



NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture – Rural Development

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Ben Higgins, State Director

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BUTTE COMMUNITY BANK RANKED TOP LENDER FOR 2006

DAVIS, Calif., January 31, 2007 – USDA Rural Development announced Butte Community Bank as the nation’s top lender in 2006 for USDA Rural Development’s Business and Industry Loan Guarantee program. The bank committed over \$46.1 million in guaranteed loans, a total investment far greater than any other lending institution throughout the United States.

“We’ve formed an extraordinary partnership with Butte Community Bank, one that is truly creating jobs, building new economic opportunities, and improving the quality of life in rural California.” said Ben Higgins, USDA Rural Development State Director.

Through the Business and Industry loan guarantee program, USDA Rural Development supports small businesses and rural entrepreneurs by working with private-sector lenders to guarantee loans for working capital, machinery, equipment, debt refinancing, buildings and real estate. In 2006, USDA Rural Development California obligated a total of 45 Business and Industry loan guarantees for a total of \$104 million.

USDA Rural Development's mission is to deliver programs in a way that will support increasing economic opportunity and improve the quality of life of rural residents. As a venture capital entity, Rural Development has invested over \$76 billion since the beginning of the Bush Administration to provide equity and technical assistance to finance and foster growth in homeownership, business development, and critical community and technology infrastructure. As a result, over 1.5 million jobs have been created or saved through these investments. Further information on rural programs is available at one of California’s 25 local USDA Rural Development offices or by visiting <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/ca>.

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**“Committed to the future of rural communities”
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