



**United States
Department of
Agriculture**



StrikeForce Initiative for Rural Growth and Opportunity

www.usda.gov/strikeforce

ALASKA

Alaska Fast Facts - 2015

State's Child Poverty Rate:	12.9%
State's Overall Poverty Rate:	16.2%
StrikeForce State Since:	2013
Number of StrikeForce Counties:	18
Total Outreach Events:	3
Number of Community Partners:	7
Total USDA Projects:	321
Total USDA Investment:	\$229 million

Contacts

Contact us to be a partner, or to learn more about StrikeForce opportunities:

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Some of Our StrikeForce Community Partners

Alaska Federation of Natives
Juneau Economic Development Council
OceansAlaska
Southeast Conference of Mayors
University of Alaska Southeast
Rasmuson Foundation
Sealaska Corporation: Haa Aani, LLC
The Nature Conservancy

Currently, 85 percent of our country's persistent poverty counties are in rural America. More than one third of rural Americans, and one in four rural children live in poverty. Kids growing up in families earning twice the poverty threshold are nearly three times as likely as other children to have poor health, are more likely to finish two fewer years of school, and are more likely to earn half as much money in their adult lives.

Growing the economy by investing in rural communities and increasing opportunities for families is key to our Nation's future. In 2010, Secretary Vilsack established USDA's StrikeForce Initiative for Rural Growth and Opportunity to address the specific challenges associated with rural poverty. Since then, StrikeForce teams have collaborated with more than 1,500 community partners and public entities to bring targeted assistance to rural areas experiencing chronic poverty.

These efforts have invested more than \$23.5 billion to create jobs, build homes, feed kids, assist farmers and conserve natural resources across more than twenty states. In 2016, StrikeForce expanded to include Florida, Missouri, Montana, and Ohio. Now, USDA StrikeForce teams will operate in 970 counties in 25 states and Puerto Rico. Each StrikeForce project is a commitment to America's economic future.

StrikeForce At Work

Making Homes Safer in Remote, Rural Alaska

A senior citizen in a remote Alaska village was able to make needed repairs on her home, thanks to a partnership between USDA, the state, and the local housing authority. Her steps and floor were in danger of rotting and posed a safety hazard. Her home is now safe and has a new low-flush toilet as well. Huslia, Alaska is a Koyukon Athabascan village, home to approximately 275 people year-round. The remote village is located on the north bank of the Koyukuk River, about 290 miles west of Fairbanks toward the Bering Sea and in the Koyukuk National Wildlife Refuge. Needless to say, living conditions are tough.

USDA-Rural Development (RD) Single Family Housing Repair grants were leveraged with the Interior Regional Housing Authority's (IRHA) Home Weatherization Program. IRHA receives funding from the State of Alaska to provide weatherization services for Interior Alaskan homes. IRHA provides a fully certified contractor, conducts full home assessments, and provides all labor, materials, and freight for the grantee recipients and their home improvement projects. This assistance allows citizens to remain in their own homes while keeping their property in good repair. Two other recipients of the Home Repair Grant, ages 67 and 81, received a new environmentally/energy efficient woodstoves and air combustion kits. These replaced very old stoves, that posed a safety hazard. These critical enhancements to these homes in Huslia were made possible through the utilization of USDA resources and outreach with the vision to enhance communities in remote, rural locations.

