenship

Cheshire – build awareness of “simple care” options

Hillsborough - Develop an accurate way to collect data on diversity

Merrimack – move office to a place accessible by public transportation, Merrimack -

Have a pool of Segways

What are the best ways for Extension to deliver educational programs and information?

- One on one
- Workshops
- Trainings
- Bulletins
- Online courses/training
- PictureTel (two way interactive video)
- Radio
- TV
- Cable TV
- Newspaper
- Electronic newsletters
- Print newsletters
- Offer credit, CEUs, other incentives
- Meet people where they are at
- Expand successful programs
- Presentations/talks
- Collaborate (schools, businesses, towns, agencies, churches, civic groups, NHPR, NHPTV)
- Web site and links to Extension from other web sites
- Target specific audiences with specific information
- Mix audiences socioeconomically
- Displays

Full data available at: <http://ceinfo.unh.edu/common/documents/NeedsAs.htm>

- Home visits
- Phone contact
- E-mail
- CDs
- Advertising (media, with bills, stores, election sites, hockey games, signage, farmers markets)
- Volunteers
- UNH students and student research projects
- Other USNH campuses
- Hands on learning
- Listening sessions/focus groups
- Libraries
- Videos
- 4-H afterschool
- Modeling
- Mentoring
- Twilight meetings
- Involve youth
- Packaged learning units
- Train the trainer
- Fairs
- Mailings
- Field trips
- Community service
- Program follow up
- Brochures
- Home study course
- On line discussion boards
- Tape cassettes
- Outdoor programs
- Hot line for help
- Small groups