



**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

Rm. 152 Federal Building 100 Centennial Mall North Lincoln, Neb. 68508
(402) 437-5551 (Phone) (402) 437-5093 (TDY) (402) 437-5408 (Fax)

Andre Boening (402) 543-2129
Vicki Ritterling (402) 437-5563

USDA BRINGS BROADBAND SERVICES TO SHERMAN COUNTY

Lincoln, Neb. May 16, 2003 - Agriculture Secretary Ann M. Veneman today announced the selection of \$20 million in broadband community grants that are the first to be awarded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. KDSC, Inc. of Grand Island, Neb. received \$143,948 of the grant funds to establish a wireless Internet infrastructure in Loup City to include connections for critical facilities.

"Residents of Loup City and Sherman County will benefit significantly from this community connect broadband project," stated Jim Barr, Nebraska state director for USDA Rural Development. "The grant dollars awarded today will enable this rural Nebraska area, where most broadband options are not feasible, an opportunity to participate and take advantage of the high-speed telecommunications tools needed to be a part of the global digital community."

The broadband funds will also provide for minor remodeling of an existing community center and the center's staffing and support. Loup City's critical facilities can potentially take advantage of the high-speed access, opening the door to many resources not currently available to them. Each facility will have their individually unique applications for continuous improvement.

KDSC, Inc. is a regional Internet Service Provider (ISP) that provides analog and digital 56k dial-up services to many Nebraska communities.

Communities receiving broadband grant funding do not have access to broadband connectivity for essential services of police, fire protection, hospitals, libraries and schools. In return for receiving a grant, the communities will provide community residents with computer and Internet access. The grant program supplements USDA Rural Development's standard high-speed telecommunications loan program.

Contact Andre Boening at 402-543-2129 for further information. Visit USDA's web site at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/> for additional information on the Broadband Grant program and other rural programs.

#

USDA Rural Development is an Equal Opportunity Lender, Provider and Employer. Complaints of discrimination should be sent to USDA, Director, OCR, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410.