



# NEWS RELEASE

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## **\$5.06 MILLION SECURED FOR AREA WATER SYSTEM**

**Esmond, May 12, 2008** – USDA Rural Development State Director Clare Carlson today, during a groundbreaking ceremony, presented a symbolic check for \$4,691,900, (loan \$2,426,000/grant \$2,265,900) to North Central Water Consortium.

The North Central Rural Water Consortium is a partnership between Central Plains Water District of Fessenden and North Prairie Rural Water District of Minot.

“This is a project that has been in the works for many years,” said Carlson. “The goal of USDA is to improve the quality of life in rural America not just now but for tomorrow’s generation. It is also a good example of two groups working together to provide something either one alone would have had a hard time accomplishing.”



The project, also known as the Benson/Pierce-REAP Zone Project, has an estimated price tag of \$5.06 million. Service will be to the city of Esmond and to over 235 rural residents in Benson, Eddy, Pierce, Sheridan/McHenry, and Wells counties. The first phase will be bid in June with construction to begin soon thereafter and completed by the end of 2008. The water will be received from the Central Plains Water District of Fessenden.

“Rural water service to Benson County residents is finally becoming a reality,” said Ralph Packulak, President of the Consortium. “There have been feasibility studies for rural water service to this area for over 15 years, and the project is now going to bid with construction to begin soon after. Without Rural Development’s loans and grants, the Benson/Pierce-REAP Zone project wouldn’t have been feasible.”

Other sources of funding include a payment of \$118,100 from North Central Rural Water and a \$250,000 State and Tribal Assistance Grant (STAG).

In Fiscal Year 2007, USDA Rural Development provided over **\$298,541,494 million** in loan and grant financing to North Dakota citizens.

USDA Rural Development’s mission is to increase economic opportunity and improve the quality of life for rural residents. Rural Development has invested more than \$76.8 billion since 2001 for equity and technical assistance to finance and foster growth in homeownership, business development, and critical community and technology infrastructure. More than 1.5 million jobs have been created or saved through these investments. Further information on rural programs is available at a local USDA Rural Development office or by visiting USDA’s web site at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov>.

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