



NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture • Rural Development
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NATIONAL HOMEOWNERSHIP CELEBRATED ON RESERVATION

USDA Rural Development and Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indian Tribe

BELCOURT, June 22, 2004 – During a celebration of National Homeownership Month today on the Turtle Mountain Indian Reservation, North Dakota Rural Development State Director Clare Carlson presented certificates of appreciation and a ceremonial check to the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa.

“President Bush has declared June as National Homeownership Month, and with Homeownership comes a sense of security and pride,” Carlson said. “It is more than just a symbol of the American Dream, it is an important part of our way of life that builds economic strength in families, economic stability for communities and is a good way to build a nest egg. Rural Development is committed to helping more families know the security and sense of pride that comes with owning a home.”

In the spirit of homeownership, and in celebration of National Homeownership Month, the Turtle Mountain area has been selected due to the collaborative effort between the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indian Tribe and USDA Rural Development in delivering housing assistance to the area.

Working through the Turtle Mountain Housing Authority and the Turtle Mountain Home Improvement Programs, over \$1,151,725 of housing assistance was provided to area residents in Fiscal Year 2003, by USDA Rural Development. This assistance would not have been possible were it not for the collaborative effort between the Tribe and USDA Rural Development.

The employees of the Turtle Mountain Housing Authority and Home Improvement Programs were instrumental in locating and assisting area residents with Rural Development’s Housing Loan and Grant Programs. These programs have improved the quality of life and provided decent, safe and sanitary housing for many rural residents. Repairs include the installation of energy efficient doors and windows, making showers and ramps more accessible, and by updating electrical wiring, heating systems, weatherization and roofing.

Committed to the future of rural communities.

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To celebrate and acknowledge the efforts of the Tribal entities and their employees, a plaque and ceremonial check will be presented to the Tribe. Those individuals recognized for their contribution include:

Andy Laverdure, Executive Director, Turtle Mountain Housing Authority, committed the resources within his authority to partner with USDA Rural Development to assist in delivering the Section 504 Grant and the 515 Rural Rental Housing programs in the Turtle Mountain area.

Jane Martin, Turtle Mountain Housing Authority, was instrumental in the organization and development of both the Section 515 Rural Rental Housing Program and 504 Grant Program in the Turtle Mountain area.

Robert Marion, Turtle Mountain Housing Authority, was a key person in managing the day to day progress in developing the Section 515 Rural Rental Housing Program in the Turtle Mountain area.

Michelle Martin, Turtle Mountain Housing Authority, assisted in the day to day activities necessary to assist potential applicants access the Section 504 Grant Program in the Turtle Mountain area,

Sharon Poitra, Block Grant Program, Turtle Mountain Housing Authority, instrumental in developing and completing the application for Housing Preservation Grant assistance in the Turtle Mountain area.

Leonard Belgrade, Home Improvement Program, was instrumental in developing and administering the Housing Preservation Grant assistance in the Turtle Mountain area.

USDA Rural Development serves as the lead federal entity for rural economic and community development needs. Its mission is to deliver programs that will support increased economic opportunity and improve the quality of life for rural residents. It administers financial and technical assistance to finance and foster growth in homeownership, business development and critical community and technology infrastructure. ***Rural Development is committed to the future of rural communities.***

In Fiscal Year 2003, USDA Rural Development provided over **\$73.5 million dollars** in loan and grant financing to North Dakota citizens. For more information, please visit our web site at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov>.