



**United States
Department of
Agriculture**



StrikeForce Initiative for Rural Growth and Opportunity

www.usda.gov/strikeforce

ALASKA

Alaska Fast Facts - 2014

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:	6
Number of Community Partners:	7
Total USDA Projects:	131
Total USDA Investment:	\$33 million

Contacts

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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 500 community partners and public entities to bring targeted assistance to rural areas experiencing chronic poverty.

These efforts have invested more than \$16.5 billion to create jobs, build homes, feed kids, assist farmers and conserve natural resources across twenty states. In 2015, StrikeForce expanded to include Oklahoma and Puerto Rico. Now, USDA StrikeForce teams will operate in 880 counties in 21 states and Puerto Rico. Each StrikeForce project is a commitment to America's economic future.

StrikeForce At Work

Alaska was designated a StrikeForce state in 2013 to help diversify the economic base. In 2013 and 2014, the US Forest Service and USDA Rural Development provided the nonprofit Juneau Economic Development Council (JEDC) with \$200,000 to support the Southeast Alaska Cluster Initiative. The effort is creating synergies within the region's key "industry clusters," or groups of businesses linked through service or supplier relationships, common customers, and supporting institutions. Through this effort, leaders, experts and stakeholders have established five targeted clusters to build economic success: ocean products, visitor products and tourism, renewable energy, mining services and supply, and research and development.

The renewable energy cluster received assistance at the Alaska Wood Energy Conference held by the Forest Service. In addition, USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service is providing ongoing technical assistance to help private forest landowners and tribes promote both conservation and sustainable use. To help the visitor products cluster capitalize on the tourism industry, the Forest Service and other partners provided training for tour guides. In addition, the Forest Service has made available 15,400 additional temporary commercial use days allowing outfitters and guides to schedule more excursions with paying customers.

"A local guiding company in Juneau has added five new positions and \$200,000 in new annual revenues since the Forest Service made additional commercial use days available," said Brian Holst, JEDC Executive Director. "A new whale tour operation is being developed using the first electric powered tour boats in our markets, after being inspired at the annual Innovation Summit," he added.

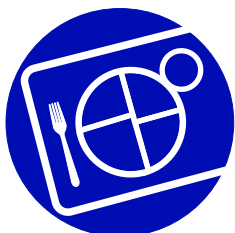
StrikeForce Initiative for Rural Growth and Opportunity in Alaska

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131 Projects in 2014 = \$33 Million Invested



22
Jobs Created
or Saved



394,708
Summer
Meals for Kids



64
Farmers
Assisted



236
Home
Investments

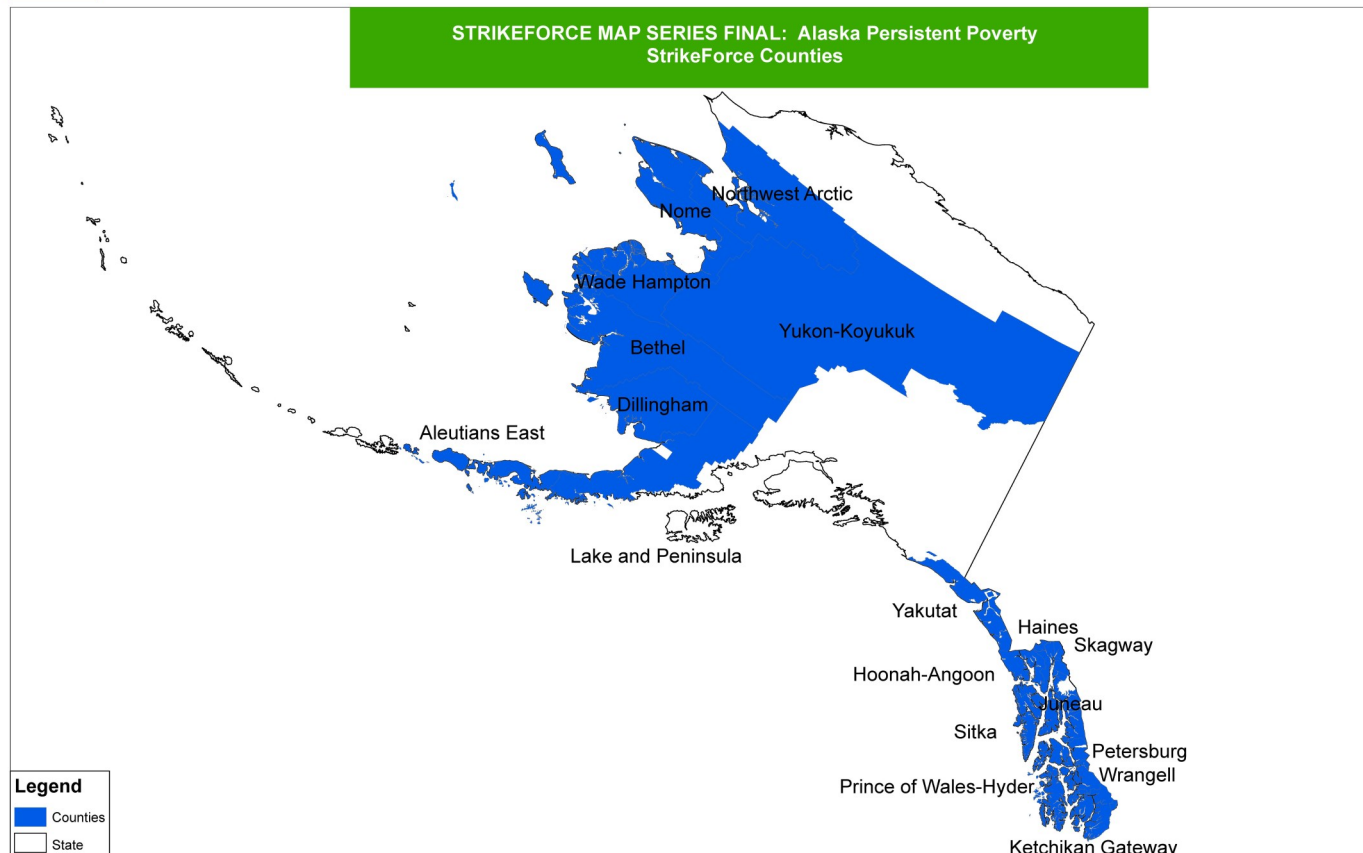


26
Conservation
Efforts



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

STRIKEFORCE MAP SERIES FINAL: Alaska Persistent Poverty StrikeForce Counties

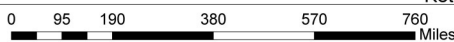


Legend

- Counties
- State

Data Sources May Contain Data From The Following Sources:
ESRI World Physical Map Base Data Layers
2000 CENSUS TRACT DATA - CENSUS, Tiger gdb
2010 CENSUS TRACT DATA - CENSUS, Tiger gdb
USGS National State Boundaries data set
NCEM - 8162 PF 2010 Special Lands Participation CODE Data
From U.S. Department of Education National Center For Education Statistics, not available for individual state
USDA/RD/GDW Data Data Reflecting RD Program Specific Data
USDA/RD/HUS/RSB/RSR/CSM/CO Data Sources
USDA/OCE/ODM Departmental Data Resources
Housing and Urban Development Data
Environmental Protection Agency Data
New Area 2008

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