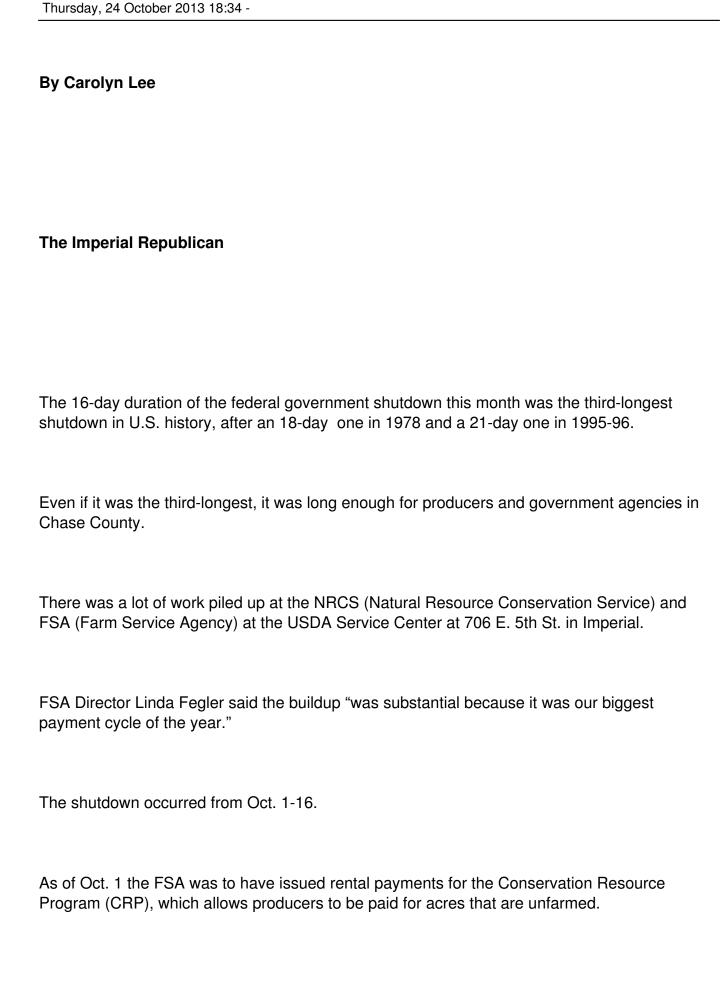
## Federal offices in Chase County open, trying to catch up on work

Written by Wauneta Breeze



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"We couldn't give producers an idea of the date" that they would be paid, Fegler said, which "puts a burden on producers."

In addition, also due Oct. 1 was a direct annual payment for the DCP, or Direct Encounter Cyclical Payments, or set-aside program.

At the NRCS, Director Andy Keep said a lot of field work involving the planning of terraces and grass waterways was set back due to the shutdown. He said personnel are "trying to catch up the field work" now that they are back at work.

Keep said the first part of October is usually a good time to do that field work because "farmers want to get those practices going."

While the offices were closed employees had no option but to do other things, such as housework, or in Keep's case, "I tried not to spend a lot of money."

They were not able to work in the office even without pay. Fegler said "We were instructed to stay away from the office. As our records are all on the computer and the computers were shut down," no work was able to continue.

About 800,000 federal employees were indefinitely furloughed, and another 1.3 million were required to report to work without known payment dates.

Keep and Fegler said they understand they will receive back pay for the 16 days.

In Chase County, eight NRCS and four FSA employees were affected.

The shutdown was called after Congress failed to enact legislation appropriating funds for fiscal

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year 2014, or a continuing resolution for the interim authorization of appropriations for fiscal year 2014.

Regular government operations resumed Oct. 17 after an interim appropriations bill was signed into law.