



# NEWS RELEASE

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## USDA Rural Development Invests Nearly \$204 Million in West Virginia

**Morgantown, WV – October 30, 2008:** "It proved to be more than a phenomenal fiscal year for **Rural Development in West Virginia** as we continue working toward our mission *To Increase Economic Opportunity and Improve the Quality of Life for all Rural Americans*," exclaimed **State Director Rick Rice**.

**\$203,800,506** was invested during Fiscal Year 2008 in West Virginia through its housing, utilities and infrastructure, community facilities, and business/cooperative programs. "Rural Development's commitment to the future of rural communities is clearly seen through this investment of funds into West Virginia, helping us get closer to our vision of a healthy, safe and prosperous place to live and work," added Rice.

The grants and loans awarded through Rural Development in Fiscal Year 2008 included:

- Over \$111.2 Million through its Housing programs;
- Over \$62 Million via the Utilities and Infrastructure Programs, Water and Wastewater programs assisting approximately 21,700 users;
- Community Facilities loans and grants totaled over \$9 Million; and
- Over \$21.3 Million was invested through the Business and Cooperative Programs, creating 552 jobs, saving 457 jobs, and assisting 90 businesses.

In addition, the following should be noted about West Virginia USDA Rural Development, its 2008 accomplishments, and its staff:

- West Virginia received more budget authority from the 2008 Farm Bill than any other State in the nation;
- West Virginia ranked 1<sup>st</sup> in the nation relative to initial grant allocation versus the actual number of obligated grant dollars in the Utilities Programs;
- Exceeded their Single Family Housing Program's REO (Inventory) Goal – WV had 0 properties in inventory at the end of Fiscal Year 2008;
- One of only 16 States in the nation granted Guaranteed Business & Industry loan approval authority to \$10 Million; and
- West Virginia has a 0% delinquency rate for Community Facilities direct and guaranteed loans.

Rural Development serves as the lead Federal entity for rural development needs and administers program assistance through its rural housing programs, rural business programs, and rural utilities programs. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.)

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Committed to the future of rural communities.

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Further information on USDA Rural Development may be obtained by visiting USDA's web site at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov>. In West Virginia, call 1-800-295-8228 to be put in touch with the appropriate personnel serving your county. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at 202.720.2600 (voice and TDD).

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