



# NEWS RELEASE

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## USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT CELEBRATES HOMEOWNERSHIP IN GRAFTON

**GRAFTON, June 13, 2007**—Clare Carlson, State Director for USDA Rural Development in North Dakota, and other Rural Development staff members, today are in Grafton to present a symbolic check for a \$10,000 pre development housing grant to the Red River Regional Council.

The visit is part of a series of events being held throughout the nation by USDA Rural Development in celebration of June as National Homeownership Month and President George W. Bush's initiative to increase homeownership opportunities.

"USDA Rural Development is pleased to be able to provide housing rehabilitation funding to this area," said Carlson. "The self help rehabilitation grant will afford an opportunity for rural residents to live in housing that meets basic health and safety standards."

The Council will use the grant to market the self help rehabilitation program and recruit homeowners in Walsh and Pembina Counties. The program is aimed to assist low-income residents in upgrading the condition of their home.

"Owning a home is part of the American dream and National Homeownership Month is an opportunity to encourage our citizens to explore the benefits of owning their own home," continued Carlson.

In Fiscal Year 2006, USDA Rural Development provided over **\$56.6 million** in loan and grant financing to North Dakota citizens.

USDA Rural Development is the lead federal entity for rural economic and community development needs. It administers financial and technical assistance through a network of state Rural Development offices, various non-profit and educational institutional partners, and its national office.

Further information on these and other 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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