



USDA Rural Development Montana

2014 Progress Report



Anthony J. Preite
Montana State Director
USDA Rural Development



At the February 2014 ceremony in Michigan to sign the 2014 Farm Bill, President Barack Obama remarked, "We are now better positioned for the 21st century than any other country on earth." Supporting rural America has been a key goal for President Obama since he took office, as a strong rural economy is the foundation for a healthy American economy. I am proud to chair the White House Rural Council to help carry out President Obama's vision to strengthen rural communities, and I am proud that the Department of Agriculture ((USDA)) has made historic investments in rural America designed to drive job growth and ensure the development of a rural economy that is built to last.

USDA Rural Development provides loan and grant financing as well as technical assistance to develop housing, community facilities, businesses, infrastructure, and renewable energy ventures in rural areas. In addition to providing direct loan and grant assistance, USDA Rural Development also partners with private sector lenders and development organizations to carry out local community development projects. Rural Development's more than 40 financial assistance programs, in addition to its ability to leverage private sector resources, give USDA the flexibility to invest in a wide range of projects that are reinvigorating rural towns and bringing new job opportunities for local residents. In September 2014, for example, USDA Rural Development provided a conditional commitment to guarantee a \$105 million loan from the Bank of America for Fulcrum Sierra Biofuels, LLC, to build a biorefinery in McCarren, Nevada, that will produce jet fuel from municipal solid waste. This is the first USDA bioenergy investment toward production of bio-jet fuel.

As another example, the Kentucky Highlands Investment Corporation is using a \$500,000 USDA loan to establish a revolving fund that will provide microloans to very small businesses (employing 10 or fewer people) in 19 Kentucky counties designated by the Appalachian Regional Commission as distressed communities. This project reflects the power of our StrikeForce for Rural Growth and Opportunity Initiative, an effort to combat poverty and target USDA assistance to the more than 700 persistent poverty counties in rural areas, including parishes, boroughs, Colonias, and Tribal reservations in 20 states.

Passage of the 2014 Farm Bill helped ensure that USDA can continue its mission to make strategic investments that bolster the rural economy. The Farm Bill builds on historic economic gains in rural America realized since the beginning of the Obama Administration and expands access to rural credit through USDA Rural Development for housing, community development, infrastructure, and other needs. The Farm Bill is also helping USDA develop new markets for rural-made products and increase rural manufacturing.

In July 2014, the White House hosted a Rural Opportunity Investment Conference in Washington, D.C., to promote investment opportunities in rural America. The conference highlighted opportunities in areas such as the bioeconomy, local and regional food systems, and infrastructure. The conference also hosted the announcement of the creation of a new Rural Infrastructure Opportunity Fund that private entities can use to invest in job-creating rural infrastructure projects across the country. National Cooperative Bank, CoBank committed an initial \$10 billion for the fund, and Capitol Peak Asset Management is managing the fund and recruiting additional investors. USDA and other Federal agencies are helping to identify rural projects that could be potential beneficiaries of the fund as well as other private funding sources. Target investments will include hospitals; schools and other educational facilities; rural water and wastewater systems; energy projects; broadband expansion; local and regional food systems; and other rural infrastructure.

USDA Rural Development's 2014 Progress Report shows the inspiring and innovative work that is going on across rural America to help improve the quality of life for rural residents so that they can continue to thrive and prosper in America's heartland. Ultimately, USDA Rural Development's investments on behalf of rural people and places ripple outward to benefit all Americans, no matter where they are, through more abundant goods and services and a stronger economic base.

As I often say, USDA is not just about helping farms and farmers. USDA Rural Development's mission is a great example of the extraordinary reach of USDA programs throughout the rural economy. I hope you will enjoy learning more about USDA Rural Development's many successes in fiscal year 2014.

Thomas J. Vilsack
Secretary of Agriculture



"Will we accept an economy where only a few of us do spectacularly well? Or will we build an economy where everyone who works hard has a chance to get ahead? ... This country does best when everyone gets their fair shot, everyone does their fair share, and everyone plays by the same set of rules."

- President Barack Obama, January 2015.

President Barack Obama's statement about equality and opportunity for all captures the purpose for USDA Rural Development. To make good on this vision, the President and Secretary Vilsack have charged our Mission Area with investing in rural communities and ensuring rural Americans have the opportunity to climb the economic ladder. I am proud to lead a Mission Area dedicated to leveraging the strengths of rural areas, building new markets to increase regional competitiveness, and expanding investment opportunities that create prosperous, sustainable communities.

With a total portfolio of more than \$200 billion and investments upwards of \$28 billion in 2014 alone, Rural Development is making lasting investments in rural communities. The Mission Area has a tremendous set of business, utilities, housing, and community development programs designed to ensure that rural Americans have access to safe, affordable homes and community facilities, jobs and business capital, and the benefits of drinking water, broadband, electricity and other essential services.

While the national economy is growing at a good pace, in rural America there remains a vital need for access to capital as well as for strong federal, state, local, and private sector partnerships. Rural Development is responding to that need with our portfolio of loans, loan guarantees, grants, and a network of dedicated field staff that spans more than 400 offices across the country. The Obama Administration is committed to ensuring that rural communities are economically strong, sound and sustainable. Through Initiatives such as the StrikeForce for Rural Growth and Opportunity and Promise Zones, Rural Development is working with partners across USDA and across government to ensure federal support is directed to high-need areas, coordinated, and responsive to locally-identified community needs. The Interagency Manufacturing Communities Partnership and The Made in Rural America Initiative along with USDA wide efforts around the bioeconomy and Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food build on economic opportunities that rural America is well suited to advance including agriculture, energy, and manufacturing.

There are stories of Rural Development investments changing lives in every state. In my time as Under Secretary, I've had the opportunity to see some of them first-hand and to listen to the stories of the people who have become homeowners, accessed the internet, and expanded their businesses because of the investments that USDA Rural Development provided.

In Brundidge, Alabama I toured the Southern Classic Food Group, a condiment manufacturer that is expanding their business and their market share with support from Rural Development. In Winona, Mississippi I announced our investment of \$600,000 to seed a revolving loan fund for north central Mississippi small businesses, and learned about a mental health center in Greenwood, Mississippi funded by our Community Facilities program that is touching thousands of lives every year. These are small improvements that strengthen and enhance the quality of life in rural communities often left behind.

Rural Development investments are informed by local priorities, focused on building economic growth and opportunity, and dedicated to making lasting impacts both in rural America and for our overall economy.

Since 2009, Rural Development has provided grants and loans to help approximately 89,000 rural small businesses grow, creating or saving more than 420,000 jobs; invested in more than 6,600 critical community projects including hospitals, libraries, schools, and public safety facilities; helped more than 900,000 rural families buy, repair or refinance a home, and provided funding for more than 3,000 multi-family housing developments; invested in new and improved broadband service to nearly 1.5 million rural residents, which expands access to state-of-the-art health care, educational and cultural resources, and provides the opportunity for local businesses to compete in the global economy; helped modernize rural electric infrastructure for about 8.5 million rural residents and businesses; and provided grants and loans for water and waste-water projects to help safeguard the health of approximately 14.5 million rural residents.

At USDA Rural Development, many of our employees live and work in the same rural communities alongside our rural customers and stakeholder and partner organizations. Aside from our commitment solely to rural America, it is this network of staff— in addition to our programs that make our Mission Area unique.

On behalf of USDA Rural Development, I look forward to continuing our mission and supporting investments that create economic prosperity and opportunity for rural Americans in the months and years to come.

Sincerely,

Lisa Mensah
Under Secretary of Agriculture
USDA Rural Development



The Montana USDA Rural Development Office in Fiscal Year 2014 had a very productive year.

Rural Development is charged with the responsibility of providing federal program assistance throughout rural Montana. We take this mandate very seriously and make a concerted effort to not only expend Rural Development resources across Montana, but to also ensure that our constituents have a level playing field in accessing all local, state, and federal programs available to them. Leveraging Rural Development funds enables Montanans to increase their chances to prepare, present and be successful in seeking funding for their worthy projects. Rural Development recognizes that by creating and expanding meaningful partnerships the results will be very beneficial to those we serve.

Rural Development employees also recognize that in addition to partnering with other resource providers, it is imperative that we reach out to the many economic and community development practitioners across Montana to garner trust. Some rural communities and Native American reservations do not enjoy the ability to hire a full time staff and therefore must depend upon Local Development Organizations to provide them with the expertise needed to compete with the larger communities. Rural Development recognizes the importance of statewide organizations such as The Montana Economic Developers Association (MEDA) and makes every effort to coordinate activities with them.

Rural Development invests hundreds of millions of dollars annually into the Montana economy and because of the intense effort to leverage and utilize other available resources both public and private, this investment grows by several million more dollars each year.

I am very proud of the efforts put forth by our statewide staff in vigorously administering our various programs.

Anthony J. Preite
Montana State Director
USDA Rural Development

INVESTING IN MONTANA

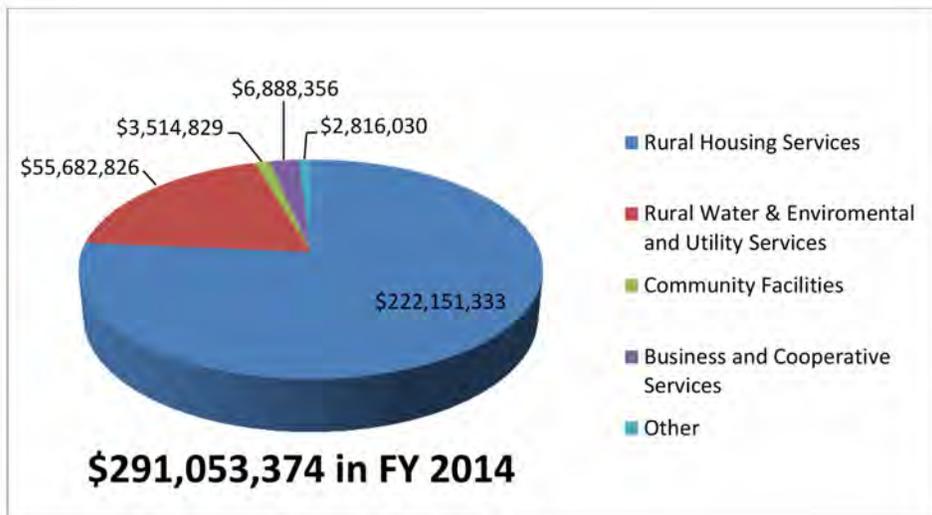
OUR PROGRAMS

Rural Development administers the following programs:

- Business & Cooperative Programs
- Rural Housing Programs
- Community Facilities Programs
- Water & Environmental and Rural Utility Programs

All of which target rural communities and Indian country throughout Montana.

Through these programs USDA Rural Development invested more than **\$291 million** in Montana during FY 2014.



Rural Business and Cooperative Programs

USDA Rural Development's Business & Cooperative Programs promote a dynamic business environment across rural Montana, including Montana's 7 Indian Reservations.

In fiscal year 2014, USDA Rural Development invested \$6.9 million in Montana's rural businesses, supporting 29 projects. Business and Cooperative Programs serve Montana communities by creating new business, growing production, maintaining jobs, conducting feasibility studies, improving rural energy development, creating professional business plans, and increasing revenue for rural business ventures.

Business & Industry Guaranteed Loan Program (B&I)

\$3,387,500 in FY 2014

Encourages the commercial financing of rural business by guaranteeing loans made by commercial lenders. Loans may be used for a variety of purposes, including: asset acquisition, construction, repair, modernization, real estate, buildings, equipment supplies, working capital and debt restructuring.

Intermediary Relending Program Loans & Rural Microentrepreneur Assistance Program Grants (IRP & RMAP)

\$2,375,000 in FY 2014 (combined)

Loans made to local Intermediaries and Micro-development Organizations to establish Revolving Loan Funds (RLF). The RLF funds are loaded directly to eligible rural borrowers to finance and support ongoing success of business and community development projects in rural areas.

Rural Energy for America Program (REAP)

\$168,000 in FY 2014

Grant and Loan Guarantees to rural small businesses and agricultural producers to purchase Renewable Energy Systems and/or make Energy Efficiency Improvements thereby reducing energy costs and consumption.

Rural Business Enterprise Grants (RBEG)

\$757,106 in FY 2014

Grants made to public bodies, non-profit corporations serving rural areas and Indian Tribes for projects which facilitate the financing and development of small and emerging private business enterprises.

Rural Cooperative Development Grants (RCDG)

\$391,030 in FY 2014

Grants made to assist individuals and businesses in the start-up, expansion or operational improvements of rural cooperatives and other mutually-owned businesses through cooperative development centers.

Rural Economic Development Loans & Grants (REDLG)

\$300,000 in FY 2014

Grant and Loan financing for eligible Rural Utilities Service electric or telecommunications borrowers for projects which promote rural economic development and job creation.

Value-Added Producer Grants (VAPG)

\$25,750 in FY 2014

Grants for planning or working capital purposes intended to expand the customer base and create a greater dollar return to agricultural producers that produce and market value-added products.



The Native American Development Corporation (NADC) received an RBEG for \$254,106 to provide assistance to small Native American businesses.



Simms Fishing Products received a REAP Grant of \$33,797 to enhance the energy-efficiency of their production facility in Bozeman.

***RCDG & RMAP not included in total funding**

Rural Housing Programs

USDA Rural Development's Housing Programs provide access to safe and affordable housing for rural Montanans.

USDA Rural Development improved rural housing in Montana with \$222.1 million in loans and grants to build, repair, rehabilitate, and purchase homes that ultimately improve the quality of life in rural Montana. Rural Development provides funding for single-family homes, apartments for lower-income families or the elderly, and housing for farm laborers. In fiscal year 2014, the agency obligated 41 direct loans and 1,276 guaranteed loans to finance homes for rural Montana families.



State Director Anthony Preite and Tom Atkins, Housing Programs Director, recognize 50,000 Mutual Self-Help Homes built Nationwide with funding from USDA Rural Development.

Rural Development's Housing programs offer two types of homeownership loans: Guaranteed and Direct

The purpose is to provide financing with no down payment and at favorable rates and terms either through a direct loan with Rural Development or a loan from a private financial institution that is guaranteed by Rural Development. These loans are for the construction, purchase, or rehabilitation of a dwelling for rural residents in the very low to moderate income brackets.

Home Improvement and Repair Loans and Grants

Enable low-income rural homeowners to remove health and safety hazards from their homes and to make homes accessible for people with disabilities. Grants are available for people 62 years old and older who cannot afford to repay a loan.



Mutual Self-Help Housing

Helps groups of six to ten low-income families build their own homes by providing materials and the skilled labor they cannot furnish themselves. The Mutual Self-Help program builds homes as well as neighborhoods, as the homeowners develop relationships throughout the construction phase that strengthen their commitment to their new neighborhood.

Rural Rental Housing Loans and Multi-Family Housing Guarantees

These are made to finance building construction and site development of multi-family living quarters for people with very low to moderate incomes. Montana has 143 properties across the state that operate through our Multi-Family Housing program.

Rural Rental Assistance

Provides financial help for very low income residents in Rural Development multi-family complexes so they can afford shelter.

FY 2014 Totals:

\$5,577,013 - Single Family Housing Direct Loan
\$210,738,892 - Single Family Housing Guaranteed Loan
\$67,148 - Home Improvement & Repair Loans & Grants
\$5,768,280 - Rental Assistance

Community Facilities Programs

USDA Rural Development's Community Facilities Programs develop essential community facilities for public use by rural Montanans.

During fiscal year 2014, USDA Rural Development invested \$3,514,829 million in rural Montana through community facilities loans and grants. The 9 projects, including funding for schools and fire safety equipment, was used to benefit more than 34,000 rural Montana residents. Community Facilities Programs help build, expand, rehabilitate, purchase, and support the development of police and emergency fire stations and equipment, museums, child care centers, hospitals, clinics, schools, and more.

\$3,514,829
Invested in Montana in FY 2014



The Emma Park Neighborhood Center in Butte opened in early September of 2014. More than \$1.3 million was provided by USDA Rural Development's Community Facilities Program.



Work continues on the USDA Rural Development financed hospital complex in Livingston. USDA invested nearly \$40 million in the project in FY 2012.



Liberty Place in Belgrade is using a USDA Rural Development Community Facilities loan to establish a facility to treat those with traumatic brain injuries.

This is the third project Liberty Place has funded with USDA Rural Development Montana's assistance.



Rural Utilities Programs

USDA Rural Development's Water & Environmental Programs make certain all residents in rural communities have access to safe drinking water and efficient wastewater facilities in Montana.

USDA Rural Development invested \$55.7 million during fiscal year 2014 through 12 infrastructure projects to provide reliable and clean drinking water, waste treatment systems, electric power, and telecommunications services in about 16 rural communities in Montana.



Water and Environmental Program Loans and Grants

Rural Development provided funding for water, sewer, and solid waste facilities in rural areas. Grants are also available for planning, training, and technical assistance to communities below 10,000 residents.

FY 2014 Funding:

\$11,964,000 - Direct Loans, \$2,500,000 - Guaranteed Loans, \$15,999,500 - Grants



The Town of Eureka receives \$1,051,000 in loan and grants funds to update their water filtration system and facility, along with associated plumbing.



The Town of Stevensville receives \$2,755,000 in loan and grant funds to decommission their oxidation ditch and build a new facility with a biological nutrient removal system and sludge press.



The City of Libby receives \$7,919,000 in loan and grant funds to replace the Flower Creek Dam, which is the city's sole source of water. A new silt barrier will also be put in upstream of the intake.

The Telecommunications Program

Creates public/private partnerships to finance the construction of telecommunications infrastructure in rural America. USDA Rural Development makes loans to finance the improvement, expansion, construction, or acquisition of telecommunications facilities in rural areas.

The Rural Electric Program

The program makes insured loans and loan guarantees to nonprofit and cooperative associations, public bodies, and other utilities. Insured loans primarily finance the construction of facilities for the distribution of electric power in rural areas. The guaranteed loan program has been expanded and is now available to finance generation, transmission, and distribution facilities in rural areas.

FY 2014 Funding:

\$363,326 - Telecom and \$24,856,000 - Electric

USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT SUMMARY OF PROGRAMS

Housing and Community Facilities

	Objective	Applicant	Uses	Population	Loan/Grant	Terms/Conditions
Single Family Home Ownership Direct Loans	Safe, well-built, affordable homes for rural Americans.	Families and individuals. Apply to Rural Development.	Buy, build, improve, repair, or rehabilitate the rural home as the applicant's permanent residence.	Rural areas with populations of up to 35,000.	Direct loan.	Up to 100 percent of market value or cost. Loan term of 33/38 years. Applicant may be eligible for payment assistance (subsidy) on the loan.
Single Family Home Ownership Guaranteed Loans	To assist moderate income applicants(s)/ household(s) in buying their homes by guaranteeing loans made by private lenders.	Families and individuals.	Purchase new or existing home and refinance existing Rural Development guaranteed or direct loans.	Rural areas with populations of up to 35,000.	Loan guarantee.	30 year, fixed rate. Interest rate is negotiated between lender and borrower. Loans up to 100 percent of market value plus the amount of the up-front guarantee fee being financed.
Single Family Repair Loans and Grants	To help very-low-income applicants remove health and safety hazards or repair their homes.	Families and individuals who currently own their home.	Repair/replace roof, winterizing, purchase or repair of heating system, structural repair, water/sewage connect fees, etc.	Rural areas with populations of up to 35,000.	Direct loan and grant.	Loans up to \$20,000 up to 20 years at 1 percent. Grants available to very-low-income applicants 62 years or older unable to pay 1 percent loan.
Mutual Self-Help Home Ownership Loans	Individual homes built by a group of applicants, with construction guidance of a nonprofit organization.	Families and individuals. Individual applications for each participating individual/family.	Construction of a new home, in part by the applicant under supervision.	Rural areas with populations of up to 35,000.	Direct loan.	Individuals/families receive a direct loan from Rural Development. Participating nonprofit housing organization receive grants for project supervision.
Mutual Self-Help Housing Grants	Assist lower income families in building their own homes.	Nonprofits and public bodies.	Technical assistance to assist small groups of families to build each other's homes.	Rural areas with populations of up to 35,000.	Grant.	Grant agreement.

	Objective	Applicant	Uses	Population	Loan/Grant	Terms/Conditions
Rural Rental Housing Direct Loans	Safe, well-built, affordable rental housing for very-low-income individuals and families.	Individuals, trusts, associations, limited partnerships, for-profit and nonprofit entities, Tribes, public bodies.	New construction or substantial rehabilitation of rental housing.	Rural areas with populations of up to 35,000.	Direct loan.	Up to 100 percent of total development cost (nonprofits); 97 percent (for-profits); 95 percent (for-profits with Low-Income Housing Tax Credits). 30-year term with up to 50 year amortization.
Rural Rental Housing Loan Guarantees	Provides loan guarantees on loans to build or preserve affordable housing for very low to moderate income tenants.	Approved lenders including for-profit and non-profit lenders.	Build or rehabilitate affordable rental housing.	Rural areas with populations of up to 35,000.	Loan guarantee.	At least 25-year term with fixed interest rate. Loan guarantees up to 90 percent of the principal.
Housing Preservation Grants	Repair and rehabilitate housing owned or occupied by very-low- and low-income rural families.	Public bodies and nonprofit organizations.	Operation of a program which finances repair and rehabilitation activities for single family and small rental properties.	Rural areas with populations of up to 35,000.	Grant.	Grant agreement.
Farm Labor Housing Loans and Grants	Safe, well-built affordable rental housing for farmworkers.	Individuals, public and private nonprofit organizations.	New construction or substantial rehabilitation of rental housing.	N/A.	Direct loan and grant.	Up to 102 percent of total development cost. Up to 33 years to repay at 1 percent interest.
Community Facilities Loans and Grants	Improve, develop, or finance essential community facilities for rural communities.	Public bodies, nonprofits, and Federally recognized Indian Tribes.	Construct, enlarge, or otherwise improve essential community facilities, such as public safety, fire and rescue, telecommunications, schools, libraries, hospitals, other healthcare facilities, etc. This may include furnishings, fixtures, and other required equipment.	City, town, or unincorporated area of not more than 20,000 in population. Facilities must primarily serve rural residents.	Direct loan, loan guarantee or grant.	Up to 100 percent of market value. Term is for useful life of the facility or equipment, the state statute, or 40 years. Maximum grant 75 percent of project cost. Grant eligibility based on income, population, and need.

Rural Community Development Initiative	To facilitate housing, community facility and community and economic development projects.	Private nonprofit or public organizations, philanthropic foundations, low-income communities.	Technical assistance grants of \$50,000 to \$300,000 to develop the capacity and ability of the awardees to carry out needed projects.	City, town, or unincorporated area of not more than 20,000 in population.	Grant.	Matching funds required for grant.
<i>Direct Loans and Grants: Apply to Rural Development. Loan Guarantees: Apply to participating intermediaries such as approved banks, mortgage companies, etc.</i>						
BUSINESS AND COOPERATIVES						
	Objective	Applicant	Uses	Population	Loan/Grant	Terms/Conditions
Business and Industry Loan Guarantees	Create jobs/stimulate rural economies by providing financial backing for rural businesses.	Lender/Businesses.	Real estate, buildings, equipment, supplies, working capital, and some debt refinancing.	All areas except cities over 50,000 and their contiguous urbanized areas.	Loan guarantee.	Lender and borrower negotiate terms. Up to 30 years for real estate, 15 years for machinery and equipment, and 7 years for working capital.
Rural Business Enterprise Grants	Finance and facilitate the development of small and emerging private business enterprises.	Public bodies, private nonprofit corporations, and Tribes.	Refinancing, land acquisition, revolving funds, construction, equipment, access streets and roads, utility and service extensions, and rural distance learning networks.	All areas except cities over 50,000 and their contiguous urbanized areas.	Grant.	Amount based on funding availability, funding priority, and national goals.
Intermediary Relending Program Loans	Establish revolving funds for business facilities and community development projects.	Public bodies, nonprofit corporations, Native American Tribes, and cooperatives.	Community development projects, establishment or expansion of businesses, creation or saving of rural jobs.	Rural areas and incorporated places with populations of less than 25,000.	Direct loan.	The intermediary makes loans to businesses from its revolving loan fund on terms consistent with security offered. Intermediary pays 1 percent for 30 years.
Rural Microentrepreneur Assistance Program	Establish revolving funds to target assistance to small rural enterprises.	Microenterprise Development Organizations (MDOs).	Loans, technical, and capacity-building assistance to businesses with 10 or fewer employees and sole proprietorships.	All areas except cities over 50,000 and their contiguous urbanized areas.	Loans, grants.	Rural microenterprises apply directly to the intermediary.

	Objective	Applicant	Uses	Population	Loan/Grant	Terms/Conditions
Rural Economic Development Loans and Grants	Finance economic development and job creation in rural areas.	Rural Utilities Service-financed electric and telephone utilities.	Business startups or expansion projects that create rural jobs.	Rural areas with priority to places with populations of 2,500 or less.	Direct loan or grant to establish revolving loan fund.	Intermediary makes loans to profit or nonprofit businesses and public bodies. Loans are 0 percent for 10 years.
Rural Cooperative Development Grants	Establish/operate centers for cooperative development.	Nonprofits and institutions of higher education.	Establish centers to provide technical assistance, training, applied research, and collection and interpretation of data, for the purpose of cooperative development.	All areas except cities over 50,000 and their contiguous urbanized areas.	Grant.	Minimum 25 percent fund match (5 percent for 1994 Institutions). Grants awarded competitively.
Small Socially Disadvantaged Producer Grants	Provides funds to eligible cooperatives or an association of cooperatives to provide technical assistance to small, socially disadvantaged producers in rural areas.	Cooperatives and associations of cooperatives whose membership and board of directors is comprised of at least 75 percent socially-disadvantaged agricultural producers.	Technical assistance.	All areas, except cities over 50,000 and their contiguous urbanized areas.	Grant.	Grants are awarded on a competitive basis. There is no matching requirement.
Value-Added Producer Grants	Assist independent agricultural producers to enter into activities that add value to their crops.	Independent producers, farmer and rancher cooperatives, producer groups, majority-controlled producer-based business ventures.	Feasibility studies, business plans; working capital.	All areas.	Grant.	Grants are awarded on a competitive basis. Funds cannot be used to build facilities or purchase equipment. Funds must be matched on a dollar-for-dollar basis.
Rural Business Opportunity Grants	Finance technical assistance for business development planning in rural areas.	Public bodies, nonprofit corporations, Indian Tribes on Federal or State reservations, cooperatives with members that are primarily rural residents.	Technical assistance, leadership training, establishment of business support centers, economic development plans.	All areas except cities over 50,000 and their contiguous urbanized areas.	Grant.	Must be completed within 2 years after project has begun.

	Objective	Applicant	Uses	Population	Loan/Grant	Terms/Conditions
Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) Loan Guarantees	Provide assistance for energy efficiency improvements or purchase of a renewable energy system for operations.	Small businesses and agricultural producers.	In addition to authorized purposes under grant, can also cover land acquisition and working capital.	Cities, towns, unincorporated areas with population less than 50,000.	Loan guarantee.	Simplified applications under \$600,000. Complete applications processed by Area Office and submitted to State Office. NOFAs determine a deadline for applications to be submitted to State Office. Grant awards determined by National Office.
REAP Feasibility Study Grants	Provide assistance for 25 percent of the cost of a feasibility study.	Small businesses and agricultural producers.	Feasibility studies for implementation of a renewable energy system from wind, solar, biomass, geothermal, hydro power, hydrogen producing electricity, heat or fuel.	Cities, towns, unincorporated areas with population less than 50,000.	Grant.	25 percent of cost, \$50,000 max. Complete applications processed by Area Office and submitted to State Office. NOFAs determine a deadline for applications to be submitted to State Office. Grant awards determined by National Office.
REAP Audit/Development Grants	Provide grant to entity to pass through to a small business or agricultural producer for 75 percent of the cost of an energy audit or renewable energy development assistance.	State, Tribal or local government institutions of higher education; rural electric cooperatives; or public power entities.	\$100,000 grant to entities, smaller ones to small business and agricultural producers for 75 percent of energy audit or renewable energy development assistance.	Cities, towns, unincorporated areas with population less than 50,000.	Grant.	\$100,000 to entities and up to 75 percent of the cost of energy audit for renewable energy development assistance. Complete applications processed by Area Office and submitted to State Office. NOFAs determine the deadline for this program. Grant awards determined by National Office.

	Objective	Applicant	Uses	Population	Loan/Grant	Terms/Conditions
Biorefinery Assistance Program Loan Guarantees	Provide loan guarantees for the development and construction of commercial-scale biorefineries or to retrofit existing facilities using eligible technology for the development of advanced biofuels.	Individuals, Indian Tribes, State or local governments, corporations, farm cooperatives, associations of agricultural producers, National Laboratories, higher learning institutions, rural electric co-ops, public power entities, consortiums of any of the entities.	Loan guarantees to develop and construct commercial scale biorefinery or retrofit existing facilities to use eligible technology for the development of advanced biofuels.	No restrictions.	Loan.	90 percent (maximum) guarantee on loans up to \$125 million; 80 percent (maximum) guarantee on loans less than \$150 million; 70 percent (maximum) guarantee on loans of \$150 million but less than \$200 million; 60 percent (maximum) guarantee on loans of \$200 million up to \$250 million. Complete applications submitted to National Office for review. NOFAs determine deadlines for the program. Loan guarantees determined by National Office.
Repowering Assistance Program	Provide payments to existing biorefineries to replace fossil fuels with biomass.	Existing biorefineries.	Grant to existing biorefineries, including ethanol and biodiesel plants that use electricity generated from natural gas and coal and require this for the fermentation process.	No restrictions.	Grant.	As funds are available. Complete applications submitted to National Office for review.
Advanced Biofuel Payment Program	Provide payments to producers of advanced biofuels.	Eligible producers of advanced biofuels.	Grant to producers of advanced biofuels (non-commercial-based).	No restrictions.	Grant.	As funds are available. Complete applications submitted to National Office for review. Grant awards determined by National Office.

Direct Loans and Grants: Apply to Rural Development. Loan Guarantees: Apply to participating intermediaries such as eligible banks, etc. Revolving Funds (RMAP, IRP, REDLG): Intermediaries apply to Rural Development, others to the intermediaries.						
Utilities	Objective	Applicant	Uses	Population	Loan/Grant	Terms/Conditions
Water and Waste Disposal Loans and Grants	Provide infrastructure for rural areas.	Public entities, Indian Tribes and nonprofit corporations.	Build, repair, and improve public water systems and waste collection and treatment systems.	Rural areas, and towns with up to 10,000 population.	Direct loan and grant.	Repayment period is a maximum of 40 years. Grant funds may be available.
Water and Waste Disposal Loan Guarantees	Provide infrastructure for rural areas.	Public entities, Indian Tribes and nonprofit corporations.	Construct, repair, improve water supply and distribution systems and waste collection and treatment systems.	Rural areas, and towns with up to 10,000 population.	Loan guarantee.	Eligible lenders obtain up to a 90 percent guarantee on loans they make and service.
Solid Waste Management Grants	Provide technical assistance and/or training to those who operate and maintain active landfills.	Public bodies, private nonprofit organizations, Indian Tribes, academic institutions.	Technical assistance and training to improve landfill conditions and protect against threats to nearby water resources.	Rural areas, and towns with up to 10,000 population.	Grant.	Applications accepted year-round. Complete applications submitted to National Office for review.
Technical Assistance/ Training/Circuit Rider	Provide technical assistance and training.	Public, private, and nonprofit organizations.	Provide technical assistance and training to assist with management of water and waste projects.	Rural areas and towns with up to 10,000 population.	Grant.	As funds are available. Complete applications submitted to National Office for review.
Rural Broadband Loan and Loan Guarantee	Deployment of broadband service to eligible rural communities.	Entities seeking to provide broadband services in rural areas. Individuals and partnerships not eligible.	Finance the construction, improvement, and acquisition of facilities and equipment to provide broadband service in eligible rural communities; refinance RD telecommunications program debt.	Any area not located within a city, town, or incorporated area over 20,000 inhabitants; or an urbanized area contiguous to a city or town of greater than 50,000 inhabitants.	Direct loan and loan guarantee.	Loans are made at the Treasury rate; loan term is the expected economic life of the assets financed; guarantee cannot exceed 80 percent of the project amount.

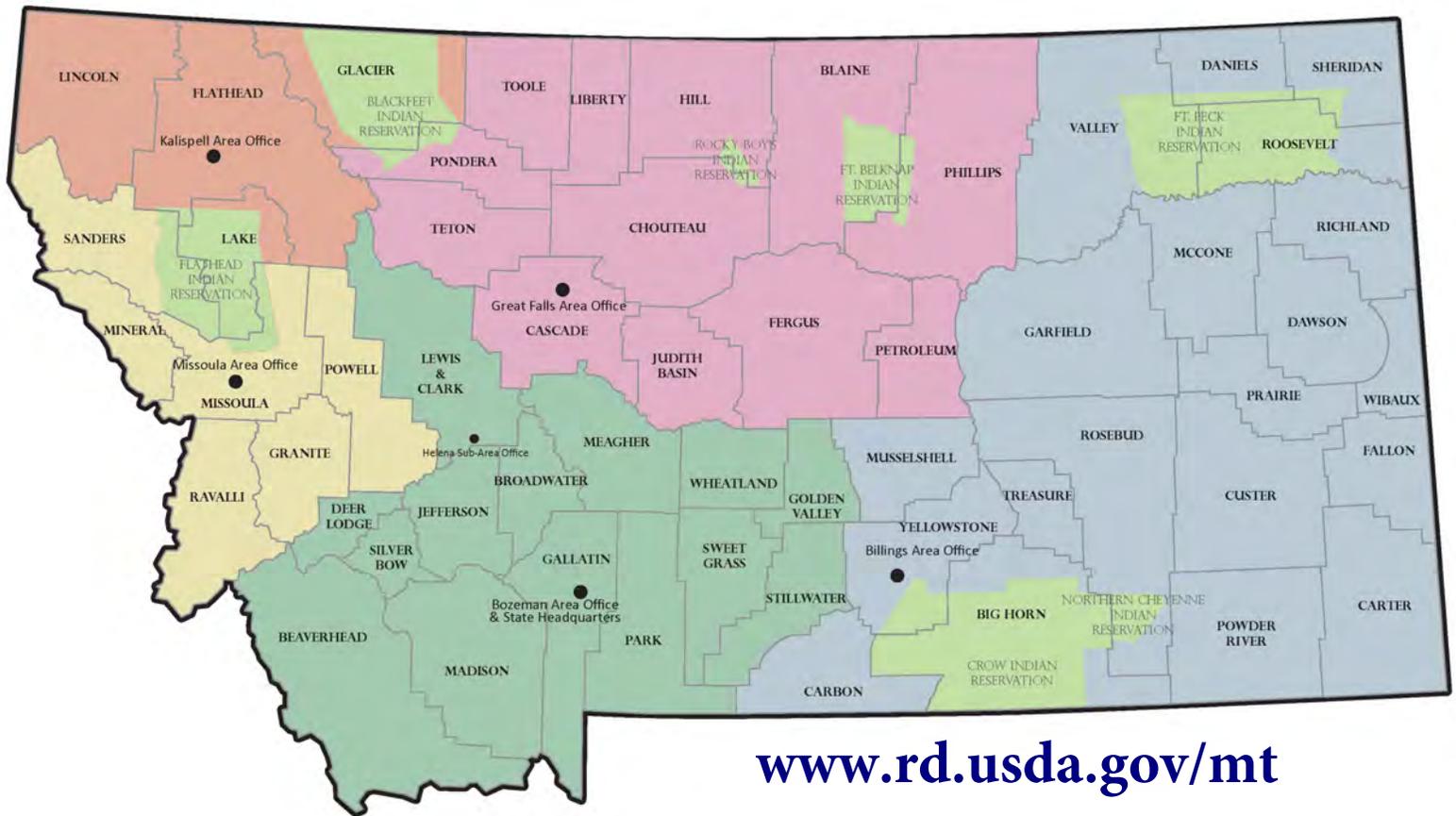
Utilities	Objective	Applications	Uses	Population	Loan/Grants	Terms/Conditions
Electric and Telecommunications Loans	Assist rural communities in obtaining affordable, high quality electric and telecommunications services.	Nonprofit and cooperative associations, public bodies, and other utilities.	Generation, transmission facilities, and distribution of electric power, including alternative, renewable, conservation and energy efficiency programs. Enhance 911 emergency service, digital switching equipment, fiber optic cable, along with traditional main system telecommunications service.	Electric: areas served by an existing rural electric borrower, or rural areas other than a city or town of more than 20,000. Telecommunications: areas cities with population over 5,000.	Direct loan or loan guarantee.	Interest rates are established in accordance with 7CFR 17145. Contact RUS at www.rd.usda.gov or 1 (800) 670-6553.
Distance Learning and Telemedicine	Development and deployment of advanced telecommunication services throughout rural America to improve education and health care.	Incorporated entities, including municipalities, for-profit, and nonprofit corporations, that operate rural schools, libraries, health care clinics and other educational or health care facilities.	To provide end-user equipment and programming that delivers distance learning and telemedicine services into eligible areas.	Rural areas outside incorporated or unincorporated cities with population over 20,000.	Direct loan and/or grant.	Matching funds are required.
Community Connect	Provide public access to broadband in otherwise un-served communities.	Public bodies, Tribes, cooperatives, nonprofits, limited dividend or mutual associations; corporations and other legally organized entities.	To build broadband infrastructure and establish a community center which offers free public access to broadband for two years.	A single community outside incorporated or unincorporated cities with population over 20,000 which does not have broadband.	Grant.	Minimum: \$50,000; Maximum: \$1 million. Amounts are published in NOFAs and may vary.

Water and Electric Programs: Contact the Rural Utilities Service Administrator; All others: Contact the Rural Development State or local office.

SUMMARY OF PROGRAM PURPOSES

	Land & Bldgs.	Mach. & Equip.	Working Capital	Infrastructure	Tech. Asst./Train.
Housing and Community Facilities					
Single Family Housing Direct Loans (including Self-Help Loans)	•				
Single Family Housing Loan Guarantees	•				
Single Family Housing Repair Loans/Grants	•				
Rural Rental Housing Direct Loans	•			•	
Rural Rental Housing Loan Guarantees	•			•	
Housing Preservation Grants	•	•	•	•	•
Farm Labor Housing Loans/Grants	•			•	
Community Facilities Direct Loans, Loan Guarantees, Grants	•	•	•	•	
Rural Community Development Initiative					•
Business and Cooperatives					
Business and Industry Loan Guarantees	•	•	•	•	
Rural Business Enterprise Grants	•	•	•	•	•
Intermediary Relending Loans	•	•	•		
Rural Microentrepreneur Assistance Program	•	•	•	•	•
Rural Economic Development Loans and Grants	•	•	•	•	•
Rural Cooperative Development Grants				•	•
Value-Added Producer Grant			•	•	•
Rural Business Opportunity Grants					•
Rural Energy for America Program Loan Guarantees/Grants	•	•		•	•
Biorefinery Assistance Program Loan Guarantees					
Repowering Assistance Program					
Advanced Biofuel Payment Program					
Utilities					
Water and Waste Disposal Direct Loans, Loan Guar., Grants	•	•	•	•	
Solid Waste Management Grants					
Rural Broadband Direct Loans and Loan Guarantees					
Electric and Telecommunications Direct Loans/Loan Guarantees					
Distance Learning and Telemedicine Loans/Grants					
Community Connect Grants					

USDA Rural Development - Montana



www.rd.usda.gov/mt

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fax: (855)576-2674

Helena Sub-Area Office

790 Colleen Street
Helena, MT 59601
ofc: (406) 449-5000 Ext. 4
fax: (855) 576-2675

State Headquarters, Bozeman - (406) 585-2580

Great Falls Area Office

12 3rd Street NW - Suite 300
Great Falls, MT 59404
ofc: (406) 727-7580 Ext. 4
fax: (866)574-1071

Kalispell Area Office

450 Corporate Drive - Suite 111
Kalispell, MT 59901
ofc: (406) 756-2005 Ext. 4
fax: (855)576-2678

Billings Area Office

1629 Avenue D - Suite A6
Billings, MT 59102
ofc: (406) 657-6297 Ext. 4
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Missoula Area Office

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www.rd.usda.gov/mt

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To File an Employment Complaint

If you wish to file an employment complaint, you must contact your agency's EEO Counselor (PDF) within 45 days of the date of the alleged discriminatory act, event, or in the case of a personnel action. Additional information can be found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_file.html.

To File a Program Complaint

If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form (PDF), found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at program.intake@usda.gov.

Persons with Disabilities

Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities and you wish to file either an EEO or program complaint please contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339 or (800) 845-6136 (in Spanish).

Persons with disabilities who wish to file a program complaint, please see information above on how to contact us by mail directly or by email. If you require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) please contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

For any other information dealing with Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) issues, persons should either contact the USDA SNAP Hotline Number at (800) 221-5689, which is also in Spanish or call the State Information/Hotline Numbers.

All Other Inquiries

For any other information not pertaining to civil rights, please refer to the listing of the USDA Agencies and Offices for specific agency information.

February 2015