



## **STAKEHOLDER ANNOUNCEMENT**

### **Jacqueline Ponti-Lazaruk Announced as Chief Innovation Officer for Rural Development's Innovation Center**

WASHINGTON, Oct. 9, 2018 – Assistant to the Secretary for Rural Development Anne Hazlett today announced the appointment of Jacqueline Ponti-Lazaruk as the agency's Chief Innovation Officer. Ponti-Lazaruk will build upon the Innovation Center's successful first year and grow its ability to drive solutions that improve program delivery and the quality of life in rural America.

Ponti-Lazaruk has nearly 13 years of leadership experience at USDA Rural Development. She led the Telecommunications and Water Programs for more than 11 years, streamlining programs and increasing the agency's impact in rural areas. In her most recent role, she served as the agency's Chief Risk Officer.

Hazlett also announced that Rural Development's Enterprise Risk Management functions will be integrated into the Innovation Center. This realignment will streamline Rural Development's efforts to identify enterprise risks and build innovative solutions to mitigate them.

Ponti-Lazaruk's knowledge of Rural Development's portfolio, programs and staff will serve as a strong foundation in her new role, which she assumed on October 1.

USDA encourages partners and stakeholder groups to reach out to Ponti-Lazaruk to build on existing partnerships and facilitate new relationships.

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