



DRIVING CHANGE TOGETHER:
TELLING THE ECONOMIC STORY
(All Speakers are Confirmed)
JUNE 13, 2017

DAY ONE – ENERGY FOCUS

7:00 am	REGISTRATION OPENS <i>All Events at Denver Airport Marriott at Gateway Park</i>
8:00 am	BREAKFAST
8:45 am	WELCOMING REMARKS <i>John Bertsch, Chairman of the Board Ports-to-Plains Alliance Cathy Shull, Executive Director Pro 15 Sara Blackhurst, President/CEO Action 22</i>
9:00 am	CHANGING THE ENERGY PORTFOLIO The new president brings new policy for America’s energy industry. What does this new direction mean for the economy in our region with such a diverse energy production portfolio? <i>Michael Whatley, Executive Vice President Consumer Energy Alliance</i>
9:30 am	STUDIES TO BROADEN YOUR HORIZON Development Research Partners has conducted many studies focused on Colorado’s energy industry covering fossil fuels and renewables. This session will highlight findings from some of their work including the importance of renewable energy in Eastern Colorado and highlighting the resource rich state. <i>Patty Silverstein, President and Chief Economist Development Research Partners David Hansen, Senior Economist Development Research Partners</i>
10:15 am	NETWORKING BREAK

10:45 am	<p>MILES AND MILES OF INFRASTRUCTURE FUELING THE ECONOMY</p> <p>Pipelines have been in the news quite a bit lately, but this infrastructure is critical in delivering the energy that fuels the economy. The United States has the largest network of energy pipelines in the world with more than 2.4 million miles of pipe including approximately 72,000 miles of crude oil lines.</p> <p><i>Brad Ayers, Government and Industry Relations TransCanada</i></p>
11:30 am	<p>CANADA...AMERICA'S LARGEST CUSTOMER</p> <p>In 2016 Canada bought more from the United States than any other nation, including China. In 2016 our northern neighbor purchased nearly \$332 billion in American goods and services. Nearly 9 million American jobs depend on trade and investment with Canada, and Canadian companies operating in the U.S. directly employ 500,000 Americans. With talk of renegotiating NAFTA in the news, we take a look at this critical relationship for our economy.</p> <p><i>Liam Stone, Executive Director, Policy Government of Alberta</i></p>
12:00 pm	<p>LUNCHEON AND KEYNOTE ADDRESS</p> <p>JOBS BEYOND THE OIL PATCH</p> <p>The energy industry impacts the economy in areas beyond those located directly in the oil patch. Denver Metro Economic Development Corporation CEO J.J. Ament discusses how the industry is creating jobs in the Denver region.</p> <p><i>J.J. Ament, Chief Executive Officer Metro Denver Economic Development Corporation</i></p>
1:30 pm	<p>A HISTORICAL RURAL INVESTMENT</p> <p>Xcel Energy Inc. recently announced a multibillion-dollar investment in 11 new wind farms across seven states. Some are located along the Ports-to-Plains Corridor including the largest single-phase wind farm ever built in North America near Limon, Colorado and one in Hale County, Texas. They will also build the largest wind farms in New Mexico and South Dakota. Many of the turbines will be made in Colorado by Vestas Wind Systems. This session will detail the nation's largest single multi-state investment in wind energy, and what it means for the Ports-to-Plains Region.</p> <p><i>Ashley Valdez, Area Manager, Community and Government Affairs, Xcel Energy</i></p>

2:15 pm	<p>PUSHING THROUGH A DOWNTURN</p> <p>The South Plains Association of Governments received a U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Association Grant to study the impact of the drop in oil and gas prices on the West Texas Economy. With a steering committee of regional colleges, workforce development and economic development agencies, Texas Tech conducted the study that assessed the economic and employment impact on the West Texas region from the decline of oil prices and made recommendations to mitigate the impact of future oil price fluctuations.</p> <p><i>Kelly Davila, Director of Regional Services South Plains Association of Governments</i></p>
3:00 pm	<p>NETWORKING BREAK</p>
3:30 PM	<p>213,000 JOBS CREATED IN THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS</p> <p>Many people know Colorado for the majestic Rocky Mountains and skiing, but did you know that the state produces more than 1.1 million barrels of oil per day and has more than 40,000 oil and gas wells in production? This session will tell you about the oil and gas industry in Colorado that supports more than 213,000 jobs and contributes more than \$25 billion to the state's economy, representing 9.1% of Colorado's GDP.</p> <p><i>Tracee Bentley, Executive Director Colorado Petroleum Council</i></p>
4:00 pm	<p>COMMUNITIES CAPITALIZING ON THE PERFECT OPPORTUNITY</p> <p>Wind farms are popping up throughout the Ports-to-Plains region, and anyone who has driven through the corridor has seen the oversized truckloads carrying blades, towers and other components. In a region blessed with wind resources, how can rural communities capitalize on opportunities from growth in the industry throughout our region?</p> <p><i>Kevin Carter, High Ground of Texas John Osborne, Lubbock Economic Development Alliance</i></p>
5:00 pm – 7:00 pm	<p>RECEPTION HONORING ENERGY AND AGRICULTURE</p>

June 14, 2017

DAY TWO – AGRICULTURE FOCUS

7:00 am REGISTRATION RE-OPENS

8:00 am BREAKFAST

8:45 am WELCOMING REMARKS

*John Bertsch, Chairman of the Board
Ports-to-Plains Alliance
Cathy Shull, Executive Director
Pro 15
Sara Blackhurst, President/CEO
Action 22*

9:00 am KEYNOTE

KEEPING A STRONG RURAL HEARTBEAT

Keeping rural America competitive requires a variety of investments including infrastructure, trade, and connectivity. How can communities communicate these needs to state and federal decision-makers?

*Don Ament
Former State Legislator and Commissioner of Agriculture*

9:30 am BOUNTIFUL HARVESTING OF THE BASE ECONOMY

In Colorado and throughout the Ports-to-Plains region agriculture still provides a base economy. How can communities provide greater support to the agriculture economy?

*Greg Brophy
Michael Best Strategies, Vice President of Western States
Former State Colorado State Senator*

10:15 am NETWORKING BREAK

10:45 am CREATING SUCCESS WITH TRANSPORTATION AND LOCATION

Colorado ranks number four in America in sunflower production, and six of the top nine sunflower states are in the Ports-to-Plains region. Colorado Mills is located along the corridor in Lamar, Colorado and is capitalizing on this resource producing sunflower oil and high protein animal feed. This session will take a look at this value-added agriculture success story.

*Rick Robbins
Colorado Mills*

12:00 pm

LUNCHEON AND KEYNOTE

BECOMING AN INFORMED AGRICULTURE ADVOCATE

Few if any pieces of legislation have a greater impact on the Ports-to-Plains region than the Farm Bill. Congress has begun working on the next five-year bill, most likely to take effect in 2018. The most recent Farm Bill was passed in 2014 after nearly two years of work. In a legislative environment that remains contentious, it looks to be a difficult process again. During this session we examine the key issues Congress will address as it writes the new Farm Bill so that we can be effective advocates for our agriculture-based economies.

*Tom Sell, Former Deputy Chief of Staff to the House Committee on Agriculture
Southwest Council of Agribusiness*

1:30 pm

KEEPING AG ON THE FOREFRONT

An eastern Colorado rancher and blogger, born and raised on agriculture will share ideas on keeping agriculture on the forefront by having conversations and sharing information that supports the farmers and ranchers who work so hard to raise safe food and focus on animal well-being.

*Kelsey Pope, Rancher
River Bend Ranch, LLC and CattleFax Digital Communications & Marketing*

2:15 pm

TALKING WORLD TRADE

Agriculture depends on trade. America's farmers and ranchers produce the food and fiber that feed and clothe the world. Delivering our farm products to the world is critical for our agriculture-based economies. While manufacturing often attracts most of the press in coverage of trade policy, it is every bit as important to agriculture. During this panel, leaders of some of our region's top commodity groups will discuss trade policy and issues, and how they affect all businesses in our region from farmers and ranchers to local retail and service industries.

*Carlyle Currier, Vice President
Colorado Farm Bureau
Board of United States Meat Export Federation
Troy Schneider, Vice President
Colorado Corn Administrative Committee
Delegate to U.S. Grains Council*

3:00 pm

NETWORKING BREAK

3:15 pm

EXPORTS AND NAFTA

As the United States looks at renegotiating NAFTA, what does the data say about the importance of exports to the Ports-to-Plains state economies? Total exports and truck exports have grown significantly and the role of agriculture is often leading the way.

Joe Kiely, Vice President of Operations
Ports-to-Plains Alliance