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CONTACT: MARIL ALSUP
Public Information Coordinator
(413) 253-4314 or maril.alsup@ma.usda.gov

USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT APPROVES GRANT AND LOAN FOR SHIRLEY WATER DISTRICT

SHIRLEY, MA – The Shirley Water District and the residents they serve received some good news, with the approval of funding from the United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development.

On behalf of President George W. Bush and Secretary of Agriculture Ann Veneman, David Tuttle, State Director of Rural Development announced the approval of a \$755,000 low interest loan and \$482,700 grant.

The funding will be used to complete phases two and three of an eight-phase project. Phases two and three call for the development of the Walker Road well, well pump station and the associated water main. The District received \$2,312,500 in 2001 to fund phase one of the project, which involved replacing an existing water tank and constructing a new one. Estimated total cost for all eight phases of the project is close to \$6 million.

“Our mission at Rural Development is to provide the much needed funding and support to communities like Shirley and entities like the Shirley Water District, that are energetically working to improve the quality of life for the people they serve”, said State Director David Tuttle. “This is a major upgrade of the Districts’ entire water system which will improve both water supply and storage capacity”.

"Any community's sustainability is dependent upon a steady flow of clean drinking water and these federal dollars are an investment in the future of Shirley's water supply," said Congressman Marty Meehan (MA-5).

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State Representative Patricia Walrath (D-Stow) commented that, "this is great news. These funds from the federal government will be well used by the Town of Shirley to upgrade and expand its water supply and service."

The Shirley Water District has historically obtained its drinking water from groundwater sources. In searching for a new well, the Walker Road site was identified as that with the most potential. The site was also identified as one which would continuously yield an adequate volume of water.

The funding is made available to the Shirley Water District through the USDA Rural Development Rural Utilities Service. Through this program, USDA Rural Development provides loans, grants and technical assistance for the renovation or construction of public water and waste systems in rural communities.

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