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Florida—Rural Utilities Service

Strategic Partners

Freeport Water System Improves Fire Protection, Makes Way For New Users

Outline Of Need:

The City of Freeport is a small rural community located in the Florida panhandle that has been designated by the State of Florida as a “Rural Area of Economic Concern.” While Freeport provides water service to the adjacent North Bay area, there was no interconnection between Freeport’s primary water system and North Bay. Without an interconnection, residents living between the two communities had no access to a municipal water system or the fire flow protection it could provide.

How Rural Development Helped:

USDA Rural Development provided a \$1,455,000 loan to improve and expand Freeport’s water supply system. The city contributed \$223,000 toward the project as well, and



The City of Freeport’s water system improvement project will bring water to previously unserved areas and improve fire protection as well.

also received \$800,000 in grant funds from the Northwest Florida Water Management District (NFWFMD).

The Results:

Improvements include installing approximately 40,000 linear feet of new 12-inch water mains to connect the existing North Bay Water System on the west side of Walton County along Highway 20 to the City of Freeport Water System. The unincorporated communities of Trout Branch and Basin Bayou, which are located between the systems, will also be provided service. Secondary distribution lines of approximately 32,991 linear feet will connect the 159 new users. An additional benefit for these new users is increased fire protection.

The expansion will also help meet the goals of the NFWFMD’s Regional Water Supply Plan which encourages the interconnection of neighboring water systems in order to ensure emergency water supply. It will also allow for much needed commercial and residential growth that will benefit the City of Freeport as well as Walton County.

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Fast Facts

Program: Water & Environmental Program (WEP)

Investment: \$1,455,000 RUS Loan
\$ 800,000 NFWFMD Grant
\$ 223,000 City of Freeport

Congressional District: FL-01

Demographics:

- City of Freeport; South Walton County
- Population: 894

Impact:

- Connect two systems to provide an emergency backup water supply. Provide water and fire protection to 159 new users in two unincorporated communities.

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