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NEWS RELEASE

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USDA CELEBRATES EARTH DAY AT RAYVILLE HIGH SCHOOL Over \$14 Million in Funding Announced

RAYVILLE, LA, April 23, 2007 – Congressman Rodney Alexander joined Clyde C. Holloway, State Director for USDA Rural Development in Louisiana, and James P. Maras, Deputy Assistant Administrator for Water and Environmental Programs for USDA Rural Development in Washington, DC, in Rayville today to announce over \$14 million in funding for environmental projects in Louisiana during an Earth Day program at Rayville High School.

Earth Day is recognized each year to promote awareness of environmental issues. During today's program, Rayville Junior High and Rayville High School students learned the importance of clean water, resource conservation, and a clean community during presentations by USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, USDA Farm Service Agency, and Keep Louisiana Beautiful.

"USDA Rural Development recognizes Earth Day by announcing funding for projects that will help our rural communities be good stewards of the environment," said Holloway. "This year, we are announcing funding to improve water and wastewater systems, enhance resource conservation, and utilize renewable energy sources."

Today, funds were announced for:

Recipient	Loan	Grant	Project
Town of Rayville	\$378,000		Phase II of an upgrade to the Town of Rayville sewer system
Town of Rayville	\$1,190,000	\$925,800	Phase II of an upgrade to the Town of Rayville water system
Town of Mangham	\$517,000	\$983,000	Town of Mangham water system repairs and improvements
Town of New Llano	\$2,240,000		Improvements to and expansion of the Town of New Llano's wastewater collection system
Bogue Lusa Water Works District	\$3,540,000		Improvements to and expansion of the district's water system
Bayou Wood Products, Inc.	\$4,905,000 Guaranteed Loan through Union Bank of Bunkie		Construct and purchase equipment for a new wood pellet plant

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AT RAYVILLE HIGH SCHOOL**

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USDA Rural Development provides a full range of rural development credit services in rural Louisiana. Further information on USDA Rural Development's loan and grant programs can be obtained by visiting Rural Development's web site at: <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/la/>.

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