



NEWS RELEASE

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USDA TO HOST FORUMS ON JOBS, ECONOMIC GROWTH

Business Owners, Residents, Community Leaders Invited to Share Ideas on Creating Jobs

PALMER, Alaska, January 8, 2010 – USDA Rural Development State Director Jim Nordlund and Farm Services Agency Executive Director Danny Consenstein announced today that the USDA will hold four forums on job creation and economic growth. The forums follow the Forum on Jobs and Economic Growth that President Obama hosted at the White House on December 3.

“These forums will provide an opportunity for residents, business owners and community leaders across the state to share ideas on creating jobs and economic opportunities,” Nordlund said. “Government can help lay the groundwork for economic growth, but the best ideas for continued growth and job creation often come from local and community leaders. I look forward to hearing these ideas and sharing them with the Administration,” Consenstein said.

The schedule for Alaska meetings is:

Fairbanks – January 14th, 2010, at the Alpine Lodge at 1:30 p.m.;

Kotzebue – January 19th at the Alaska Technical Center, at 9:00 a.m.;

Juneau – January 26th at Centennial Hall at 1:30 p.m.;

Anchorage – February 1st at the Millennium Hotel at 1:30 p.m.

The forums will include business owners, residents, state and local officials, union members, non-profit organizations, community leaders, economists and other interested parties. Participants will discuss steps that can be taken to grow the economy and put Americans back to work.

The primary focus will be on ideas to accelerate job growth in rural America. Some of the topics to be discussed are:

- Creating jobs by building Alaska’s rural infrastructure; such as expanded broadband access to rural communities
- Expanding Alaska’s agricultural production and building stronger local food systems;
- Creating jobs by lowering energy costs and developing new renewable energy projects;
- Exploring economic opportunities as a result of climate change;
- Supporting job growth among small businesses;
- Preparing workers for 21st century jobs;
- Exploring ways to rejuvenate and promote local businesses.

Committed to the future of rural communities.

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Co-sponsoring the forums with USDA will be:

- Fairbanks:
 - Fairbanks North Star Borough
 - Fairbanks Economic Development Corporation
 - Tanana Chiefs Conference
 - University of Alaska-Fairbanks
- Kotzebue:
 - The Northwest Arctic Leadership Team including
 - Northwest Arctic Borough School District
 - Northwest Arctic Borough
 - Maniilaq Association
 - NANA Regional Corporation
- Juneau:
 - Southeast Conference
 - Juneau Economic Development Corporation
 - University of Alaska, Southeast
- Anchorage:
 - Denali Commission
 - State of Alaska
 - ANCSA Regional Association

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