

FEBRUARY 2014 CALL WITH DAFO

I had a call with DAFO Greg Diephouse on the morning of February 5, 2014, to discuss various topics. See comments from the discussion below:

- We have some concerns about a plan in the Southwest Area to hire a Key PT position by advertising outside FSA nationwide. The advertisement does not seem to meet procedure standards. Greg promised to review this situation. And I promised to forward additional information on this case.
- Greg indicated that the budget for FSA is still being determined but he is optimistic for FY 2014 and hopes that face to face training can be increased. He is also hopeful that temporary employees can be utilized to assist with initial demands of the Farm Bill. I stressed that NASCOE hopes that additional permanent employees can be added as well.
- We discussed the 2 employees and 20 mile rule that is still part of the permanent Farm Bill law. He stated that part time county offices would subject to the 2 and 20 rule if they were more than 20 miles from the nearest office
- The new delivery project continues to make progress in identifying opportunities for improving our service delivery model and strengthening the future of the Agency. The working group has been engaging and intends to engage employees in the discussion next. The agency looks forward to sharing them with NASCOE and working to incorporate further input maybe early March 2014."
- Greg reiterated that the Secretary is a proponent of the FSA county office and wants to continue to promote us as a key player in future immigration legislation and he sees FSA as a resource that should be leveraged for citizens needing USDA services.

Wes Daniels and I have plans to go to WDC the first week of March to address additional issues and follow up on items above.

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