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USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

USDA CELEBRATES 200 DAYS OF PROGRESS IMPLEMENTING THE RECOVERY ACT

In just 200 days, USDA has made great progress in implementing the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to support the Obama administration's goal of rebuilding and revitalizing the nation's rural infrastructure to create and save jobs.

Our economic problems weren't created in 200 days and they won't be solved by the next 200 days - but we know that the efforts USDA is making with Recovery Act investments projects throughout the country are helping communities build a foundation for a stronger future.

Altogether, USDA has announced \$27.8 billion of the \$28.0 billion in Recovery Act projects appropriated to the Department. A few of the landmarks the Department has achieved through the past 200 days include:

- USDA has committed nearly \$1.64 billion in funding for 454 waste and water projects in 48 states to help spur economic development and improve the quality of life for more than 4.8 million rural residents.
- USDA has increased SNAP benefits so that the 34 million Americans who rely on assistance to help put food on the table are seeing an extra \$80 per month going to the average family of four.
- USDA has distributed 2,600 loans worth \$173 million to help farmers buy the seed, feed and fuel they needed to plant this spring and stimulate rural economies.
- USDA has distributed 59,000 loans to help rural residents build, repair, renovate, or relocate their homes and thereby helping stimulate local economies and preserving jobs.
- USDA has announced more than 100 projects with funding worth nearly \$200 million to protect watersheds, rehabilitate aging dams, mitigate flooding and improve water quality.
- USDA has begun maintenance work on 400 miles of trails in our national forest. These projects will create jobs while protecting watersheds and local ecosystems.
- USDA has treated approximately 40,000 acres of Forest land to reduce the risk of catastrophic wild land fire.
- USDA has announced \$100 million for states so 5,021 school districts for the National School Lunch Program. USDA has announced \$234 million for Community Facilities projects totaling nearly 800 projects.

"USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender."

To file a complaint of discrimination write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (800)795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD).