



NEWS RELEASE

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Greensburg Welcomes Back Families Through Special USDA Housing Program *Ten New Homes Being Built, More Planned*

Greensburg, KS. – USDA Rural Development State Director Chuck Banks was joined Saturday by families and community leaders from Greensburg and across Kiowa County for the groundbreaking of ten (10) new homes to be constructed under the Agency-supported *Greensburg Community Self-Help Housing Program*. In cooperation with USDA Rural Development and other regional partners, the City is assisting returning residents in the homeowner participating construction of affordable single-family 'green' homes in Greensburg.

"Today is an exciting day for Greensburg and its residents. I compliment the vision of Greensburg city leaders to embrace this innovative opportunity to support new affordable green housing in the community. More new affordable homes are a key component for Greensburg's long-term recovery, to support a greener, more sustainable future for Greensburg and Kiowa County," commented State Director Banks at Saturday's event.

Congressman Jerry Moran, in a statement recognizing the ceremony, stated, "I appreciate USDA Rural Development and its many partners working together to bring needed housing to Greensburg. This initiative will help Kansans rebuild their lives, their community and create a place to call home."

Funding for the *Greensburg Community Self-Help Housing Program* is a result from the Kansas Congressional Delegation's efforts to secure supplementary funding to assist Greensburg undertake the long-term recovery process. USDA funds for this effort are also being leveraged with a major financial contribution from the United Way of the Plains. This collective funding will allow the City of Greensburg to work with Mennonite Housing Rehabilitation Services to oversee the construction of affordable single-family homes. At least fifteen (15) additional homes are planned to be constructed under this Program.

"Today is a celebration of the strength of people joining forces to do good. From three little girls who opened a lemonade stand in Wisconsin to raise money to an elderly gentleman who sent a check for the town where he grew up; this groundbreaking is putting the contributions of this nation into action to provide a future of hope," said Patrick J. Hanrahan, president of United Way of the Plains.

The *Greensburg Community Self-Help Housing Program* modeled after USDA's successful *Mutual Self-Help Housing Program*, includes other non-profits and faith-based organizations, national energy experts, government agencies, and trade associations to help reduce the cost of the houses being built to replace those homes lost from the devastating May 4th tornado that struck Greensburg and the region. Contributors to the *Greensburg Community Self-Help Housing Program* include the Kansas Housing Resources Corporation, South Central Community Foundation, National Association of Home Builders, South Central Kansas Tornado Recovery Organization, FHLBank Topeka, Greensburg State Bank / Hudson Oil Foundation, the Salvation Army, Community Housing Services, the Kiowa County Commission and Greensburg GreenTown/DoE/NREL/IBACOS.

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Press Release

Page 2

During the ceremony, State Director Banks remarked, “USDA Rural Development has a long history of providing assistance to improve homeownership opportunities in rural Kansas. There is an important link between homeownership and personal prosperity. Further, the important link between affordable housing and jobs is clearly recognized here in Greensburg”.

“USDA Rural Development will continue to assist Greensburg residents and those in the surrounding area who were impacted by the tornadoes and storms which struck on May 4th and 5th. The Agency administers the Renewable Energy & Energy Efficiency Program that could assist eligible applicants, as well as excellent grant and low interest loan programs to help individuals and families finance rebuilding or repairs of homes, along with workforce and senior rental housing in Kiowa County and other FEMA-designated counties in Kansas,” remarked State Director Banks.

USDA Rural Development’s mission is to deliver programs that support increasing economic opportunities and enhancing the quality of life for rural Americans. As a venture capital entity, USDA Rural Development provides equity and technical assistance to finance and foster growth in homeownership, business development, and critical community and technology infrastructure in rural America. Since 2001, USDA Rural Development has delivered over \$1 billion for Kansas covering all Agency programs, supporting well over \$5 billion in future economic development for the Sunflower State.

Additional information regarding USDA Rural Development’s programs can be obtained by visiting the Agency Greensburg Office currently located southwest of the Kiowa County Courthouse, calling the Agency’s Hays office at 785-628-3081, or logging onto the USDA Rural Development website at: www.rurdev.usda.gov/ks .

USDA Rural Development – *Committed to the Future of Rural Communities.*

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