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From: Francis, Ronald - Salt Lake City, UT
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BIO ON NEW NRCS CHIEF ARLEN LANCASTER

Appointed August 23, 2006, Arlen Lancaster heads the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the primary agency for voluntary conservation on working agricultural lands. As the thirteenth Chief for the agency, he directs the work of 12,000 employees and manages a budget totaling nearly \$3.2 billion.

Before joining NRCS, Mr. Lancaster served as USDA Deputy Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations. Previously he worked for the Congress in a variety of positions including senior policy advisor for Senator Mike Crapo, staff director for the Senate Subcommittee on Forestry, Conservation, and Rural Revitalization and staff member for Senator Robert Bennett. He played a key role in crafting the conservation title of the 2002 farm bill.

As NRCS chief executive officer, Mr. Lancaster guides the agency in helping people help the land through locally-led, cooperative conservation programs. Under his direction, NRCS works with private landowners and partners to conserve, maintain and improve natural resources, which supports sustainable agriculture and enhances the environment. NRCS conservation partnerships provide public environmental benefits such as a cleaner environment, clear and abundant water, increased biological diversity and a scenic landscape.

A graduate of the University of Utah, Mr. Lancaster is the first Asian American Chief of NRCS. He is an avid fly fisherman and outdoorsman. He and his wife Staci live in Alexandria, Va.

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Sylvia Gillen, State Conservationist, Natural Resources Conservation Service

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