



NEWS RELEASE

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USDA ADMINISTRATOR ANNOUNCES FUNDING FOR WASTE MANAGEMENT EFFORTS IN INTERIOR ALASKA

Rural Development Funds to provide training through two Fairbanks-based organizations

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Fairbanks, Alaska, August 23, 2008 – Funding totaling \$485,000 will be awarded to two Fairbanks-based organizations to provide training to managers of waste control programs in rural Alaska, James Andrew, Administrator of USDA Rural Development’s rural utilities programs announced today.

The Yukon River Intertribal Watershed Council will receive an \$185,000 solid waste management grant to train solid waste program managers in Yukon River communities. The council oversees a program that uses yearly supply barges to “backhaul” recyclable materials to hub communities where they can be reused. The Tanana Chiefs Conference will receive solid waste management grant and technical assistance and training grant funds totaling \$300,000. Those funds will be used to provide training in order to improve the operation of solid waste management facilities and facilities that provide drinking water to low income rural Native villages in Interior Alaska.

“These funds are part of Rural Development’s continuing commitment to provide training to system managers and to also to work with our partners to ensure that waste materials including recyclables continue to be removed from communities along the Yukon River watershed,” said Andrew. Joining the administrator in making the announcement was Acting USDA Rural Development State Director Chad Padgett, who said that the grants continue training programs that have a proven success record. The backhaul program alone, Padgett said, has removed tons of recyclable and hazardous materials from the Yukon River watershed and has gained national attention.

In the past two fiscal years alone, Rural Development has provided \$550,000 to the Tanana Chiefs Conference and \$255,000 to the Yukon River Inter-Tribal Watershed Council for training. Funding has also been provided by State and Federal partners, including the Denali Commission. The grants were announced during the annual Chena Renewable Energy Fair.

USDA Rural Development has its Alaska state office in Palmer with area offices in Sitka, Kenai, Fairbanks, Dillingham, Bethel and Nome. Further information on rural programs is available at any of these USDA Rural Development offices or by visiting the web site at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/ak/>

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