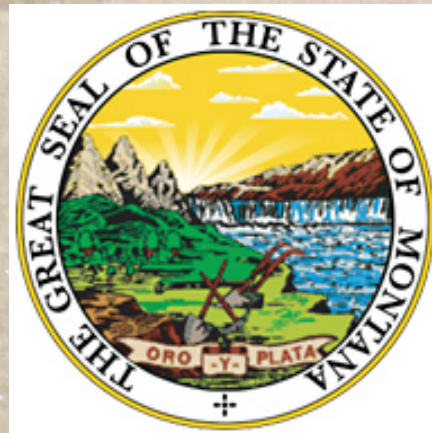
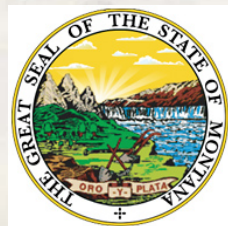


**BUILDING SUSTAINABLE  
AND VIABLE COMMUNITIES:**

**envisioning action, progress, results**

**REPRESENTATIVE SHANNON J. AUGARE  
MONTANA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**





# The Three Rural Americas

- Amenity Rich
- Declining Resource Dependent
- Chronically Poor



# Amenity Rich Rural America

Growing as baby boomers retire, as more people buy second homes, and as certain professionals choose to settle in small town communities.



# Declining Resource Dependent Rural America

Areas where agriculture, timber, mining or related manufacturing industries once supported a solid blue collar middle class, but are now in economic decline.



# Chronically Poor

Communities where decades of resource extraction and underinvestment have left a legacy of poverty, low education, substance abuse, and broken families and civic institutions.



# MAJOR DRIVERS CHANGING RURAL AMERICA



# GLOBALIZATION...

The decline of traditional rural industries  
and disappearance of jobs.



# UNDERINVESTMENT...

The deterioration of infrastructure,  
services, and leadership.



# MIGRATION...

Patterns of migration changing the demographics of rural communities.

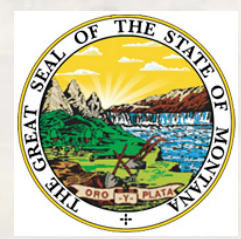




**THE END IS NIGH**  
THEREFORE DO YOUR IMPORTANT PAPERWORK NOW, THIS MORNING, BECAUSE IF YOU LEAVE IT UNTIL THIS AFTERNOON YOU MIGHT FIND THAT IT IS TOO LATE, THEREBY LEAVING YOU IN A BIT OF A PICKLE

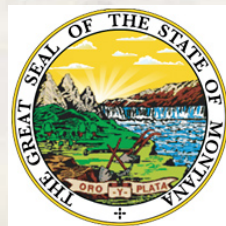


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# KEY TOPICS

- Demographic Transitions
- Changing Rural Economy
- Investment and Resource Distribution
- Community Institutions and Civic Leadership
- Environmental Challenges



# Demographic Transitions

## SUMMARY

- Younger people continue to leave.
- Immigrants are settling in.
- Amenity-rich communities are growing.
- Poorer communities are shrinking.



# Demographic Transitions

## ASSETS

- Older residents
- Attractive affordable housing
- Small-classroom schools
- Low crime
- Educated youth both within and outside of the community



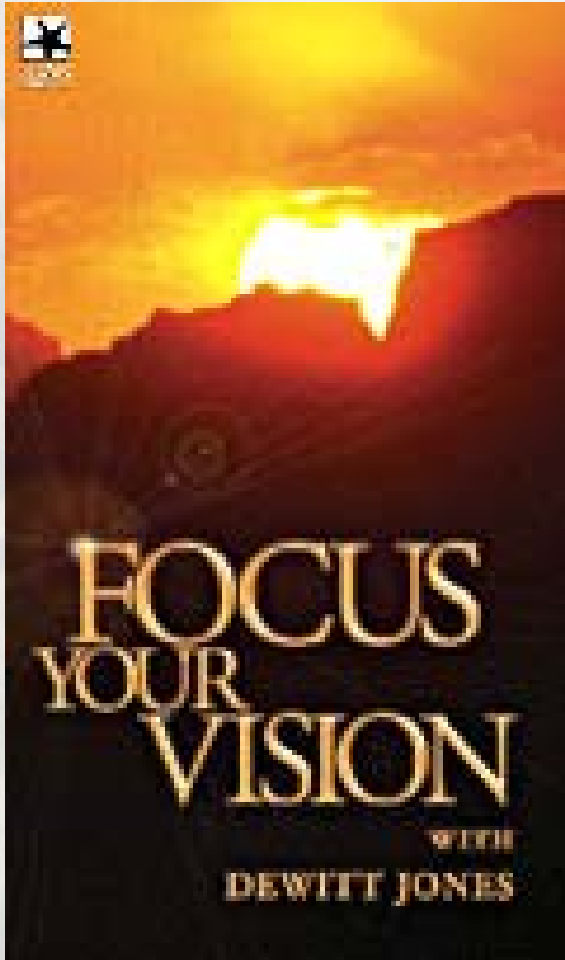
# Demographic Transitions

## CHALLENGES

- Newcomers reluctant to participate in civic life.
- Older generations more traditional.
- When a population leaves or changes it is hard to build on a collective history.
- Maintaining or expanding health care system and services.
- Maintaining adequate support for schools.



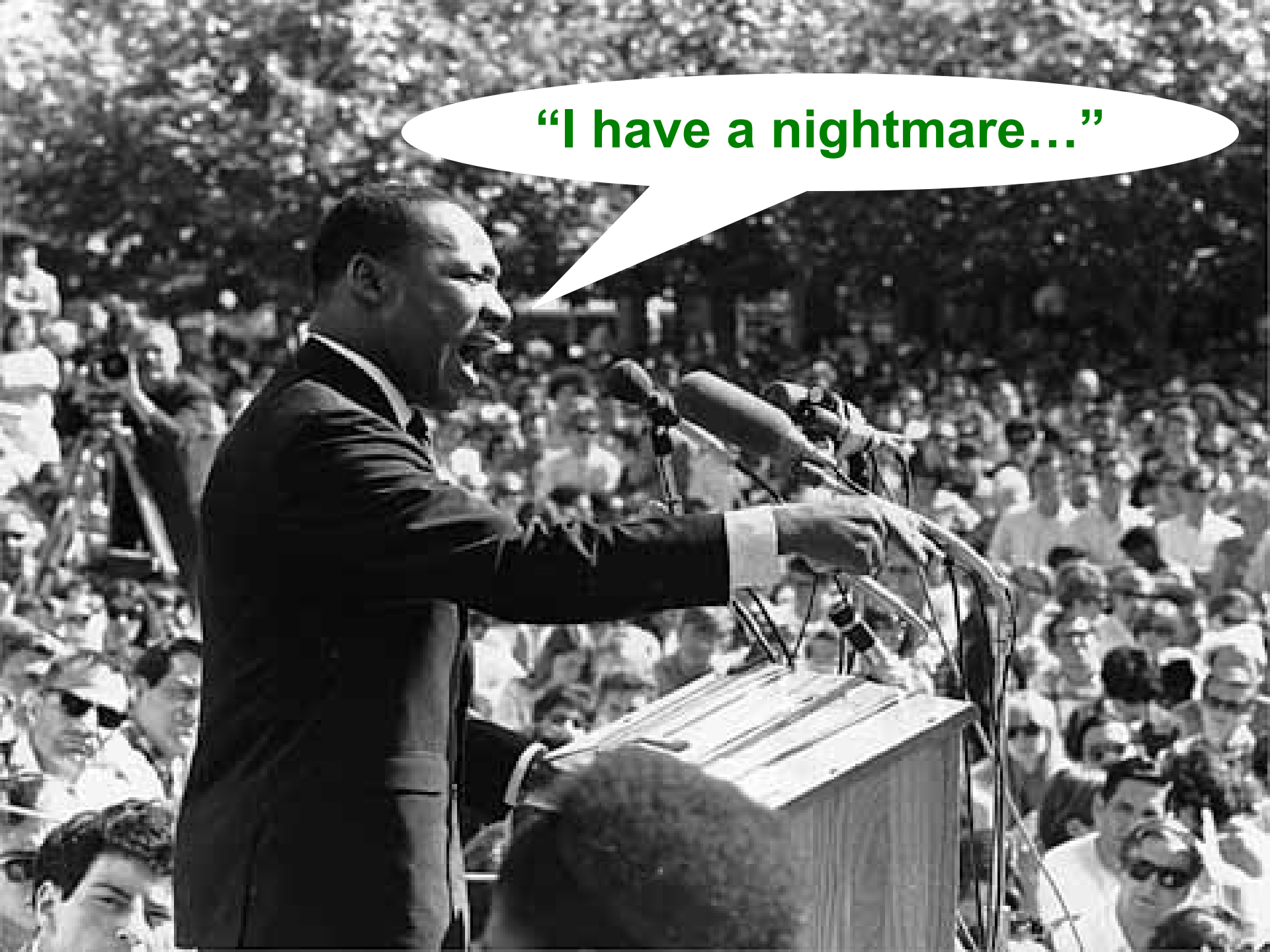
# Finding Our Purpose



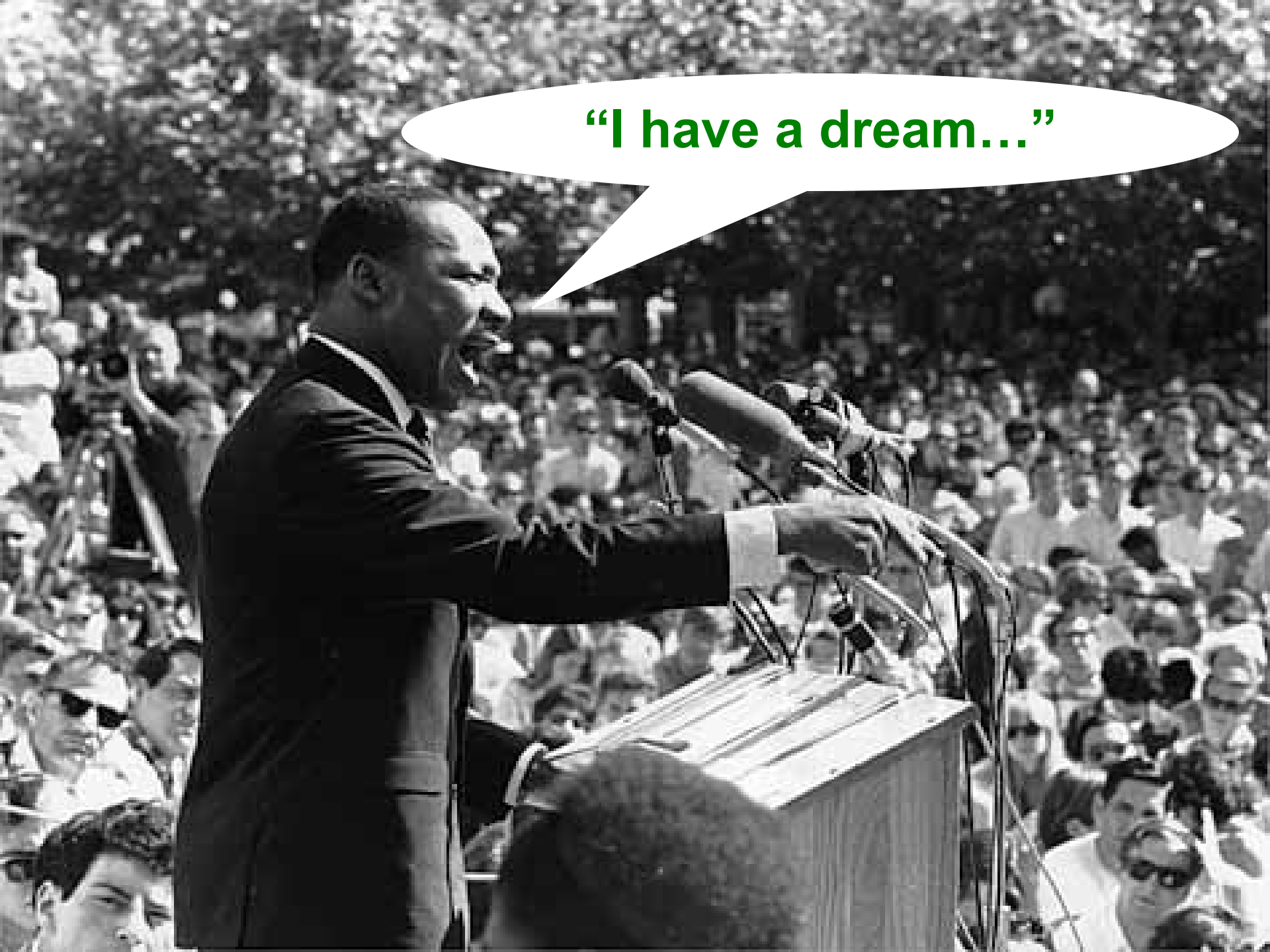
- Combine our energy and passion with our focused visions.
- Encourage ourselves to develop our visions and turn them into reality.
- Connect with our visions, and in doing so, release our passion.
- As a result, we have a better understanding of who we are, what we stand for, and where we are going.



**“I have a nightmare...”**



**“I have a dream...”**



# Demographic Transitions

## VISION

- Demographically diverse.
- Leverage the creative energy of all ages, cultures, ethnicities, and interests.
- Youth are leaders and entrepreneurs.
- Elderly are source of wisdom and a market base for local businesses.
- Integrated, open, and vibrant civic life.
- Communities actively engage all residents.



# Demographic Transitions STRATEGIES

- Focus on leadership training.
- Develop a system of infrastructure investment.
- Provide entrepreneurship training for youth and minorities.
- Use communication technology.
- Active “town hall” meetings.
- Provide a wide variety of internships.



# Changing Rural Economy

## SUMMARY

- Globalization has dramatically changed the structure of the rural economy.
- Resource-based and manufacturing industries are decreasing.
- Absentee-ownership and industrialization of agriculture have undermined local systems of productions.



# Changing Rural Economy

## ASSETS

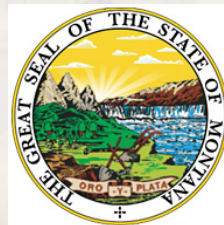
- Strong base of small businesses and entrepreneurial capacity.
- Many economic opportunities.
- Land, natural resources, culture, heritage, values.
- Internet has opened access to new (regional, national, global) markets for rural communities.
- Smaller communities provide opportunity for change.



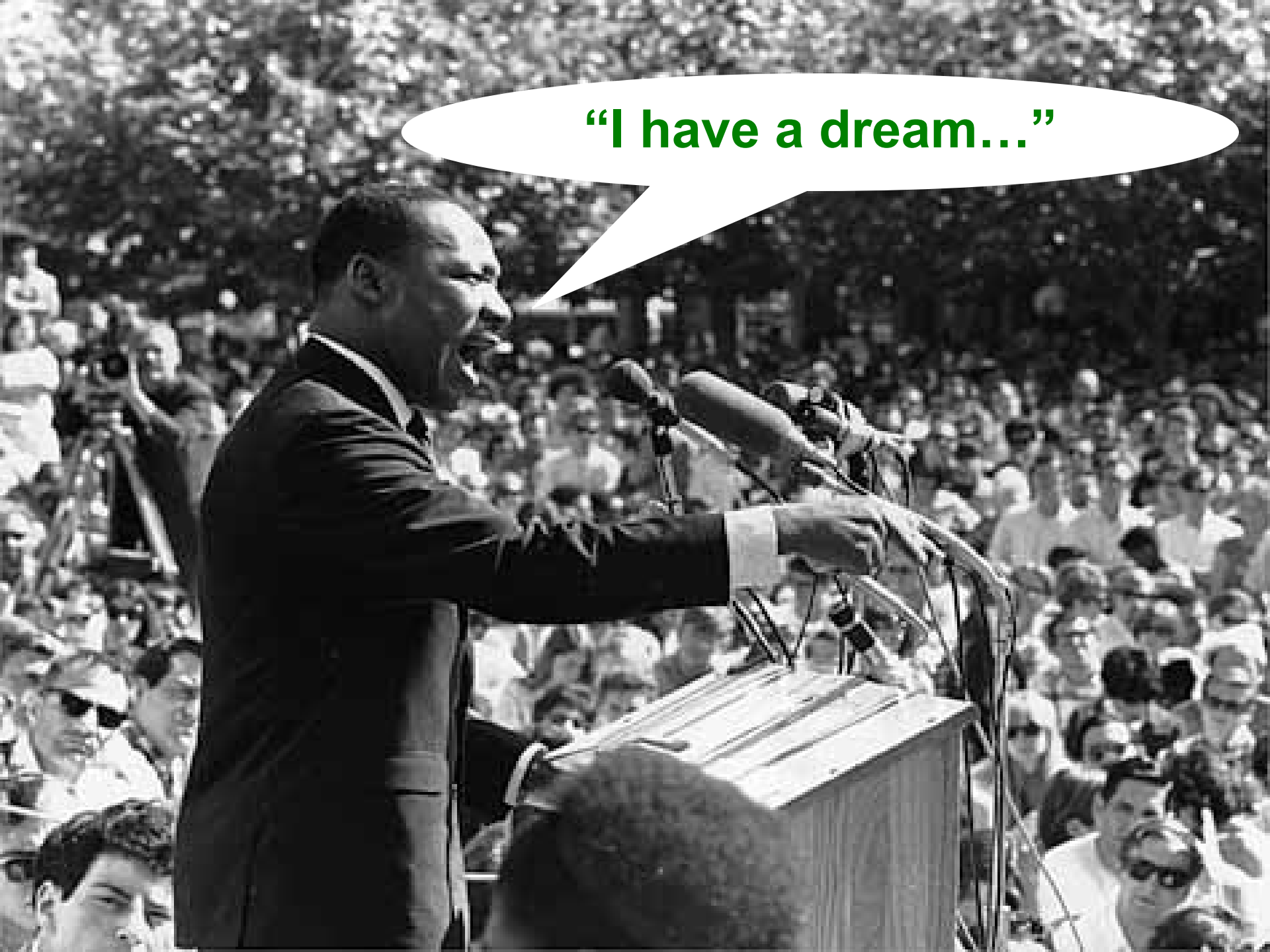
# Changing Rural Economy

## CHALLENGES

- Remoteness and isolation.
- Lack of up-to-date educational programs.
- Lack of equitable, non-predatory and affordable capital is limiting local ownership.
- Limited access to affordable health care.
- Lack of opportunity for youth and educated people.



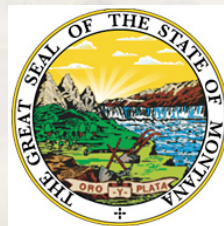
**“I have a dream...”**



# Rural Economy

## VISION

- Affordable credit and capital is available.
- Local youth are encouraged to stay and invest in rural life.
- Rural communities provide livable wages and leverage local and natural resources to create value-added economic opportunities.
- Rural communities embrace diversity, retain current residents, and attract newcomers.



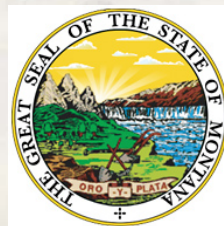
# Rural Economy STRATEGIES

- Comprehensive economic development strategies.
- Integrated program delivery strategy that encourages agency collaboration and value-added investment.
- Regional development strategy that enhances competitiveness.
- Comprehensive technology strategy.



# Investment and Resource Distribution SUMMARY

- Housing, transportation, telecommunications, and other infrastructure are severely deteriorated.
- Insufficient services, including financial, education and health, sustain persistent poverty.



# Investment and Resource Distribution

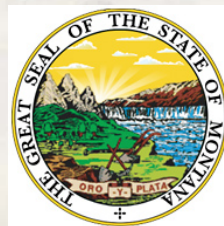
## ASSETS

- Increased IT capacity connects everyone.
- A belief that resources are abundant and life is good.
- Locally controlled established and emerging financial institutions and utilities.
- Entrepreneurial spirit.
- Strong sense of connection to place, desire to be there, and connections to each other.

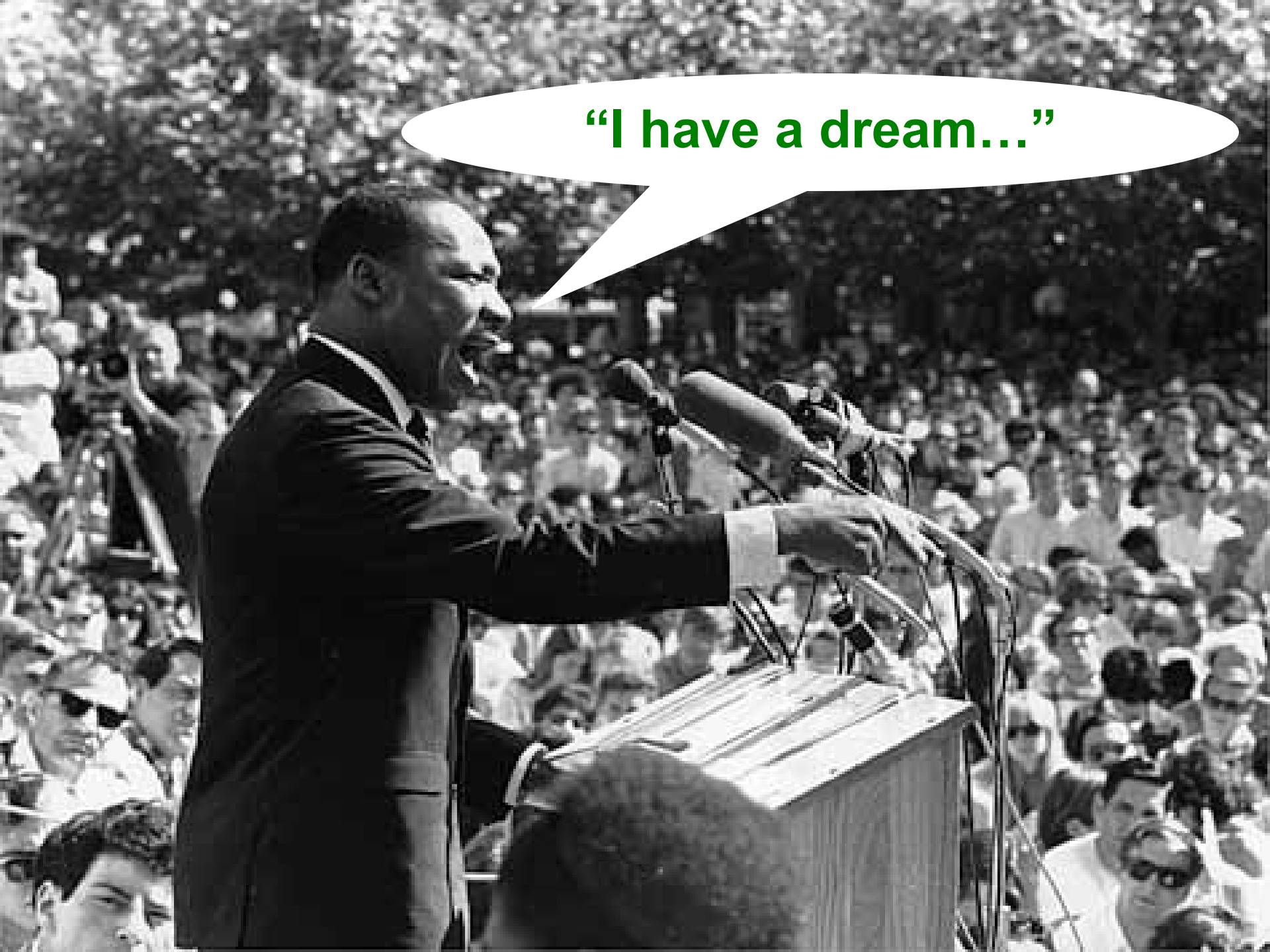


# Investment and Resource Distribution CHALLENGES

- Infrastructure gaps.
- Inadequately funded educational systems.
- Unsatisfactory share of philanthropic resources.
- Community development institutions are not adequately recognized or rewarded.

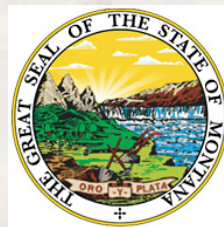


**“I have a dream...”**



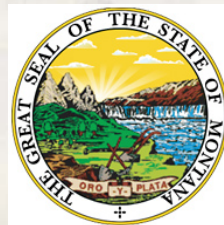
# Investment and Resource Distribution VISION

- Sustainable, harmonious, equitable communities with own identities.
- Local institutions have flexible and sufficient resources and power to support education, health, economy, housing, and transportation.



# Investment and Resource Distribution STRATEGIES

- Encourage delivery systems that lead to affordable access to health care in all rural communities.
- Provide continuous high investment in rural education, early childhood through college.
- Invest in rural infrastructure for economic competitiveness.
- Provide incentives for regional decision making and collaboration that requires accountability and results.



# Community Institutions and Civic Leadership

## SUMMARY

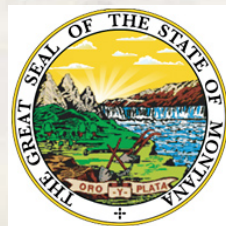
- Strong tradition of self-reliance and local capacity.
- Leadership struggling to be dynamic and innovative in face of new problems.
- Growing dependency on outside resources.
- People have lost trust in the ability of the government to get things done.



# Community Institutions and Civic Leadership

## ASSETS

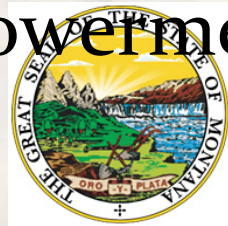
- Small size and strong sense of community.
- Core institutions form the center of rural life.
- Technology minimizes remoteness.
- Local youth are a source of leadership vitality so long as they are empowered community participants and implementers.



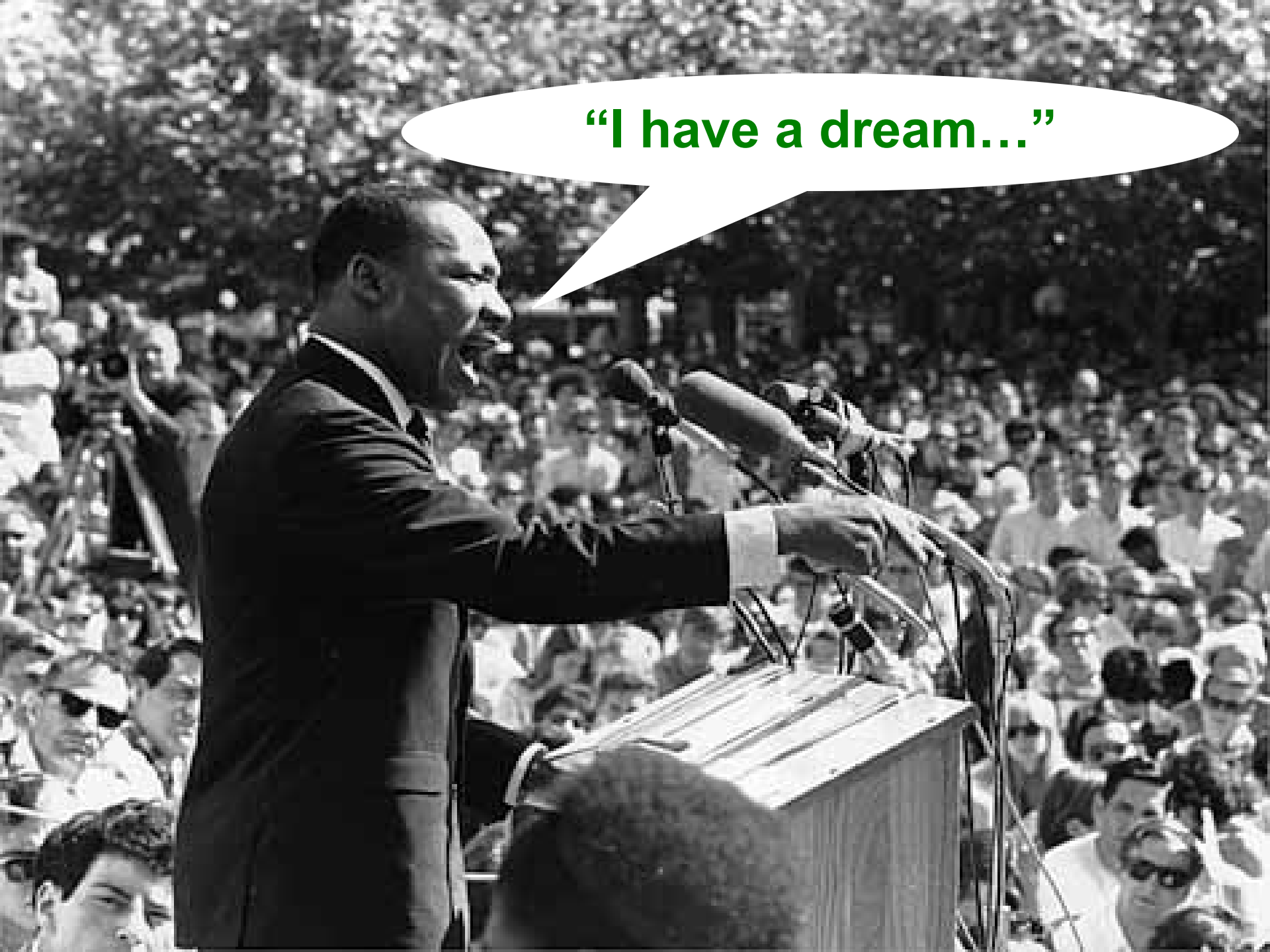
# Community Institutions and Civic Leadership

## CHALLENGES

- Race continues to divide institutions and leaders.
- Local institutions overly dependent on dwindling resources available for rural regions.
- Weak financial education; many people are un-banked.
- Feeling of disempowerment.



**“I have a dream...”**



# Community Institutions and Civic Leadership

## VISION

- Diverse community residents are civically engaged and have the leadership skills to collaborate in planning and making decisions about a wide range of issues.
- Political influence and public and private resources are being leveraged to ensure economic vitality.



# Community Institutions and Civic Leadership STRATEGIES

- Promote greater investment in rural infrastructure.
- Direct funding to education and training geared at youth, entrepreneurs, and local leadership development.
- Develop a local communication process so that diverse voices at the local level are heard.



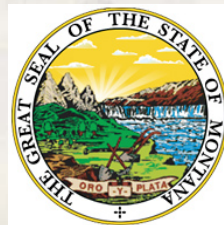
# Rural Environment SUMMARY

- Extraction industries have negative environmental impact.
- Suburban sprawl.
- New substantial industries are being developed.
- Global climate change and the frequency of severe weather is a growing concern.



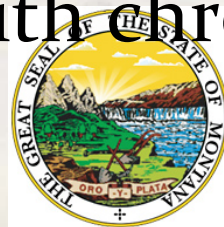
# Rural Environment ASSETS

- Rural people care about the environment and have an attachment to the land.
- Quality of Life.
- Bio-diversity and the knowledge to manage it.
- Abundance of natural resources.

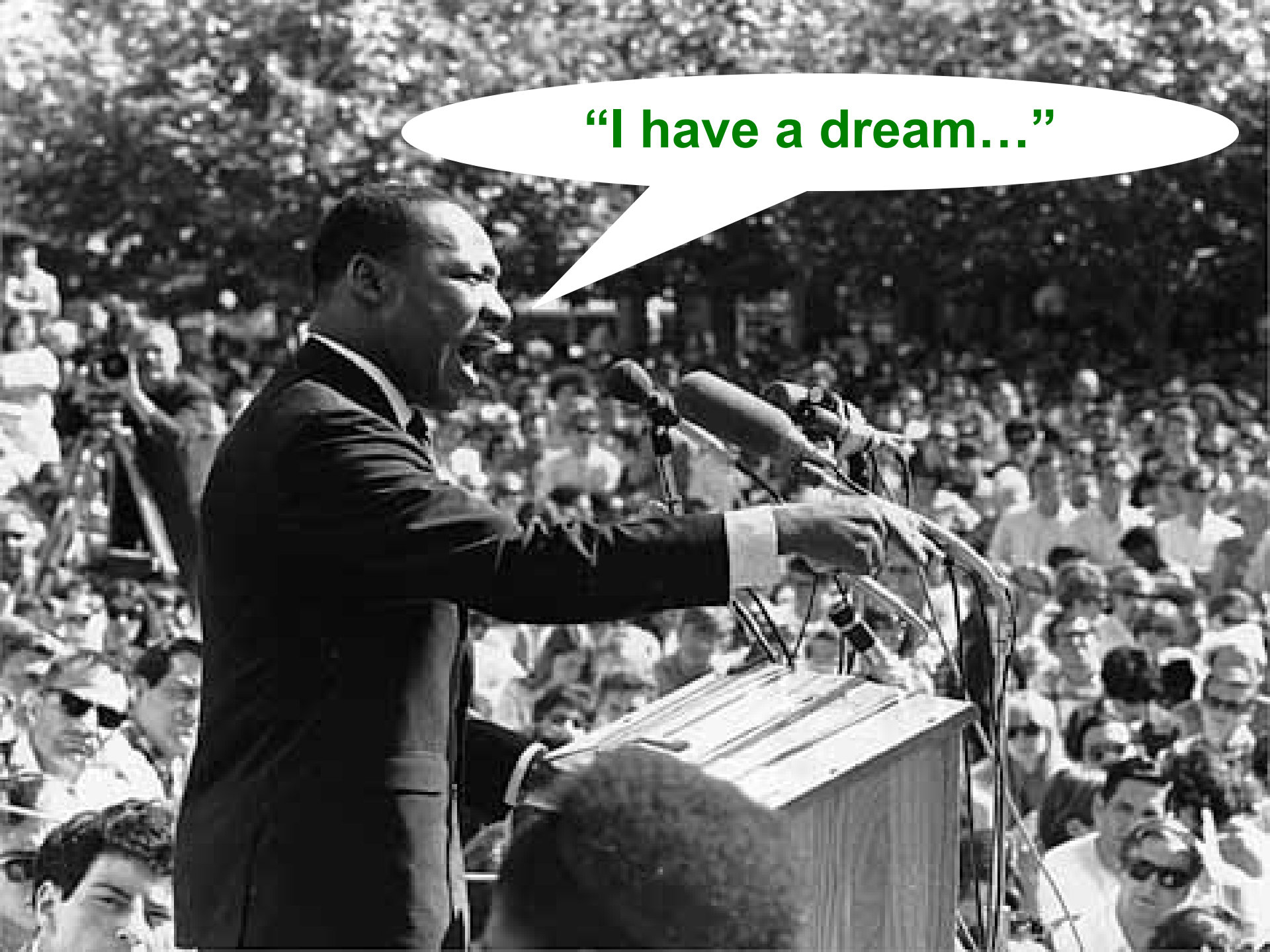


# Rural Environment CHALLENGES

- Not creating value-added products out of our natural resources.
- Sprawl and land fragmentation.
- Lack of resources for infrastructure development.
- Balancing economic growth with cultural values and historical heritage.
- Difficult to attract entrepreneurs and leaders to communities with chronic poverty.



**“I have a dream...”**



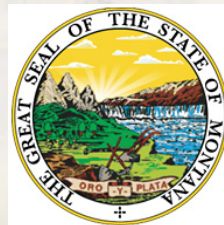
# Rural Environment VISION

- Rural areas are comprised of healthy and resilient landscapes .
- Communities will have renewable energy and sustainable food production that are locally owned.



# Rural Environment STRATEGIES

- Shift resources away from traditional farm and commodity programs.
- Provide mandatory funding for sustainable agriculture and energy and rural development.
- Re-tool economic development policies.
- Create a national “Rural Energy Institute”





REPENT! REUSE!  
RECYCLE!  
LEST YE BURN!

PRAISE  
THE GLOBE!

Cox &  
Forkum  
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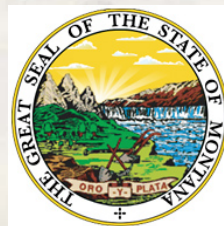
Looking over the horizon



# Next Steps...

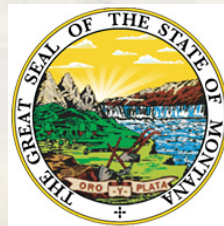
## CREATE A COALITION

- Develop a unified message.
- Be a recognized, leading, strong voice and advocate for rural-America.
- Develop and advocate a state rural agenda.
- Link rural and urban issues.



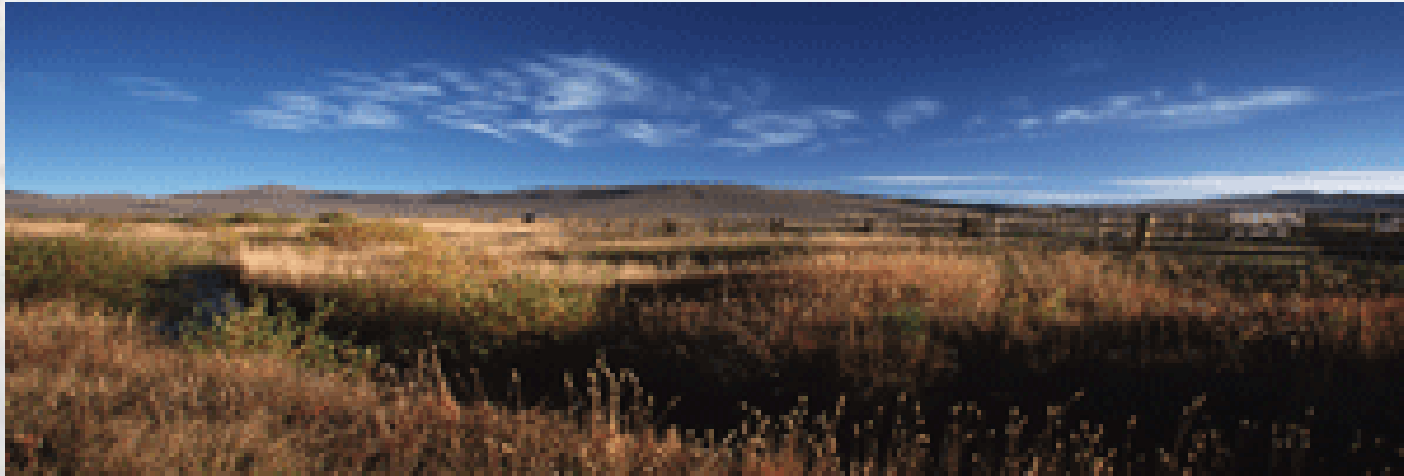
## Critical Activities for a Coalition

- Organize across diverse constituencies including youth to advance the goals.
- Re-frame the message around rural America to facilitate a public communications strategy.
- Develop an initial policy agenda .
- Develop champions for rural America in your states.



FIGHT FOR  
RURAL  
AMERICA!





## What is your personal commitment?

- \* Building a coalition?
- \* Staying Informed?
- \* Spreading the Word?
- \* Staying connected?
- \* Building Diversity?
- \* Advancing the Agenda?

