

Veterinarian Shortage Situation Nomination Form

To be submitted under the authority of the chief State or Insular Area Animal Health Official

Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program (VMLRP)

This form must be used for Nomination of Veterinarian Shortage Situations to the Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program (VMLRP), Authorized Under the National Veterinary Medical Service Act (NVMSA)

Note: Please submit one separate nomination form for each shortage situation. See the State Animal Health Official (SAHO) section of the VMLRP web site (www.nifa.usda.gov/vmlrp) for the number of nominations permitted for your state or insular area.

Location of Veterinary Shortage Area for this Nomination

Location of Veterinary Shortage: Kenai Peninsula (e.g., County, State/Insular Area; must be a logistically feasible veterinary practice service area)

Approximate Center of Shortage Area (or Location of Position if Type III): No exact location can be identified the area extends from Portage (just south of Anchorage down to Homer at the tip of the Kenai Peninsula) (e.g., Address or Cross Street, Town/City, and Zip Code)

Overall Priority of Shortage: [] Moderate Priority [] High Priority [x] Critical Priority

Type of Veterinary Practice Area/Discipline/Specialty (Choose only one Type)

[] Type I Shortage: Private Practice Food Animal Medicine (awardee obligation: at least 80 percent time or 32 hr/week)

Must cover (check at least one)

- [] Beef Cattle [] Dairy Cattle [] Swine [] Poultry [] Small Ruminant [] Other: _____

May cover

- [] Beef Cattle [] Dairy Cattle [] Swine [] Poultry [] Small Ruminant [] Other: _____

[x] Type II Shortage: Private Practice – Rural Area Food Animal Medicine (awardee obligation: at least 30 percent time or 12 hr/week)

Must cover (check at least one)

- [x] Beef Cattle [] Dairy Cattle [x] Swine [x] Poultry [x] Small Ruminant [x] Other: reindeer, llamas, yak, bison

May cover

- [] Beef Cattle [x] Dairy Cattle [] Swine [] Poultry [] Small Ruminant [x] Other: elk, captive wildlife

[] Type III Shortage: Public Practice (awardee obligation: at least 49 percent time or 19.6 hr/week)

Employer: _____ Position Title: _____

Please select one or more specialty/disciplinary areas:

- [] Food Safety [] Public Health [] Epidemiology [] Other: _____

Please describe the **importance and objectives** of a veterinarian filling this shortage situation as well as being located in the community, area, state/insular area, or position requested above (limit your response to 200 words or less).

The objectives of this position will be to develop herd health management to an expanding number of beef cattle and small ruminant operations as well as 4-H groups located on the Kenai Peninsula (area ranging from Portage, 40 miles south of Anchorage to Homer, some 250 miles south). The issue with most areas of Alaska is the large distances between livestock operations; average farm size is 1,300 acres. The Kenai Peninsula has over 35 cattle, 9 hog and 53 small ruminant farms (NASS). The poultry operations are mostly small backyard flocks ranging in size from 10 to the largest of 800 birds. There are numerous family dairies that participate in "cow and goat share operations". Due to the distribution of the farms this position would involve significant travel, reliance on digital or tele- medicine and need to support a practice with small animal work to sustain an economically successful business.

There have been past efforts by the cattle operators to develop a local slaughter facility. The state has encouraged the producers to consider a mobile slaughter plant to serve the Kenai Peninsula as this would seem to fit the unique needs of this area. An entrepreneur has approached this office for requirements to build a mobile facility. If this endeavor is successful there is the possibility that this veterinary position could act as a consultant to the operation to provide guidance regarding animal handling and food safety issues.

Please describe the **activities** of a veterinarian meeting this shortage situation in the community, area, state/insular area, or position requested above (limit your response to 200 words or less).

Activities will be directed to support the larger established beef and hog operations, some small sheep and goat herds and the one captive wildlife facility (Alaska Wildlife Conservation Center - exhibiting a number of wild animal species: elk, deer, bear, reindeer, bison) on the Kenai Peninsula. Secondary activities will be to support the numerous backyard or homestead farming operations that raise a number of species (poultry, ducks, pigs, small ruminants, few dairy goats or cows). Since several cattle operations use horses to manage their herds this practitioner would also need to be able to provide equine services.

This position would also support emergency response to morbidity/mortality investigations and emergency response to any hazards that would impact animal health. (This area has experienced natural disasters in the past: earthquake, forest fire, and tsunami). Most of these premises produce meat and poultry products for small communities (10 to 20 households) off the main thoroughfares and 50 to 70 miles from the nearest town.

Please describe any past efforts to recruit and retain a veterinarian in the shortage situation identified above (limit your response to 100 words or less).

There are only 2 veterinary clinics serving this area. These practices offer food animal services and are actively recruiting for an associate that they hope to hire this year. One of the practitioners is waiting for a local resident to graduate from veterinary school and has moved the practice facility closer to the local communities of Kenai and Soldotna in anticipation of this new associate. No previous efforts to recruit veterinary services have been made from this office other than the position nomination through this program.

Please describe the risk of this veterinarian position not being secured or retained. Include the risk(s) to the production of a safe and wholesome food supply and to animal, human, and environmental health not only in the community but in the region, state/insular area, nation, and/or international community (limit your response to 250 words or less).

The primary risk to not retaining this position involves the lack of support to local communities to produce safe and sustainable local food production. Local farm markets have increased across the Kenai Peninsula and most of the livestock operations market animals and animal products as farm gate sales. The need for consultation regarding animal production and animal care, as well as food safety and food borne disease is desperately needed. Over the last two years there have been several food borne outbreaks in several communities traced back to "cow share" operations and others linked to farm market sales. In addition, one of the food animal practitioners is considering retiring in the near future and is looking to take on an associate to make this transition.

Due to climatic changes the state has noted an increase in invasive species (insect vectors, parasites) as well as an increase in certain animal and food borne diseases. Without support from veterinary practitioners in the field the state and agricultural industry will be ill prepared to identify and diagnose morbidity and mortality events that can have impact on animal and public health. In addition, without this position the state may not be able to effectively manage emergency response to a hazard that impacts domestic animals and animal health.

(Optional) If the nominator wishes to specify a service time for this shortage situation that is higher than the minimum required for the shortage type checked on Page 1, please specify the percent time in the box below (based on a 40-hour work week). Leave the box blank if the service time for this shortage situation is for the minimum percent time of the shortage type indicated.

30%

Minimum Service time required for each shortage type

- Type I: 80 percent time or 32 hours/week
- Type II: 30 percent time or 12 hours/week
- Type III: 49 percent time or 19.6 hours/week

SAHO nominator must check both boxes below in order for NIFA to consider this nomination for official designation

- ◆ By checking this box, I affirm that this form represents a nomination and is subject to NIFA review and approval.

- ◆ By checking this box, I affirm that it is my professional opinion that this is a bona fide food supply or public health-related veterinary shortage situation. I affirm due diligence has been invested to identify this area as a shortage situation of at least moderate priority (severity).

Authorized State or Insular Area Animal Health Official or designee:

Name: Robert F Gerlach, VMD

Title: Alaska State Veterinarian

Organization: Alaska Dept of Environmental Conservation

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Public reporting for OMB control number 0524-0046 is estimated to average two hours, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information, unless it displays a current valid OMB control number. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden to NIFA, OGF, 800 9th St. SW, Washington, DC 20024, Attention Policy Section. Do not return the completed form to this address.

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