

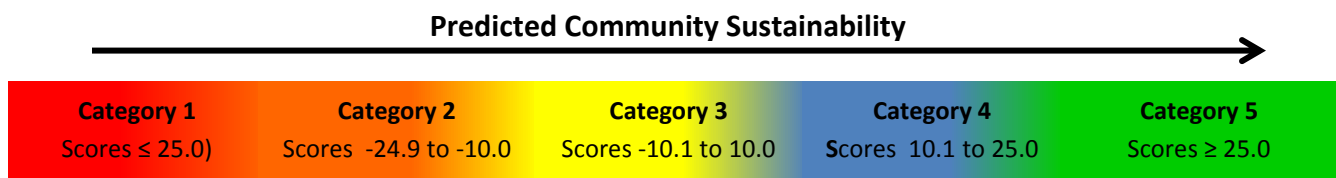
RURAL POPULATION SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT TOOL

Missouri’s Rural Population Sustainability Assessment Tool was developed for the Missouri Department of Natural Resources by Wichita State University’s [Environmental Finance Center](#) (EFC). Wichita State University’s EFC is one of 8 university-based centers across the nation funded by a U.S. Environmental Protection agency grant to promote development of financially and environmentally sustainable communities.

The Rural Population Sustainability Assessment Tool uses census data to calculate the potential for growth and sustainability in communities by assigning a weight to various statistics for each community. Key demographic and economic factors, which research has shown predict future changes in rural population growth and decline, are weighted to produce an overall rating of a community’s growth potential, or sustainability score. The tool includes data for 745 communities in Missouri and was designed to focus on rural communities.

This tool will provide the Department with information that will help identify communities that may be good candidates for assistance, including financial, technical, managerial assistance or regulatory relief measures. The type of assistance provided and recommendations made to the community will be based on the community’s potential for sustainability along with other factors, including a community’s economic state and health and environmental impacts.

Using the tool, an overall score is generated for each community. Higher scores indicate greater predicted sustainability. Five categories were designated within the range of scores indicating the level of predicted future sustainability. Use of these categories will enable tool output to be used in planning and prioritizing Department assistance.



For more information, contact the Missouri Department of Natural Resources’ Community Service Coordinator at (573) 751-1080 or visit www.dnr.mo.gov/assistance. A summary report may be downloaded from <http://dnr.mo.gov/env/wpp/cwforum/affordability.htm>.