



United States Department
of Agriculture

5975 Lakeside Boulevard
Indianapolis, Indiana 46278

Phone: 317.290.3100
TDD: 317.290.3343
Fax: 317.290.3095
www.rurdev.usda.gov/in/index.html

News Release

Contact: Kelly M. Barmann

USDA WELCOMES 2002 NATIONAL RURAL DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP TO INDIANA

Indianapolis (#02-25; 6-7-2002): USDA is set to welcome rural economic development professionals from across the nation to discuss how to strengthen rural America at a meeting to be held in French Lick, August 25-28, 2002. Anyone interested in sharing their ideas on how to strengthen rural America and in learning about successful activities from around the country is encouraged to attend the conference.

Conference goers will have the opportunity to travel to several rural communities near French Lick to see first-hand how Hoosiers have addressed issues related to economic development, downtown revitalization, infrastructure, housing development, partnerships, planning, leadership, community pride, and community wellness.

On Monday, August 26th, First Lady Judy O'Bannon and U.S. Department of Agriculture Deputy Secretary Jim Moseley, a Tippecanoe County native, have been invited to address the conference. Also speaking at the conference will be Tom Hylton, author of "Save Our Land, Save Our Towns", and Purdue University President Dr. Martin Jischke.

"This is a wonderful opportunity for Indiana community leaders to meet, network with and learn from rural development professionals from around the country," said Indiana Rural Development Council Executive Director Wendy Dant Chesser. "Indiana is honored to host this national conference."

The complete conference agenda, registration materials and additional information about the NRDP conference will soon be available on the Web at <http://www.in.gov/irdc>. For further information contact: Wendy Dant Chesser, Executive Director, Indiana Rural Development Council, (317) 232-8776.

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