



Jasper Schneider, USDA Rural Development state director, addresses a crowd Friday, July 22, 2011, during the dedication ceremony at the Jamestown Regional Medical Center. Forum file photo

Schneider steps down from USDA post

By [Forum staff reports](#) Today at 10:54 a.m.

FARGO – Jasper Schneider is stepping down after five and a half years as the state director for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Development division, the department said.

A former two-term state representative from Fargo, he was also appointed last fall as acting administrator of the Rural Utilities Service.

Schneider, an attorney and entrepreneur, will now return to the private sector. Deputy State Director Bill Davis will serve as acting state director.

USDA credited Schneider with directing \$3 billion in investments to help North Dakota "meet the demands of population and industry growth."

This includes \$750 million to support oil and gas producing counties in the west, \$341 million for affordable housing, \$294 million to expand broadband access, \$240 million for tribal infrastructure needs and \$169 million for new healthcare facilities.

Schneider also launched a statewide planning initiative called North Dakota 2.0 in fall 2011, which produced recommendations for how the state should invest its budget surplus. Recommendations included sending more aid to local governments and spending more on infrastructure.

As Rural Utilities Service administrator, he oversaw a \$60 billion loan portfolio and managed programs to help public utilities.

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