



# Utah Coal Country Strike Team

America's coal transition belongs to all of us.

June 14, 2019

The Utah Coal Country Strike Team stands ready to help Utah's most distressed region – the coal communities of Carbon and Emery counties – diversify the economy and raise incomes by 10 percent. We have assembled a multi-disciplinary team of experts, secured a \$500,000 state appropriation, landed commitments from over two dozen large employers and organizations, and developed an evidence-based, counterfactual trend model to measure our success. Our work plan calls for us to harness the strengths of two public universities to train/re-train workers, invest in tourism infrastructure, revitalize housing in the community, and reinvent economic development incentives. We plan to leverage each \$1 of Alliance for the American Dream funding with \$2.5 from other sources. The region's congressman, mayors, county commissioners, and the Utah lieutenant governor support our efforts, which we believe can serve as a national model on how to help distressed coal communities as America combats global climate change. With the Alliance's help we can expand economic opportunity and create a healthier and more robust middle class. We like to say, "America's coal transition belongs to all of us." We ask for your partnership and support.

**The Heart of Utah's Coal Country, 2018**

- 32,063** People
- 12,223** Households
- 16%** Job Loss 2008-2017

Carbon County  
Emery County

## GOAL

Increase the income by 10 percent for 10,000 households in Utah's Coal Country by the end of 2020.

## IDEA

Form a Utah Coal Country Strike Team to help diversify the economy and provide urgent public policy support. We believe four interventions will be necessary to meet the goal.

- 1. Workforce Training and Jobs** - Diversify the economy by providing an array of opportunities with a pathway to jobs. We call this intervention Silicon Slopes East+.
- 2. Housing Revitalization** – Prioritize investment in Utah's Coal Country housing stock to increase wealth and create a more attractive community. We call this intervention Hearth and Home.
- 3. Tourism Infrastructure** – Diversify the economy by investing in tourism infrastructure. Utah's Coal Country is the closest desert red rock to the Greater Salt Lake Area. We call this intervention Red Rock Gateway.
- 4. Economic Development Incentives** – Fix broken economic development incentives with customized tax policy. We call this intervention Custom Incentives.

## MEASURES OF SUCCESS

The American Dream Ideas Challenge set an aggressive goal of achieving a 10 percent increase in household income of 10,000 households by the end of 2020. We created an American Dream Model to measure our success.

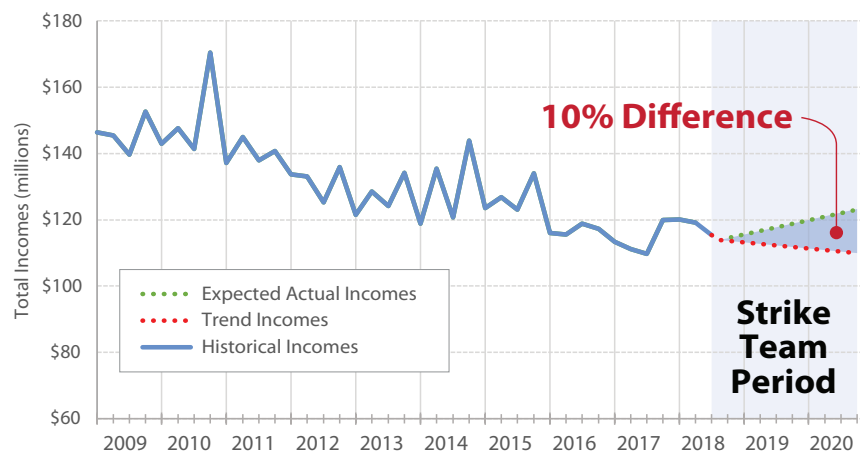
The model tracks total income in Utah's Coal Country as a proxy for household income. We track our success by creating two estimates of income. The first estimate evaluates incomes in Carbon and Emery counties without our work. We call this "trend income" and it serves as the counterfactual for measuring success. This trend income is based on the performance of 150 similar coal communities in the country. The second estimate includes actual income performance in Utah's Coal Country.

We track the differences in these two estimates each quarter so we can make adjustments in our interventions as needed. By the end of 2020 we plan to obtain a 10 percent difference between the trend incomes and actual incomes.

We are excited to show other coal communities around the country how they too can use this evidence-based model to measure success.

### The American Dream Model Tracker

Actual Incomes compared to Trend Incomes



Source: Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute (model) and the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (data).

## SCALE POTENTIAL

The United States has approximately 150 coal-dependent communities. An analysis by the Brookings Institution concluded these communities will continue to face significant economic hardship because of stagnant domestic electricity demand, advances in competing generation technologies, unfavorable export conditions, and deepening concern about climate change.<sup>1</sup>

Coal-dependent communities face a choice: they can act, or they can be acted upon. The Strike Team model favors action.

We have created a national model for others to follow. Every coal-dependent community in the nation can bring together a mission-focused, multi-disciplinary, locally led, and data-driven group of experts to review challenges, assess strengths, develop custom public policies, and measure success. The solutions will not be the same, but the process holds promise for every coal-dependent community in America.

### Coal Country Roadmap



## PEOPLE AND PARTNERS — Utah Coal Country Strike Team

We've assembled a highly focused, multi-disciplinary Strike Team of elected officials, public policy experts, and business and community leaders. The team is supported by a partnership of more than 70 individuals, representing a wide range of businesses, non-profits, and educational institutions.

### Congressman John Curtis

*Honorary Co-Chair*

### Lt. Governor Spencer Cox

*Honorary Co-Chair*

### Mike Kourianos/co-chair

*Mayor, Price City*

### Natalie Gochmour/co-chair

*Director, Gardner Institute*

### Danny Van Wagoner

*Mayor, Castle Dale City*

### Kent Wilson

*Commissioner, Emery County*

### Tony Martines

*Commissioner, Carbon County*

### Gary Straquadine

*Vice Provost, Utah State University – Eastern*

### Lorie Fowlke

*District Director, Congressman Curtis*

### Ginger Chinn

*Managing Director, Governor's Office of Economic Development*

### Clint Betts

*Executive Director, Silicon Slopes*

### Geri Gamber

*Executive Director, Southeastern Utah Association of Local Governments*

### Stuart Clason

*Regional Economic Growth Director, Utah Association of Counties*

### Mike McCandless

*Governor's Rural Partnership Board*

### Jennifer Robinson

*Associate Director, Gardner Institute*

### Nick Tatton

*Economic Development Director, Price City*

### Rita Vigor

*Economic Development Specialist, Carbon County*

### Gina Gagon

*Chair, Community Economic Council*

### Wes Curtis

*Senior Rural Advisor*

### Max Backlund

*Director, Utah Community Builders Foundation, Salt Lake Chamber*

## Business Supporters

The following businesses have committed their support to this endeavor, including work force development and employment opportunities for graduates.

Blacksmith International

Bottega

City Creek Center

Chamber Rural

Workforce Network

Clyde Companies

Deseret Management

Corporation

Domo, Inc.

Governor's Office of Economic Development

Economic Development

Corporation of Utah

Infinite Scale

Insidesales.com

Ivory Homes

LSI Corporation

Wasatch Group

Pluralsight

Qualtrics

R&R Partners

Rural Online Initiative

Salt Lake Chamber

Silicon Slopes

UAMMI

University of Utah

University of Utah Health

Utah Division of

Workforce Services

Utah Community Builders

Utah State University

Wellington Microtech

Zions Bank

1. "The U.S. Coal Sector," Howard Gruenspecht, Brookings Institution, January 2019.