

USDA/Rural Development

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News Release

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USDA ANNOUNCES RURAL INVESTMENTS OF \$45 MILLION TO SPARK COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN 34 STATES *Funds To Create or Save 1,000 Jobs/ 129 First Responder and Public Safety Requests Selected*

WASHINGTON, Sept. 15, 2003-- Agriculture Secretary Ann M. Veneman today announced the selection of 309 business, community and Tribal transportation, business and educational loan and grant requests from 34 states. The funds are a mixture of economic and community development investments being made as part of the Bush Administration's overall efforts to help spur economic opportunities and improve the quality of life for rural Americans.

"The capital investments announced today go to the heart of President Bush's commitment to rural America," said Veneman. "The grants will help community leaders bring new business and jobs to their community; provide fire, rescue and public safety to protect rural families and support educational opportunities that increase the ability to compete in the global marketplace."

Veneman said that the \$45 million will help fund 129 first responder and public safety requests, create or save nearly 1,000 jobs through financing of over 130 businesses, assist 24 Tribal colleges build and renovate educational facilities and 16 Tribal governments with business development. Funds will also assist in the construction of municipal facilities such as courthouses, city halls, libraries and other essential community facilities. To assist with developing transportation systems in rural areas, the Community Transportation Association of America was selected to receive \$750,000 in grants to expand a new transit system in Oklahoma and create new transit systems for tribes in Arizona and South Dakota as well as develop or expand rural transportation services in Utah, Louisiana, Mississippi, Vermont and Hawaii.

Jim Barr, state director for USDA Rural Development in Nebraska stated, "Rural Nebraska will benefit greatly from the dollars received in today's announcement." "Business, education, public safety and essential community facilities are valuable components to building a stronger rural economy."

Nebraska received nearly \$940,000 . The recipients include:

Native American Rural Business Enterprise (RBEG) and Opportunity Grants (RBOG):

Santee Sioux Nation- Santee Reservation, \$99,500-RBEG small business incubator

Santee Sioux Nation- Santee Reservation, \$14,637-RBOG redevelopment plan for Santee

Community Programs Tribal College:

NE Indian Community College, \$184,861, community college building project

Little Priest Tribal College, \$184,861, classroom-building project

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Community Programs Economic Impact:

Village of Rulo, \$3,700, emergency siren and radio controls
Village of Royal, \$6,900, early warning system
Village of Salem, \$7,800 emergency fire truck
Village of Dawson, \$11,100, early warning system
Village of Verdon, \$11,100, emergency siren
Village of Salem, \$11,300, early warning system
Village of Rulo, \$19,500, library
City of Humboldt, \$23,000, warning siren system
Humboldt Share, Inc., \$60,000, rural health clinic project
Humboldt Community Foundation, \$80,000, public library expansion project
NE Indian Community College, \$100,000, community college building project
Graves Library Foundation, \$120,160, construction of new public library

A complete list of recipients by program area can be found at www.rurdev.usda.gov. Funding of individual recipients will be contingent upon meeting the conditions of the grant agreement.

USDA Rural Development's mission is to deliver programs in a way that will support increasing economic opportunity and improve the quality of life of rural residents. As a venture capital entity, Rural Development provides equity and technical assistance to finance and foster growth in homeownership, business development, and critical community and technology infrastructure. Further information on rural programs is available at a local USDA Rural Development office or by visiting USDA's web site at www.rurdev.usda.gov.

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