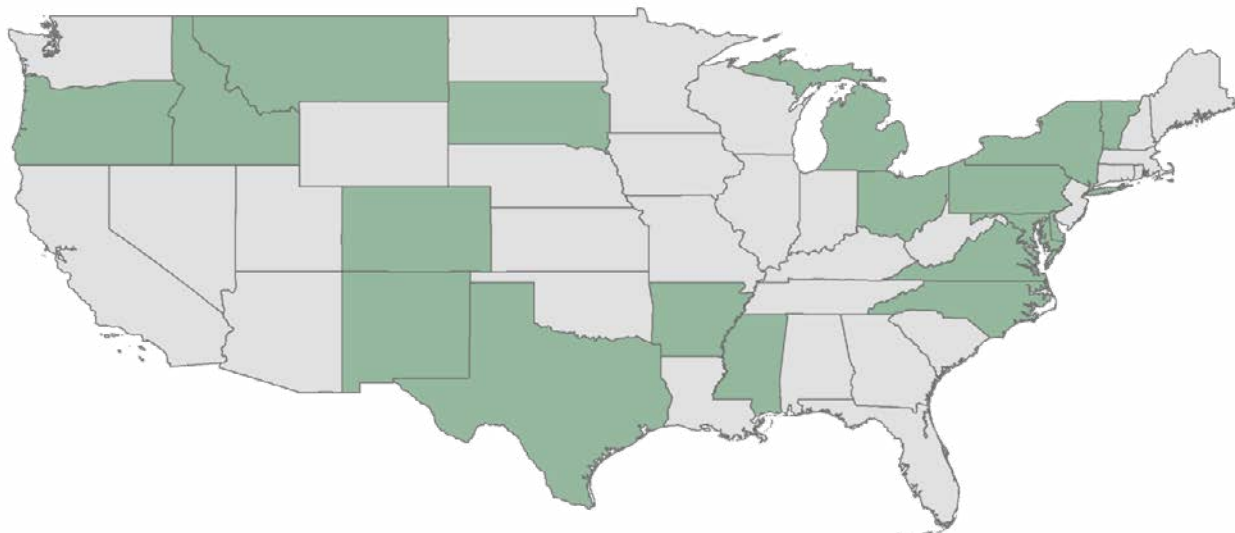# 2023 Annual Report

Overview

JG specializes in applied research on topics related to community and public health, behavioral health, human services, food systems, and natural resources and the environment. The JG team is comprised of a team of experts, holding advanced degrees in rural sociology, sociology, public health, epidemiology, environmental studies, public administration, psychology, divinity, biological science, business analytics, anthropology, and applied economics. Together, the JG team utilizes systems thinking to understand complex social problems and identify potential ways to build systems that better serve people and the environment.

In 2023, JG added three full-time staff members to bring the team to a total of 18. Throughout last year, JG's work covered all of the topical and technical areas of expertise on which JG has focused over the past several years, and brought opportunities to work in new ways. The work featured in this year-end report is focused around a selection of our content areas and includes: working with individuals with lived experience, improving business processes for human services, impacts of climate variability, supporting adaptive grazing practices, applied community-based data visualization, and dashboard for systems improvement.

JG is grateful to our clients, collaborators, and colleagues and looks forward to continuing to drive our mission of science for the public good in 2024. Additional information about our work and team can be found on our updated website: www.jgresearch.org.

States in which JG worked in 2023

Interesting topics we worked on this year

Working to improve lived experiences of houselessness

There are varied approaches to meeting the needs of individuals experiencing houselessness and addressing the root causes of houselessness. **The perspectives of individuals with lived experience with houselessness and of individuals working to provide direct services are important when assessing needs and opportunities for improvement.** These perspectives can add nuance and detail to analyses that otherwise rely heavily on quantitative data to identify needs and gaps in the existing housing and service continuums.

Highlighted projects

- **Reaching Home: Missoula's 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness a Retrospective Evaluation (Client: City of Missoula, MT)**
- **Grand Junction Area Unhoused Needs Assessment (Client: City of Grand Junction, CO)**

Further reading

- [Reaching Home final report](#)
- [City of Grand Junction information page and link to draft needs assessment report](#)

Data visualization for service providers and community collaborators

Health and human service providers work within local and regional systems of care that can provide the best and most efficient care to individual community members when coordination is prioritized. **Data from across service systems can be integrated, synthesized, and visualized to identify gaps and redundancies as well as opportunities for enhancing the flow of people, resources, and information.** Dynamic dashboards and data analysis tools provide the framework for making sense of the diversity of information needed to improve systems and ultimately outcomes for the people they serve.

Highlighted projects

- **Behavioral health crisis system community and state dashboards (Clients: County crisis coalitions across the state of Montana, supported by the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services and the Montana Healthcare Foundation)**
- **Calculating need and capacity in Ohio (Client: Ohio Recovery Housing)**

Further reading

- [Gallatin County Behavioral Health Coalition web-based dashboard](#)
- [Final report for Ohio Recovery Housing](#)
- [Peer-reviewed publication about JG's Calculating an Adequate System Tool (CAST)](#)

Supporting adaptive grazing practices

Working grasslands on which producers use adaptive grazing management practices provide wildlife habitat, carbon storage, and a buffer against the negative impacts of conversion to crops or residential development. **Planning and management in adaptive grazing systems can support the health and wellbeing of the human, animal, and natural systems that depend on grasslands and pastures.** Supporting ranchers and others in the food system to monitor and learn from the outcomes of adaptive grazing can increase the efficacy and value of these practices.

Highlighted projects

- **Regenerative grazing in the Southeastern United States (Client: National Center for Appropriate Technology)**
- **Exploring the priorities, needs, and motivations of ranchers for ranch monitoring (Client: The Nature Conservancy)**

Further reading

- [Press release on the largest-ever SSARE award supporting the project](#)
- [Regenerative Grazing Lands Program of The Nature Conservancy-North America](#)

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Exploring impact of and adaptations to climate variability

Climate variability is increasingly impacting communities across the country and around the globe, through extreme weather, slow changes to annual precipitation and temperature, and shifting seasonality to weather patterns. **The impacts of climate variability on agriculture and forestry systems as well as other natural resource-based economic sectors are especially apparent, and both build slowly over time and become obvious with an unexpected weather event.** Identifying effective and efficient adaptations to a changing climate requires understanding vulnerability to the impacts and opportunities to both mitigate impacts and increase resilience.

Highlighted projects

- **Drought Vulnerability Assessment for the updated Montana Drought Management Plan (Client: Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation)**
- **Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities Program Learning Network data reporting and analysis (Client: Office of the Chief Economist, U.S. Department of Agriculture (Contract lead: Lindahl Reed))**

Further reading

- Montana Drought Management Plan
- Appendix C: Drought Vulnerability Assessment
- Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities Program

Improving business processes for human services

Human and social services from federal, state, and local agencies are meant to provide support and opportunity for all individuals to meet their basic needs and enhance their wellbeing. However, **processes and data systems that are not designed with the needs and capacities of recipients in mind can undermine equitable access to and utilization of services**. Understanding the client experience of accessing resources and improving business processes of human services agencies can increase equity and decrease barriers to utilization.

Highlighted projects

- **Barriers to Accessing Public Benefits: A Voice of the Customer Study (Client: Department of Health and Human Services, Montgomery County, MD)**
- **Child care licensing redesign (Client: Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (Contract lead: Bloom Consulting))**

Further reading

- DHHS focus on transforming "practices so that they are streamlined, appropriate, accessible and equitable"
- Child care licensing assessment: Stakeholder perspectives to support regulatory and systems improvement
- Summary of proposed rule rewrite (pending as of January 14, 2024)

Clients we worked with in 2023

- Agnew Beck Consulting, Inc.
- Behavioral Health Alliance of Montana (BHAM)
- Bloom Consulting
- Buffalo Nations Grassland Alliance
- Buncombe County (NC) Partnership for Children, Inc.
- Montana Family Planning
- City of Grand Junction (CO)
- City of Missoula (MT)
- Community Food & Agriculture Coalition (MT)
- Concert Health
- County of Rio Arriba (NM)
- Custer (County ID) Economic Development Association
- District 7 Human Resource Development Council (MT)
- Eastern Montana Community Mental Health Center
- Eastern Shore (VA) Community Services Board
- Faunalytics
- Gallatin County (MT) Behavioral Health Crisis Coalition
- Glynwood Center for Regional Food and Farming (NY)
- Grand Traverse (MI) Conservation District
- Greater Susquehanna Valley (PA) United Way
- Help Center-Southwest Montana
- Lemhi County (ID) Economic Development Association
- Lindahl Reed
- Meridian Institute
- Montana Consortium for Urban Indian Health
- Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services Behavioral Health and Disabilities Division
- Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services Community Services Bureau/ Senior and Long-Term Care Division
- Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services Early Childhood and Family Services Division
- Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services Health Resources Division
- Montana Department of Natural Resources
- Montana Healthcare Foundation
- Montana Primary Care Association
- Montana Public Health Institute
- Montana State University College of Education, Health, and Human Development
- Montana State University College of Agriculture
- Montgomery County (MD) Community Action Agency
- Montgomery County (MD) Department of Health and Human Services
- National Center for Appropriate Technology
- Northwest Energy Efficiency Alliance, Inc.
- Ohio Children's Alliance
- Ohio Recovery Housing
- Oregon Health and Sciences University
- Park County (MT) Health Department
- Richland County (MT) Public Health Department
- The Nature Conservancy
- United States Department of Agriculture
- University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture
- University of Vermont
- Vermont Department of Health Division of Substance Use
- Voices of Hope Hotline (MT)
- Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE)
- Western Landowners Alliance
- Western Montana Mental Health Center
- Yellowstone County (MT) Sheriff Department

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