

USDA / Rural Development

Bismarck, North Dakota

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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\$73.5 Million Invested in North Dakota

*USDA Rural Development programs have
a significant impact on the economy and quality of life in rural North Dakota*

BISMARCK-January 6, 2004—Rural Development in North Dakota, a mission area of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), reported \$73.5 million in program delivery for Fiscal Year 2003, ending September 30.

Today at the state capitol, Rural Development issued its “rural report card” during a celebration with partners, customers, friends, elected officials, and employees summarizing the impact of its rural development programs during FY 2003 in rural North Dakota.

State Director for North Dakota Rural Development, Clare Carlson, said, “The report card is our way of personalizing the programs that we deliver to North Dakotans. It helps us get a sense of the impact of our programs.”

Carlson reported the agency delivered \$73.5 million in program funding citing major gains in the areas of rural home ownership, community facilities, business development, and the expansion of rural water and utility services as evidence of the Bush Administration’s commitment to improving the quality of life in rural America.

“It’s really a privilege to have delivered this level of service to North Dakotans and a tribute to the hard work and dedication of USDA Rural Development employees,” said Carlson. “Through the help and assistance from the numerous partners and partnerships that we have developed, the work through the Governor’s office and the support from our Congressional delegation, rural North Dakota is a better place to live.”

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FY 2003 highlights include the funding of 47 Rural Utilities Service (RUS) and Rural Business Cooperative Service (RBS) projects totaling more than \$43 million. This amount includes \$20.7 million of RUS funding that provided for water and environmental programs assuring safe drinking water and environmental effective wastewater systems to North Dakota residents. Through the Value-Added Agricultural Product Market Development Grants program, North Dakota received \$1.8 million during the fiscal year.

North Dakota Rural Development provided more than \$19.5 million for 294 new homeowners, and \$693,000 to upgrade 68 multi-family apartment units. One of President Bush's goals is to help families attain the dream of homeownership in rural communities and to strengthen the overall quality of life for rural families.

Also in FY 2003, Rural Development provided \$808,000 of funding for other services such as technical assistance, repairs and preservation of existing homes, economic impact assistance and national disasters.

Through its Community Facilities programs, a record 18 projects totaling \$4.4 million for essential community projects like fire stations and trucks, ambulances, clinics, and libraries were funded in FY 2003. These facilities serve a rural population of more than 10,000.

Other Program highlights include:

- 294 families received housing loans
- 160 families received housing rehabilitation assistance
- 18 essential community facilities projects
- 352 jobs saved or created through business and industry loans and loan guarantees
- 8,571 new residential users served with domestic drinking water project funding
- 1,835 families received rental assistance

USDA Rural Development serves as the lead federal entity for rural development needs and administers financial and technical assistance through three agencies: Rural Housing Service, Rural Business-Cooperative Service and Rural Utilities Service. Further information on USDA Rural Development can be obtained by contacting any USDA Service Center or by visiting USDA's web site at www.usda.gov.



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