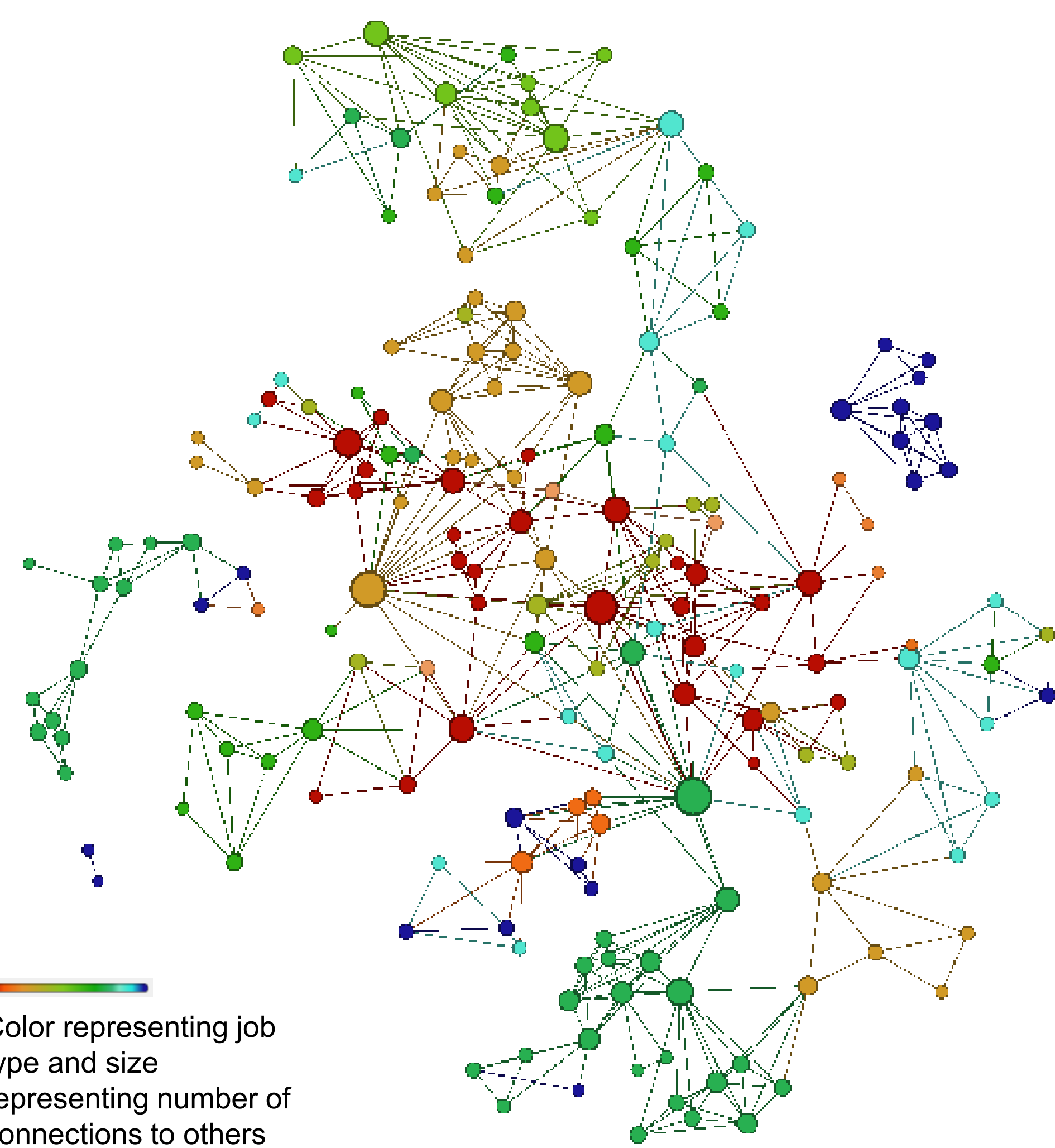
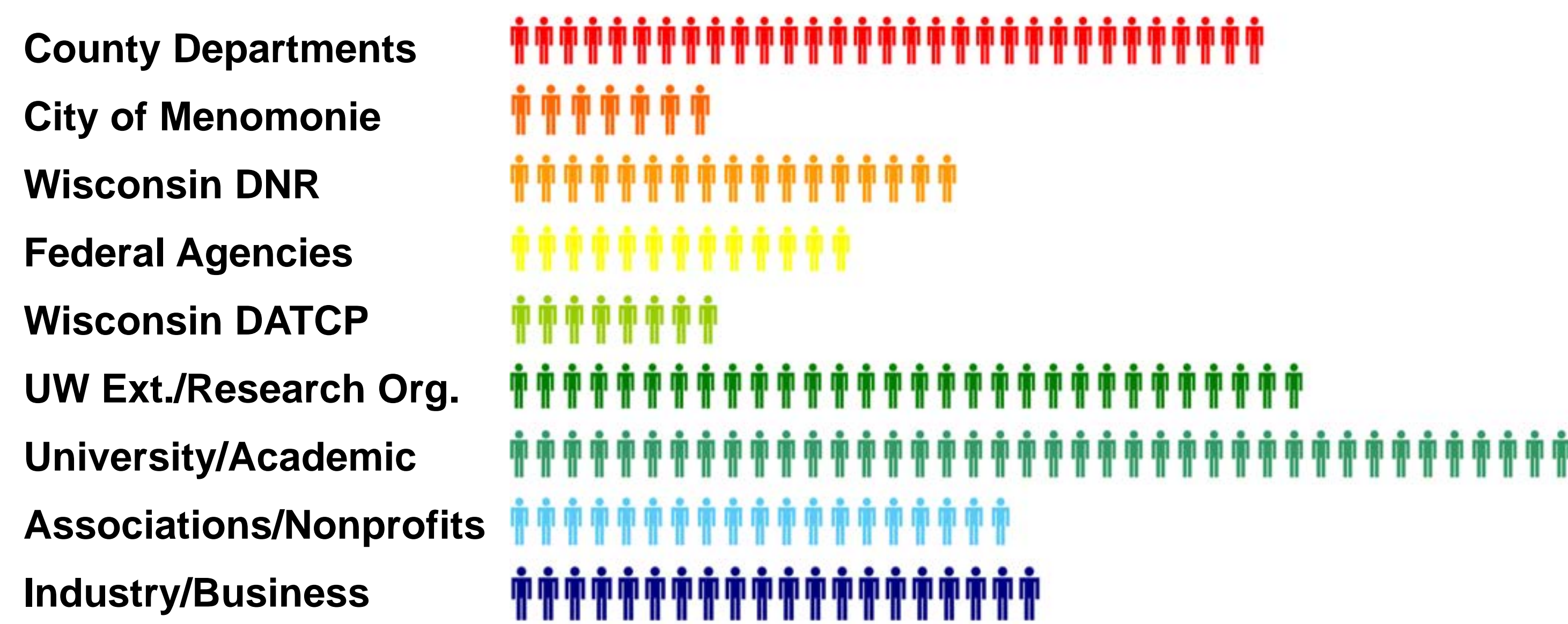


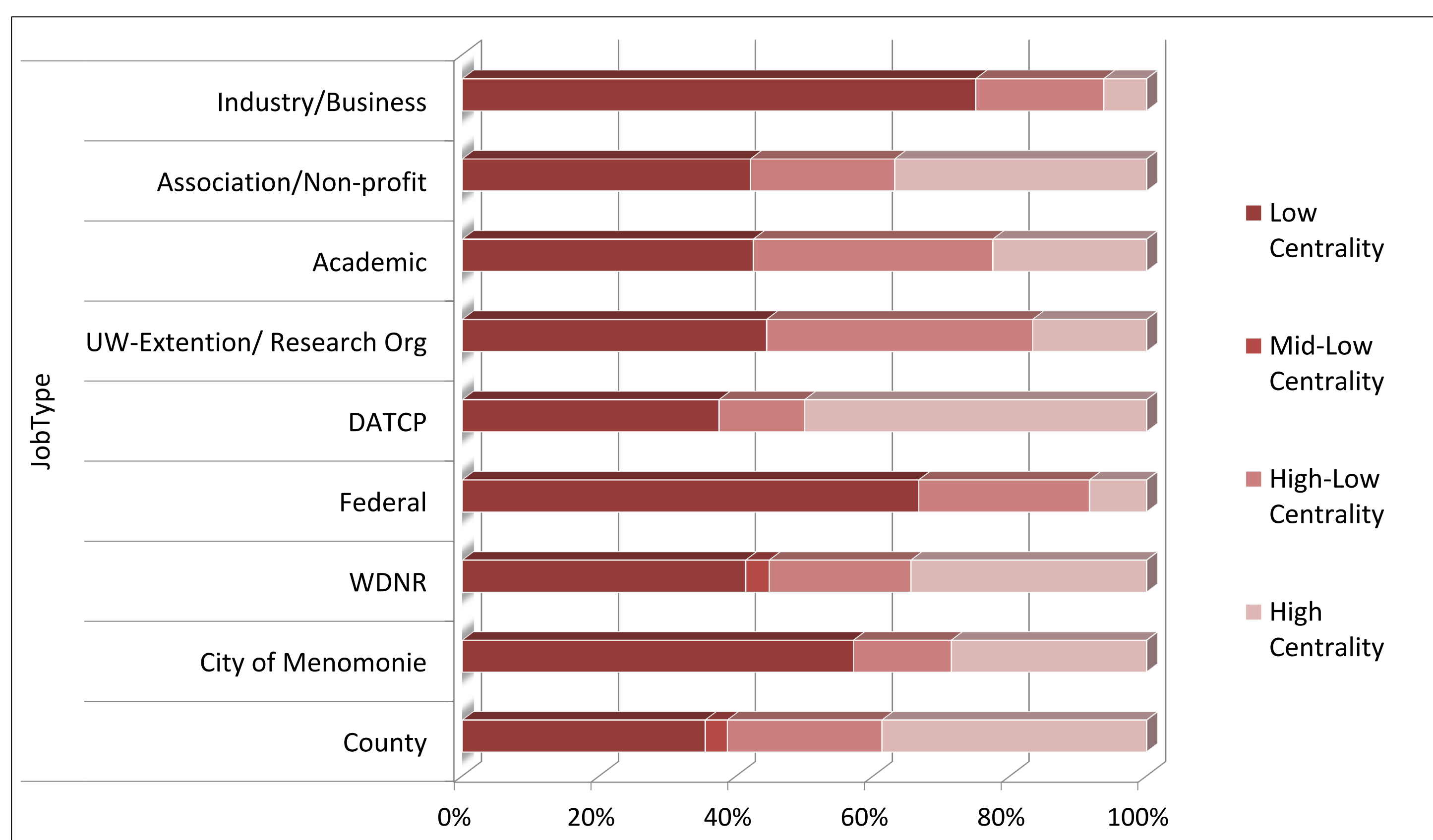
# The Social Network to Improve Water Quality in the Red Cedar Basin: Challenges and Opportunities

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## Actors in this Social Network



## Network Centrality by Job Type



## Background

Social capital is broadly recognized as the sharing and networking among groups in a way that facilitates co-operation. This most notably includes "community engagement, community efficacy (shared sense of empowerment and capacity to effect change at the community level), volunteering, political participation, informal social support networks (e.g. who knows who), and trust in various institutions" (The National Economic and Social Forum, 2003 p.10).

Social capital has been shown to be positively associated with various desirable outcomes for society such as educational attainment, regional and local economic performance, and effectiveness of government institutions. Promoting social capital among policymakers and practitioners could lead to greater community involvement and inclusive decision making.

However, some aspects of social capital (e.g. trust) may act as a barrier to social inclusion or mobility (Aldridge et al., 2002).

## Social Capital Categorized into Three Distinct Types

- **General Social Capital:** Attend various social events
- **Diverse Social Capital:** Desire for a diverse network and support for diverse perspectives
- **Leadership Social Capital:** Organizing social events, as well as how they were seen by their colleagues (sought out for advice or seen as a leader)

Those with higher General Social Capital are:

80%

More likely to see *social connections with the right people* as one of the most important characteristics in a leader

41%

More likely to see *the ability to make others feel empowered* as one of the most important characteristics in a leader

Those with higher Diverse Social Capital are:

81%

More likely to see *good listening or communication skills* as one of the most important characteristics in a leader

35%

Less likely to see *the ability to make others feel empowered* as one of the most important characteristics in a leader

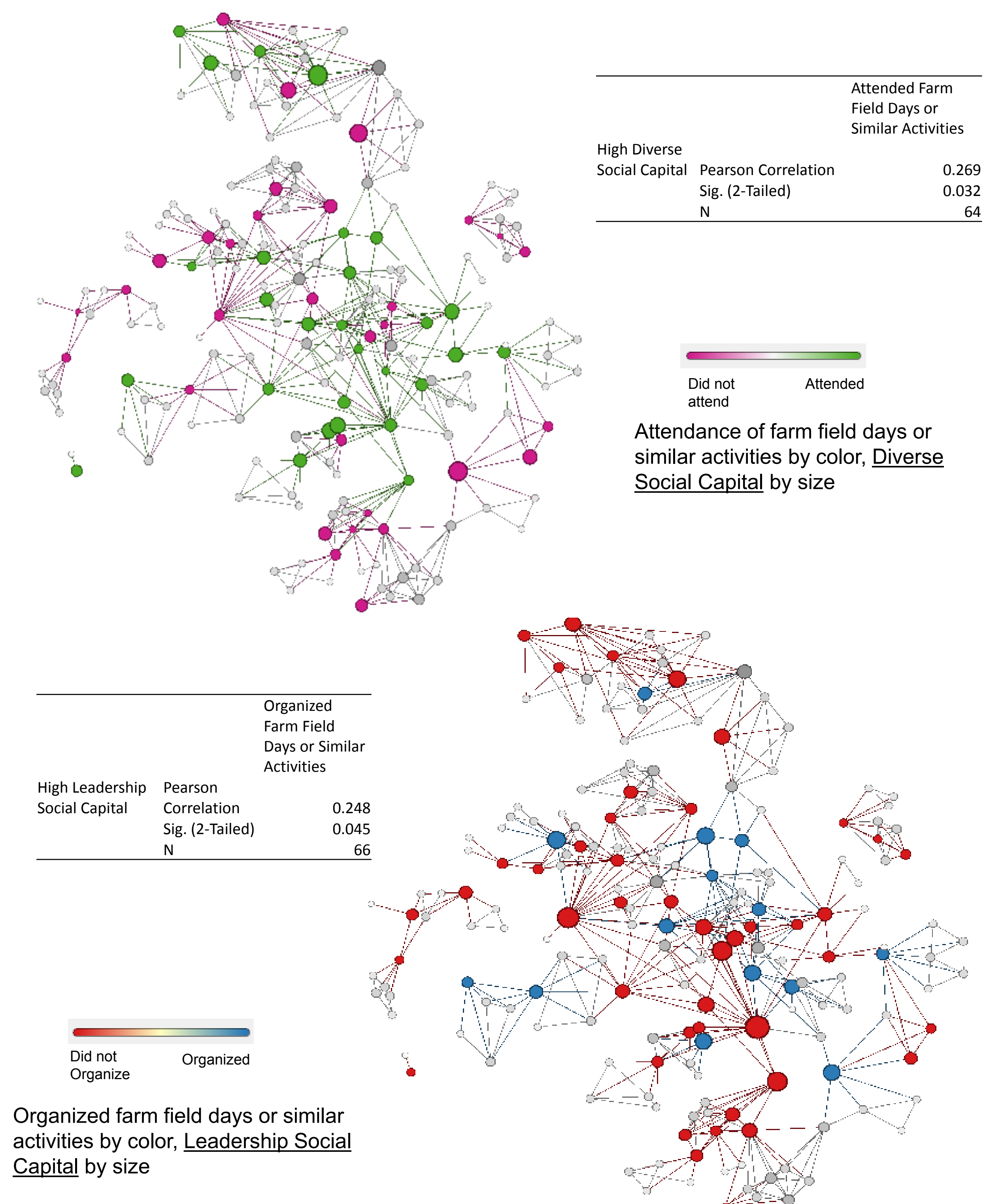
Those with higher Leadership Social Capital are:

19%

Less likely to see *the ability to make others feel empowered* as one of the most important characteristics in a leader

## Farmer Involvement

- The majority of individuals in the policy implementing process are not closely associated with farmers who impact the watershed most (only 3 of 195 individuals within this social network are farmers in the Red Cedar River Basin)
- Attending farm field days is positively correlated with high diverse social capital and organizing farm field days is positively correlated with leadership social capital
- Farmers may be the key to creating more sound policy and lead to more effective dispersion of local knowledge and funds (as seen in farmer initiatives such as the Farmer Led Councils). However, this is not valued as highly by those most connected to farmers in this social network.



## Discussion

Those who are most likely to connect to farmers (through farm field days and other similar events) do not value social empowerment as a leadership trait (which is the idea behind farmer councils, for example).

Having social capital is not enough to create and/or implement effective policy. *Type* of social capital matters (for example, those with General Social Capital value empowerment while those with Leadership and Diverse Social Capital do not).

Those with the highest centrality in the network are DNR, DATCP, and County officials- those whose jobs are most connected to conservation. How they pursue social capital and prioritize leadership attributes matters. Capturing the complexity of social network dynamics can help us better understand ways of improving water pollution.