

Montana FSA Reorganization Plan

Lewis & Clark County Profile

1) Proposed Consolidation

It is proposed that the Lewis & Clark County Office at Helena, Montana be closed and the workload and staff consolidated into the Broadwater County Office in Townsend, Montana.

2) General Description of County

Lewis and Clark County is a small one-person shared management office in Helena with approximately 145 active FSA clients (2001-2006 data). This is a medium sized county in west central Montana with nearly 87 percent of the county in pasture and woodlands and less than 13% devoted to crop production. L & C did not rank in small grains production and ranks 30th in livestock production in the state. L & C had 126 DCP and 37 CRP contracts in 2005.

3) County Statistics

- Number of producers 155 Percent of State .6%
- Producer Payments \$1,304,021 Percent of State .37%
- Number of employees 1

(Note: Number of Producers and payments derived from 2005 CCC-1099 data)

- Cost to benefits ratio .122

(Note: this represents the administrative cost in dollars to deliver one dollars worth of benefits in the county office)

4) Destination County: Broadwater County (Townsend)

- Townsend is 34 miles from the Lewis & Clark (Helena) FSA office
- Workload - Due to the geographic attributes of the county it is anticipated that approximately 25% of the producers will travel north to Choteau or East to Great Falls. The majority of the producers will travel to the Townsend Office for FSA programs
- Employees – there is one employee assigned to the Helena office, however that employee lives in Townsend. Two State Office employees (District Director, Management Program Analyst) also are assigned to the Helena Office. These employees travel the majority of the time and can be assigned to another county office.

5) Makeup of Receiving County

The receiving office (Townsend, Broadwater County), upon implementation of the plan will be composed of one 3-5 member Area Committee, one County Executive Director and 4 Program Technicians. The STO positions may also be assigned to this location. Meagher County (White Sulphur Springs) is also part of this proposed consolidation.

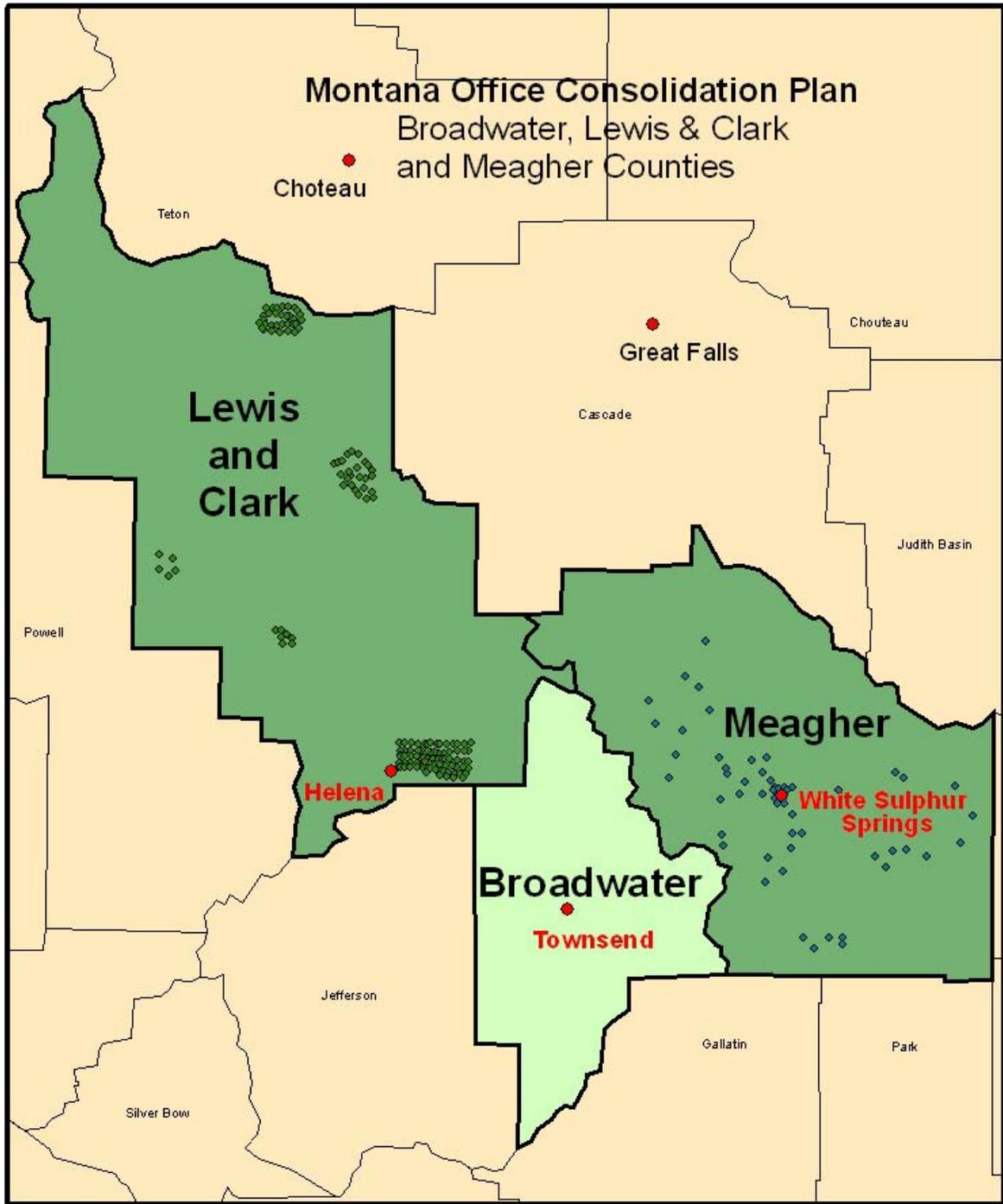
6) Travel impact on producers

- Included is a map of the proposed combination to include Lewis & Clark, Meagher and Broadwater Counties. The map shows the approximate number and locations of producers in Lewis & Clark and Meagher Counties. Producers numbers on this map may be different than the producer numbers above, due to using 2001-2006 as the base years for this figure. This will include all producers visiting the office, and would also include EQIP and disaster applications. FSA no longer has responsibility for EQIP.
- The Broadwater office is 34 miles from the Lewis and Clark Office. Of the 150 active producers in Lewis and Clark, up to 25% of these producers would go to Teton County to the North and would have a shorter trip to their FSA office than they currently have-30 to 40 miles compared to the 65 to 80 miles they currently drive to Helena. Another 20% would be equal distance from Cascade County at 35 to 40 miles. Most of the remainder of L& C producers live between their current office and the Broadwater office. No producers would have to travel more than 34 additional miles to their new office and at least half would have a shorter trip to the FSA office after consolidation.

6) Specialized Service Needs/Outreach

An integral part of the Montana FSA Reorganization Plan is to streamline or change business practices focused at requiring less visits, on the part of the producer, to the county office to do business with FSA. These changes will be implemented in all counties within the state with the intent to make participation for all producers easier and more efficient. In addition to those initiatives, FSA will reach out to communities where the closure of an office burdens producers with excessive distances to travel to the nearest FSA office. This outreach effort may include, sign-up meetings where the producer will be able to sign up with an FSA official in the producer's own community, informational meeting in the outlying communities, office days in the outlying communities during implementation of the plan, or 1-800 numbers installed in the FSA office.

One of the focuses of the public meetings to be held will be to solicit ideas from producers how FSA can best meet their needs on an ongoing basis.



Montana Office Consolidation Plan
 Broadwater, Lewis & Clark
 and Meagher Counties

Legend

 Producer Location	 Town
 Recommended Closed	 Receiving County



Map Created on February 21, 2007.