EXHIBIT 1
DATE 1-26-05
HB HJ 6

TO: Jonathan WindyBoy

FROM: Debbie Swanson

RE: House Joint Resolution No. 6

Enclosed is background information on the closure of the USDA-Rural Development office in Glasgow. This closure has severely diminished the access to USDA-Rural Development programs by the citizens of eastern Montana. Despite claims to the contrary, there has been no consistent outreach or presence by Rural Development staff in northeast Montana since September, 2004. In addition, RD field staff was recently notified that travel is being restricted so outreach to eastern Montana is even more unlikely than before.

The citizens of the rural communities of Montana, especially economically struggling eastern Montana, are entitled to more service by Federal public servants. Closure of the Glasgow office requires these individuals to travel hundreds of miles to meet with loan officials regarding potential projects. Rural Development's housing programs are geared towards very-low income applicants who do not have the financial means to travel these distances or make lengthy long distance telephone calls to obtain assistance in purchasing a home for their families or improving their existing homes to remove health and safety hazards. Closure of the Glasgow USDA-Rural Development office was a huge disservice to the taxpayers of eastern Montana.

On a personal level, I was directly reassigned from the Manager of the Glasgow office to Billings on January 12, 2004. This directed reassignment was intended to displace me (get me to quit) so they could fill the Billings position with a lower paid employee. The reassignment split my family in two and has caused tremendous financial hardship. The cost of maintaining two households and traveling back and forth is at my own expense. I can honestly say that I have put more than 30,000 miles on my personal vehicle in the past year as a result of the Glasgow office closure. This does not include the cost of airline travel back and forth to Billings when that was a more convenient option. Re-opening the Glasgow office would probably not result in me being able to move back there. However, it is the right thing to do for the citizens of northeast Montana. Regardless of who occupies the office or the position, the residents of northeast Montana deserve to have more convenient access to the programs of USDA-Rural Development.

Thank you very much for your efforts to put the "rural" back in Montana Rural Development.

Debbie Swanson
623 Avenue E
Billings, MT 59102

Mailed
9-9-04

Honorable Max Baucus
United States Senate
511 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Baucus:

You were recently notified that Glasgow Satellite Office of USDA-Rural Development will be closed "in a continuing effort to manage the delivery of Montana USDA Rural Development programs and *meet the Agency's streamlining goals*."

Please be advised that this action is in direct contradiction to the "Field Structure Consistency Plan" that was approved by the National Office of USDA Rural Development last fall. A copy of the approved staffing plan is enclosed for your reference. Please note that the Montana RD State Office proposed closing the Glasgow office but the National Office required that it be kept open as a "satellite office" with a limited staff. The National Office made this requirement because without a presence in Glasgow, the neediest communities in Eastern Montana will be left behind when it comes to the programs that USDA Rural Development is responsible for delivering.

There are no "streamlining goals" other than the "Field Structure Consistency Plan" and Montana Rural Development has the budget to support a satellite office in Glasgow. There is no reason to close the Glasgow office – especially since the motto of USDA Rural Development is "Committed to the Future of Rural Communities." Ironically, Montana RD has centralized the staffing and program delivery of their programs into all of the major communities in Montana and closed every office that was located in a rural community. There used to be offices in Plentywood, Malta, Wolf Point, Circle, Sidney, Glendive, Miles City, Havre, Shelby, Choteau and many other communities. All of these offices have been closed and the functions have been moved to the larger cities. As you well know, taking two or three Federal jobs out of a small, rural community has a far greater impact than taking them out of Bozeman, Billings or any of the other larger communities.

The Montana State Office of USDA Rural Development is not giving you all the information but is trying to sneak the closure of the Glasgow Satellite Office past you. Please do not let this happen. Voice your objections to this proposal and require them to make more (not less) resources available to the rural Eastern Montana communities that need the help the most!

Thank you for your prompt attent~~ion to~~ this matter. I look forward to your assistance in keeping the resources of USDA-Rural Development available to the citizens of Eastern Montana.

Sincerely,

Debbie Swanson

Enclosures

Swanson, Debbie - Billings, MT

From: Swanson, Debbie - Billings, MT
Sent: Thursday, August 19, 2004 10:43 AM
To: Leigland, Robert - Bozeman, MT
Subject: RE: Glasgow Space

Robert:

When I spoke to Michael Tolle at the policy meeting in Denver about "consistency" plan implementation, he said that it was his recollection that we couldn't close Glasgow. He said that is why the satellite office was approved - because the National Office was requiring us to keep a presence there. The Montana Consistency Plan and timeline that were provided to all Montana RD employees on December 18, 2003 does not include closing the Glasgow office - only reduces it to a satellite office with less space than before. If modifications to the "consistency" plan have been approved, all employees should been notified. Please distribute copies of the updated "consistency" plan and timeline. Thanks.

-----Original Message-----
From: Leigland, Robert - Bozeman, MT
Sent: Monday, August 09, 2004 4:41 PM
To: Swanson, Debbie - Billings, MT; Burkhalter, Bill - Bozeman, MT
Subject: Glasgow Space

Debbie, I have instructed Bill to give notice for termination of the Glasgow space, that gives us a 120 day window minimum. When you return give me your thoughts about staffing for Eastern Montana, I'd like to discuss it with the management staff soon.....thx's

2021-A
Reg Dept level approval
Dep Reg 10-10-1

OCT 14 2003

USDA
United States
Department of
Agriculture

Rural Development

"Improving the Quality of Life for Rural Montana"

P.O. Box 850
Bozeman, MT 59771
(406) 585-2580
(406) 585-2565 FAX
(406) 585-2562 TDD

October 10, 2003

TO: All Montana Rural Development Employees

SUBJECT: Field Structure Consistency Plan for Montana

On October 8, 2003, the national office informed us that they approved Montana's Consistency plan. A copy of this plan was provided to the union on October 9, 2003. Attached is a copy for each of you.

You will be kept informed as the implementation process gets under way. The Under Secretary has made it clear that all employees will have the opportunity for continued employment as we strive to provide excellent customer service for all programs.

W.T. (Tim) RYAN
State Director

Attachment (1)

The USDA is an Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer.
Complaints of discrimination should be sent to:
USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY-Montana Plan
Revised September 2003

PROCESS

Montana has a bargaining unit. Management solicited the bargaining unit's input. On March 3, 2003 the Union was provided a copy of the "Field Structure Consistency Plan" dated February 2003. The Union was provided further guidance on the formulation of the State plan as outlined by the Deputy Administrator for Operations and Management on March 6, 2003, with a timeline of State events. On March 12, 2003 the Union was provided the revised March 11, 2003 "Field Structure Consistency Plan". Managers were also provided copies of the above information.

The Union President has had discussions of the proposals with the bargaining unit and provided letters to management on May 8, 2002 and March 19, 2003. The bargaining unit concerns centered around the responsibilities of the area office, limits on staffing (FTEs), the need to continue internal processing "as is", the "bail out" of experienced employees with A-76, the concern of combining the CF with RUS without providing adequate staff, support for a Program Support Director (working supervisor), and appreciated management not requesting a RIF.

Management formed a committee on March 12, 2003 of program directors, State Director, support staff and local office management representation, see attached list. At the first meeting on March 25, 2003 the guidance letter provided by the National Office, the Union letters and the consistency plan were reviewed. After considerable discussion it was the consensus of the committee that we needed to adopt both a consistency plan and staffing realignments. The committee agreed with the bargaining unit's comments and recommended combining CF with RUS and providing additional FTEs to support Community Programs and other program area expertise in the area offices. In order to provide additional FTEs to the program areas a realignment of our two Eastern Montana offices, Billings and Glasgow was required. The committee also supported relocating CP, MFH, and RBCS State Office positions to Area Offices; but the committee could not support an additional program director for support staff.

A staffing draft was circulated to committee members adopting the two-tier model increasing staff for RBCS and RUS/CF and recommending the closure of the Glasgow office. A second meeting was held on April 15, 2003. The committee reviewed the draft proposal and made final changes to the plan for submission on April 17, 2003.

The State Consistency Committee met on September 18, 2003 and revised the plan based on National Office comments and has incorporated the changes and/or provided an explanation. The Glasgow office will not be closed but will become a satellite office. This office will be staffed with one loan specialist.

OVERVIEW

The current organizational structure is more decentralized than our initial proposal. As now proposed, all programs will be more represented in the area offices. Area Directors will be involved in the marketing of all programs and all employees will be responsible for implementing community development principles.

Three Community Programs Specialists and a Multi-Family Specialist are currently located in area offices. As additional vacancies occur, we will look at placing specialists in all program areas in the Area Offices. Montana will reduce staff in the Glasgow Office. Glasgow will become a satellite office (collocated with NRCS and FSA). The geographical boundaries of the state will be adjusted to equitably distribute the housing caseload of Eastern Montana. The Glasgow Area Director will be reassigned to the vacant Area Director position in Billings. The Billings Area Director will supervise the loan specialist in the Glasgow satellite office.

The incumbent position, Rural Development Coordinator, grade 13, will be reassigned to an American Indian Community Programs Specialist as part of the CP Director's staff with the present collateral duty of the EC/EZ. This incumbent only position will be assigned an additional collateral duty as the relay for OCD to the field staff. See attachments.

This proposal provides a position for all employees, anticipates one reassignment (a management position) and identifies one incumbent only position, see attached numbers, titles, series, grades and demographics.

The congressional districts are Senator Max Baucus, Senator Conrad Burns, and Congressman Dennis Rehburg. We anticipate reassigning one non-bargaining unit employee in FY 2004.

The average grade level change of this proposed consistency plan and the actual FTE level does not change (grade level average is not significant 10.05 to 10.06). This plan anticipates some additional realignment of state office staffs in the future as we continue to move more program delivery to the Area Offices.

See the attached timeline.

USDA Rural Development

United States Department of Agriculture
Rural Development
Montana State Office

August 30, 2004

Honorable Max Baucus
United States Senate
511 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Baucus:

In a continuing effort to manage the delivery of Montana USDA Rural Development programs and meet the Agency's streamlining goals, we will no longer maintain a satellite office in Glasgow, Montana. It is anticipated the satellite office will close after the August 31, 2004, retirement of the satellite office employee.

In a letter dated December 30, 2003, we advised our customers in Daniels, Dawson, Garfield, McCone, Phillips, Prairie, Richland, Roosevelt, Sheridan, Valley and Wibaux counties that the Billings Rural Development office would serve as the main contact for their housing needs. At that time, the Glasgow office became a satellite office, with one staff member holding office days the first and third Monday and Tuesday of each month. (Please see attached letter to customers.)

We will continue to do outreach, and hold office days in the eastern Montana areas. Notices will be published in local newspapers when Rural Development staff will be in an area. Customers will be able to drop in, or call for an appointment. We will also continue to provide service to the Fort Peck Indian Reservation. There will be no negative impact to our customers as a result of our discontinuing the Glasgow satellite office. *

If we can provide further information on the Glasgow satellite office, or on any of the Rural Development programs, please let us know.

Sincerely,

for W.T. (Tim) RYAN
State Director

* Despite RD claims to the contrary, There has been no RD outreach or presence in Fort Peck since September, '04.

cc: Senator Max Baucus - Billings; Bozeman; Butte; Great Falls; Helena; Kalispell; Missoula

P.O. Box 850 • Bozeman, MT 59771
Voice (406) 585-2580 • Fax (406) 585-2565 • TDD (406) 585-2562 • Web: http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/mt

Committed to the future of rural communities.

"USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender."
To file a complaint of discrimination write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 14th and Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice or TDD).

-----Original Message-----
From: Vincent, Laurie - Bozeman, MT
Sent: Tue 8/31/2004 9:37 AM
To: Debra Swanson (debbie.swanson@mt.usda.gov)
Cc:
Subject: Glasgow

Debbie,

Just saw a copy of Robert's letter requesting the Congressional to close Glasgow. In it he refers to a draft consistency plan the committee had not approved stating that Glasgow would be staffed on certain days of the week to meet with customers. I am still looking for that draft, because I know I have seen it recently but all of a sudden can't put my hands on it.

The final National Office approved consistency plan does not state the above at all, but says "The Glasgow office will not be closed but will become a satellite office. This office will be staffed with one loan specialist." Then later on. "Glasgow will become a satellite office (collocated with NRCS and FSA). The Billings Area Director will supervise the loan specialist in the Glasgow satellite office."

He is twisting the facts (using old information which was not approved) for his own personal vendetta, or Tim's, as I see it. I've told Kathy Kaufman to get the Housing Authority to write against this closure and to recommend that a MFH specialist be placed in Glasgow also. We also need a CP Specialist to be placed in the Glasgow Service Center. I figure maybe we need to outsmart the fox and get the communities involved. Kathy was saying that the oil business is starting to bring business up in that area and that RD will be able to help significantly. So won't it be better to have these specialists closer to their customers, instead of having to drive from Billings?

We need to let Burns and Baucus and Rehberg know that this is going to hurt the communities in the NE. Maybe you can stir up the communities and customers you deal with and get them to write letters or call.

I'll keep digging for that other draft.

Laurie

Swanson, Debbie - Billings, MT

From: senator_burns@burns.senate.gov
Sent: Monday, September 20, 2004 2:03 PM
To: vincentview@prodigy.net
Subject: Re: www_email

September 20, 2004

Mrs. Laurie Vincent
111 Sourdough Ridge Road
Bozeman, MT 59715

Dear Mrs. Vincent:

Thank you for contacting my office regarding the closure of the USDA - Rural Development office in Glasgow. I appreciate you taking the time to share your concern with me.

As you know, the satellite office in Glasgow closed on August 31, 2004 after the retirement of their office employee. The State Director for USDA's Montana Rural Development office, Tim Ryan, assured me there will be no negative impact on customers in Northeastern Montana as a result of this closure.

The USDA will continue to do outreach and hold office days in eastern Montana and will continue to provide service to the Fort Peck Indian Reservation. Rest assured I will keep a close eye on this situation to ensure Northeastern Montanans are still fully served by USDA Rural Development.

Thanks again for contacting me. Please do not hesitate to contact my office with any other questions or concerns that you may have. It is important to note that heightened security procedures due to the Anthrax and Ricin incidents have significantly delayed the processing and delivery of mail to my Washington, DC office. I encourage you to contact me via phone at (800) 344-1513, fax at (202) 224-8594, or through my website at http://burns.senate.gov. I apologize for any inconvenience caused by the delay in our mail process. I appreciate your patience as we continue to work through our increased security measures.

Sincerely,
Conrad Burns
United States Senator

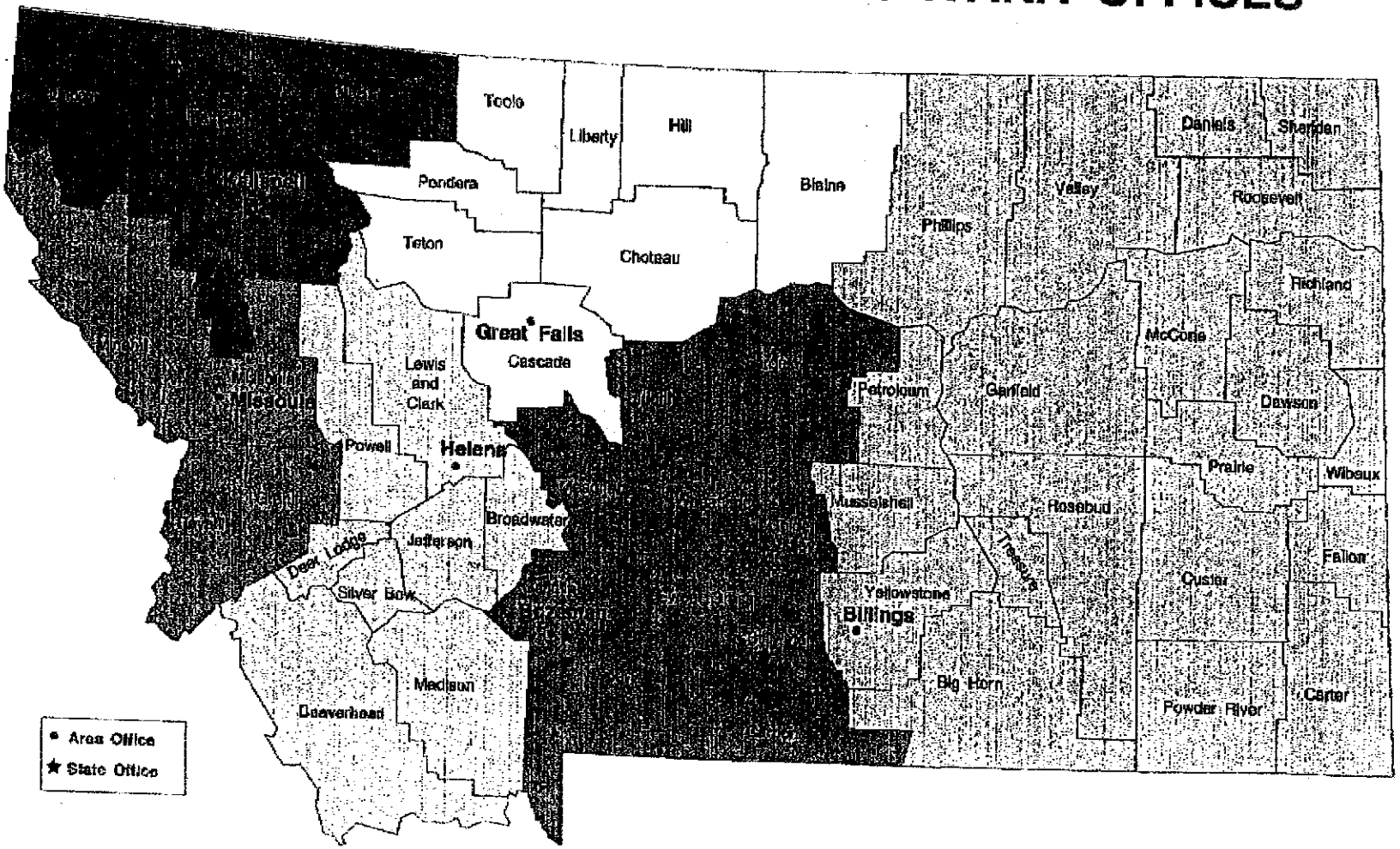
??

??

??

??

RURAL DEVELOPMENT MONTANA OFFICES



Billings Area Office
Debbie Swanson
Area Director
406.657.6297

Helena Area Office
Cindy Donnell
Area Director
406.449.5000

Missoula Area Office
Chris VanRenk
Area Director
406.829.3395

Bozeman Area Office
[illegible]
Area Director
[illegible]

Great Falls Area Office
Cindy Stene
Area Director
406.727.7580

[illegible]

Montana State Office
W.T. (Tim) Ryan,
State Director
406.585.2580

Revised 02/04