

News Release

Alisa Harrison (202) 720-4623

Tim McNeilly (202) 690-0498

USDA ANNOUNCES \$6 MILLION IN GRANTS FOR RURAL ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

WASHINGTON, July 30, 2003 – Agriculture Secretary Ann M. Veneman today announced the availability of \$6 million in USDA Rural Development grant funds designed to support rural economic and community development efforts.

“Through the development of local financial and technical assistance programs supported by these grant funds, rural communities can increase their capacity to bring community and economic development opportunities to local residents,” said USDA Under Secretary for Rural Development Thomas C. Dorr.

USDA's [Rural Community Development Initiative](#) (RCDI) provides funds to help nonprofit, community-based development organizations, federally recognized Indian tribes and low-income communities improve their ability to develop rural housing and community facilities and to improve economic growth. Recipients were required to obtain matching funds, doubling the value of the USDA grants. Funding of selected applicants will be contingent upon meeting the conditions of the grant agreement.

Grant recipients will provide training and technical assistance to eligible nonprofit community-development organizations and low-income communities located in rural areas with populations of 50,000 or less. Technical assistance includes: setting up homeownership education programs; supporting micro-enterprises, cooperatives and sustainable development; and providing training to develop strategic plans, hire staff and oversee board operations and management.

Detailed information about program requirements and information on how to apply will be available in the July 30, 2003 Federal Register. Additional information on the grant program and other USDA Rural Development programs can be obtained by visiting: <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/>.

The Bush Administration provided \$5.8 million in [RCDI funds in 2002](#) to assist with over 100 rural community efforts in 39 states. 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 provides equity and technical assistance to finance and foster growth in homeownership, business development, and critical community and technology infrastructure. Further information on rural programs is available at a local USDA Rural Development office or by visiting USDA's web site at www.rurdev.usda.gov.



USDA Rural Development is an Equal Opportunity Lender, Provider, and Employer. Complaints of discrimination should be sent to: USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410