



NEWS RELEASE

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\$109.7 Million Delivered to Rural Nebraska *USDA Rural Development Releases FY 2007 Annual Report*

Lincoln, Neb., January 29, 2008 – The United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development has released its' 2007 Annual Report for Nebraska. The report reveals \$109.7 million infused into the state's rural economy to assist in areas of housing, utilities, community facilities, business, telecommunications, value-added and energy.

“USDA Rural Development is a leading advocate for rural Nebraska as our annual report witnesses. We offer an array of programs that bring a greater quality of life to rural areas. These benefits are multiplied when our resources are leveraged with those of our many partners,” stated Nebraska State Director Scot Blehm, USDA Rural Development.

The report reveals that 536 households became rural homeowners; with 126 existing rural homeowners receiving needed home repairs. A 10 unit group home will be built in Beatrice while 5 existing rural rental housing complexes are slated to receive updates. Nearly 3,900 tenants of Rural Development rural rental housing complexes were assisted with affordable rents. Twenty-one community facility projects received dollars for healthcare and assisted living facilities, emergency equipment, sirens or community buildings. A dependable supply of quality water will be delivered to rural Nebraskans via 13 water projects. Sanitary waste disposal improvements are scheduled for 5 rural communities. Distance learning and telemedicine equipment and training opportunities to 2 medical networks and 2 educational service units will bring enhanced capabilities to these facilities. Via various Rural Development business programs, approximately 360 jobs were created &/or saved. Renewable energy will increase as 2 projects were selected for funding and energy efficiency improvements are to be gained through 101 projects.

“It is Rural Development's desire to become a household name as the “lender of first opportunity” and an asset in the financial toolbox of each rural community,” stated Blehm. “We encourage rural residents and communities to contact us about the needs of their rural area.”

Visit <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/ne/07Annrpt.pdf> for a copy of the report or call (402) 437-5563. Visit <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/ne/> for additional program information or to locate an USDA Rural Development Office nearest you.

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