

San Luis Valley development group names new director

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ALAMOSA — The new leader of a San Luis Valley economic development group sees untapped potential in the region.

“I think there’s a lot of potential in the San Luis Valley,” Kevin Wilkins said. “I think it’s an undiscovered area of Colorado that affords us an opportunity to give careful consideration as to where we want to be.”

Wilkins is in the first week of his new job as executive director of the San Luis Valley Development Resources Group.

He was chosen by the group’s 12-member board to replace Mike Wisdom, who spent over two decades on the job.

Wilkins is very familiar with Wisdom, as he sat on the board of another economic development group Wisdom once ran in Wray.

In fact, he found out about the job because he heard of Wisdom’s retirement, called to wish him well and, instead, got talked into applying.

Wilkins said he wants to build off the organization’s successful programs.

Those include an enterprise tax zone that can direct tax incentives to businesses and a revolving loan fund.

Moreover, the organization serves as a repository of information that can foster projects.

“You have an entity that can unify a strategic direction for rural economic development in a pretty diverse region,” he said.

One of Wilkins’ first tasks will be visiting with officials in the six counties and 18 towns in the region.

“There will be a change there, but you don’t want to do anything against the wishes of the community,” he said. “It’s up to them in determining how to move the region forward.”

Wilkins came to the valley after serving as the economic development administrator for the city of Yuma, Ariz., for five years.

There he helped establish a desert agricultural institute and an economic development organization that included Arizona, Southern California and two neighboring [Mexican](#) states.

Wilkins grew up in Eastern Colorado and western Nebraska.

“It was an opportunity to come back to Colorado,” he said.

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