



# NEWS RELEASE

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## USDA ANNOUNCES AVAILABILITY OF \$8.9 MILLION IN BROADBAND GRANTS

**WASHINGTON, July 5, 2007** — Deputy Agriculture Secretary Chuck Connor announced the availability of \$8.9 million in grants for communities without broadband service to provide residential service and connect facilities such as police and fire stations, health care, libraries and schools.

“The Community Connect Grant Program has proved to be effective in reaching those rural communities where broadband service is least likely to be deployed,” Conner said. “Connecting residents and essential community facilities improves local services and the protection of the citizens of these communities.”

Ohio’s GMN Tri County Community Action Committee was a previous beneficiary of Rural Development’s Broadband Grant Program. GMN received \$383,284 to provide wireless broadband internet service to the Village of Woodsfield. Additionally, the funding provided broadband to local fire and police and established a computer center for public access.

“Providing community residents with access to the internet and training on how to use it helps rural citizens understand the benefits of broadband service and is one more economic development tool available through USDA Rural Development,” said Agriculture Under Secretary for Rural Development Thomas C. Dorr.

Applications for grants are due by close of business August 13, 2007. There is a minimum grant level of \$50,000 and a maximum grant level of \$1,000,000 for projects. The application guide for this grant program can be found at <http://www.usda.gov/rus/telecom/>.

USDA Rural Development’s mission is to increase economic opportunity and improve the quality of life for rural residents. Rural Development has invested more than \$76.8 billion since 2001 for equity and technical assistance to finance and foster growth in homeownership, business development, and critical community and technology infrastructure. More than 1.5 million jobs have been created or saved through these investments. Further information on 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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