

Secretary of Agriculture

Ann M. Veneman

Our country stands united as we report on a unique and challenging year for the Department of Agriculture. In the wake of the tragedies of September 11th, we have worked to ensure the protection of our food supply, employees, customers, facilities and programs. As President Bush has said, “We will not waver; we will not tire; we will not falter; and we will not fail. Peace and freedom will prevail.”



During this past year, we faced many challenges, but many opportunities as well. As our new Administration has taken hold, USDA's Rural Development undertook many efforts to assist and strengthen our rural communities. These efforts included: 950 communities approved for \$1.4 billion in loan and grant funds to establish or improve drinking water or waste disposal systems for more than a million rural residents; 43,000 families received loans to purchase a home, allowing them to realize their dream of owning their own home and contributing to an all time high in our nation's homeownership rate; and nearly \$15 million in grant funds were provided to distance learning projects encompassing over 590 educational institutions, and \$11.5 million for 41 telemedicine projects involving nearly 236 medical facilities, bringing greater access for rural residents to much needed educational and medical services.

Over the years, we have made great strides to better serve our customers. In September, we unveiled a new report, “Food and Agricultural Policy: Taking Stock for the New Century.” This study focuses on the changing role of agriculture and rural development and how we can work together to provide new opportunities and greater economic growth for this nation's farmers, ranchers and rural communities. I encourage you to review this report from USDA's website at www.usda.gov.

Residents in Pennsylvania and from all across this nation are what truly make America great. We can continue to build on our successes in strengthening our rural communities. And, our Rural Development employees stand ready to assist in any way they can.



*A Message from the Pennsylvania State Director,
Byron E. Ross*

One of the greatest challenges faced by rural communities today is the ability to preserve the qualities of rural life while simultaneously creating a viable economic strategy that will allow them to compete effectively in the national and global economies. One of the most striking changes is that many of today's farmers, or their spouses, must now seek outside employment to supplement their farm income. Agriculture has given way to manufacturing services or other non-farming activities, and is no longer the primary foundation of rural communities. Recognizing this dramatic shift in our rural economy, Rural Development is working with local leaders to help stabilize and improve the overall economic conditions of rural Pennsylvania.

Developing sustainable communities in rural America has been, and continues to be, one of our greatest challenges at USDA. In 2001, Pennsylvania's USDA Rural Development employees continued to take the lead in developing new ways in which to provide much needed services to their rural customers. We are finding new ways to bring fresh ideas and resources to local communities and creating an environment which allows local communities to make a difference in the lives of their residents.

By joining together in partnership with rural communities, for-profit and not-for-profit organizations, as well as other state and federal agencies, we have been able to substantially improve life in rural America. The legacy of this effort is everywhere on the rural landscape: improved rural housing, community facilities, businesses and cooperatives, and utility services.

We should all be proud of what has been accomplished in rural Pennsylvania and throughout this country. The accomplishments outlined in this annual report, I believe, are a reflection of USDA's commitment to the residents of rural Pennsylvania.

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Community Facilities (CF)

The Community Facilities (CF) program provides loans, grants, and loan guarantees to public bodies, not-for-profits, and Indian tribes for health care, public safety, public improvements, community support, educational services, and telecommunications. In FY 2001, Rural Development's CF programs assisted over 41,000 rural Pennsylvania residents in several communities by providing the funding needed for projects like road equipment, emergency shelter, and sewer authority assistance. CF funds were also used to preserve a historical structure in Luzerne County and to build a community center in Nuangola Grove, Pennsylvania.

We are proud of our recent accomplishments. In Fiscal Year (FY) 2000, PA Rural Development received the Administrator's Bronze Award (in part) for being one of the top states in the nation for providing CF direct and guaranteed funding, the state with the largest increase in CF loans in one year, and the state with the most improved CF program overall. In FY 2001, we continued to excel and received another award from the National Office as a result of their review of our CF programs and the increasing volume of CF assistance delivered to Pennsylvania.

FY 2001 - Community Facility Funding			
County	Project Name	Loan Amount	Grant Amount
Beaver	HAP Senior Care, Inc.	*\$ 3,000,000	
Beaver	HAP Senior Care, Inc.	\$ 1,100,000	
Carbon	Nesquehoning Hose Company #1	\$ 133,000	\$ 100,000
Clarion	Mill Creek Township	\$ 55,000	\$ 23,000
Crawford	Crawford Co. Coalition on Housing Needs	\$ 111,000	\$ 100,000
Delaware	Millbourne Fire Company	\$ 45,000	\$ 55,000
Elk	Jay Township Volunteer Fire Company	\$ 75,000	\$ 95,000
Indiana	Central Indiana Joint Sanitary Authority	\$ 200,000	
Jefferson	WRC PA Memorial Home	*\$ 4,000,000	
Jefferson	WRC PA Memorial Home	\$ 4,000,000	
Lawrence	South Central Alpha Housing & Health Care	\$ 3,700,000	
Luzerne	Bear Creek Historical Society	*\$ 310,000	
Luzerne	Courtdale Volunteer Hose Company	\$ 42,500	\$ 87,500
Luzerne	Nuangola Grove Association, Inc.	\$ 100,000	
Schuylkill	Altamont Fire Company	\$ 563,490	\$ 100,000
Schuylkill	Summit Station Fire Company #1	\$ 750,000	
Total Obligated		\$18,184,990	\$ 560,500

*Indicates a guaranteed loan.

Assisting our Rural Firefighters

Over \$2 million in CF loans and grants were provided to six fire companies in five Pennsylvania counties during fiscal year 2001. The funds were used for a variety of purposes including, three fire trucks, construction of two new fire stations and improvements to one existing station.



"I am proud of our continued commitment to assist rural Pennsylvania communities in obtaining emergency and fire equipment and buildings needed to provide protection for thousands of residents," said State Director Ross.

Community Facilities (CF)

Laurelbrooke Landing

Assisted Living/Personal Care Facility



WRC Community and Health Services is a not-for-profit organization founded over 100 years ago by the Women's Relief Corps (WRC) in Brookville, PA. This cooperation originally provided a haven for Civil War veterans and widows. The first facility, Pennsylvania Memorial Home, established WRC's tradition of providing high quality health care to elderly individuals.

Since that time, WRC has grown to become a multi-facility provider of housing and support services for the elderly in several communities in north-central Pennsylvania. These services include nursing care, personal care, subsidized independent living, home care, and community outreach services.

Two of the WRC facilities, a 108-bed skilled nursing facility and a 27-bed personal care facility, were aging and in need of major renovations. An architectural evaluation determined that constructing a new facility would be more desirable and cost effective than renovating the existing sites. WRC located a 30-acre site adjacent to the Brookville Hospital and less than a mile from their current sites.

Rural Development provided \$4 million in direct loans and a \$4 million loan guarantee, which were combined with \$4 million of WRC's funds to purchase the site and construct the new buildings. The new facility, named Laurelbrooke Landing, will include 90 beds of skilled nursing care and a 50-bed personal care facility, which includes 20 dementia units. They will also include space for related administrative and support services. Construction was started in the summer of 2001 and is proceeding rapidly. Rural Development is pleased to provide funding assistance to enhance elderly care by this outstanding and historic organization.

HAP Senior Care, Inc.

Assisted Living Facility

HAP stands for Help-A-Person and that is what they do. For more than 13 years, HAP Enterprises, Inc. and their affiliates have been the largest provider of mental health/mental retardation services in Beaver County. They have provided educational classes, day care, and numerous other services to people suffering with mental disabilities.



HAP is currently under construction
and expected to open in 2002

In order to further its mission, HAP decided to build a 77-unit (97-bed) personal care facility in Brighton Township, Beaver County. The building will contain five wings with 15 suites, 25 private personal care units, 20 semi-private personal care units and 17 units of adult day care. Rural Development provided a \$1.1 million direct loan and a \$3 million loan guarantee, which were combined with \$1.8 million in tax-free funding and the applicant's contribution to build this new facility.

Multi-Family Housing (MFH)

Four Multi-Family Housing loans were obligated in FY 2001, all for improvements to existing apartment complexes. "With the help of Rural Development's Multi-Family Housing programs, housing developers are able to build quality and affordable rental units for our low-income, elderly, and disabled rural residents," said State Director Ross, " and, the Rental Assistance Program assures that qualified applicants pay no more than 30% of their income for housing."

FY 2001 Section 515 Loans		
County	Project Name	Loan Amount
Adams	Oxford Manor	\$ 315,000
Blair	Showalter Apartments	\$ 656,500
Mercer	Brandy Springs Apartments	\$ 142,000
Somerset	Rockwood Gardens	\$ 81,690
Total Obligated		\$1,195,190

Three Rural Development funded MFH complexes opened this fiscal year:



Pleasant Valley Estates - Mount Carmel, PA - A
16-unit elderly/handicapped complex in
Columbia County.



Mansfield Court - Mansfield, PA - A
24-unit elderly/handicapped complex in
Tioga County.



Philipsburg Place - Philipsburg, PA - A
16-unit family complex in Centre County.

Farm Labor Housing

Rural Development also funded a \$125,000 loan and a \$893,507 grant for the construction of 13 units of housing for migrant farm workers in Aspers, Adams County, Pennsylvania. This housing is desperately needed to replace severely substandard housing that is currently used by these farm workers. This housing should provide decent, safe and sanitary housing for up to 52 farm workers at a time and will be used primarily during the summer fruit-growing season.

Housing Preservation Grants

Two Housing Preservation Grants were obligated in Pennsylvania in Fiscal Year 2001, both for \$121,670. These grants were made to the Redevelopment Authority of Fayette County and the Redevelopment Authority of Wayne County. The grants will be combined with other funds to operate programs that provide low-cost loans or grants to very-low income rural homeowners to make essential repairs to their homes.

Rural Business - Cooperative Service (RBS)

Rural businesses were major beneficiaries of USDA, Rural Development spending in Pennsylvania last fiscal year. Rural Development provided more than \$32 million in loans and grants to help start or expand 1,247 businesses last year. These businesses created or saved over 6,500 rural jobs -- *many of them in areas where unemployment rates are higher than the national average.* In addition to creating or preserving quality jobs, our RBS programs promote a clean rural environment.

Our RBS staff works closely with private sector lenders and community-based organizations to provide financial assistance and business planning. In fact, the RBS financial resources are frequently leveraged with funds from other public and private credit source lenders to meet business and credit needs in underserved areas. Last fiscal year, Rural Development's business programs provided incentive for private credit source lenders to invest more than \$29 million in business opportunities to Pennsylvania's rural communities.

Business and Industry Loans and Loan Guarantees

In September 2001, Rural Development approved a \$9 million business loan for the Lehigh Coal and Navigation Company located in Pottsville. The loan provided funds needed to reopen portions of the mine, and allow the return of 230 employees whom had been laid off since January 2001. The Lehigh Coal and Navigation Company is engaged in the mining, processing, and sale of anthracite coal. Operations are located in northeast Pennsylvania (Schuylkill and Carbon Counties) where raw coal is extracted by open pit mining methods. Shipments are made by rail and trucked to customers located within the United States and by ship or barge to foreign customers.



Lehigh Coal's state-of-the-art hydraulic excavator at the Springdale mine. This machine uses a 45-yard bucket and can load over 100 tons with each bite. Here, it is loading the R260 truck, the largest truck in the Lehigh Coal fleet.

In FY 2001, Rural Development provided \$19,900,000 to eight projects in loan note guarantees for Business and Industry (B&I) loans in rural Pennsylvania. These eight projects were submitted by six different lenders, four of them being new participants in our Guaranteed B&I program. The projects served a variety of industries including electronics, communication and multimedia distribution, trucking and transportation, agricultural processing and environmental recycling.

Specialty Lending and Grant Programs

There are several Rural Development funded programs designed to assist in the fostering of economic development in rural areas.

Fifteen **Rural Business Enterprise Grants (RBEG)**, totaling more than \$1,361,000, were granted during fiscal year 2001. For every dollar of USDA funds, there were \$3.34 of private funds leveraged into these RBEG projects. One RBEG will benefit small and emerging businesses in the Meadville downtown area adjacent to a market. It is expected that this market opportunity will benefit women-owned businesses and small farmers. Another RBEG was made to the Pottsville Area Development Corporation (PADCO). The grant will be used at the technology center to equip twenty office/lab/production suites with computers and related equipment.

Eight **Rural Business Opportunity Grants (RBOG)** made in fiscal year 2001 will create or save over 2,600 jobs in Pennsylvania. The RBOG program funds provide for technical assistance, training, and planning activities that improve economic conditions in rural areas. One RBOG was made to the Northern Cambria Community Development Corporation for the creation of a comprehensive economic development plan and marketing strategy for the Borough of Northern Cambria. Another RBOG made to the Jefferson County Development Council, Inc. will be used to provide technical assistance for creating marketing materials for business recruiting purposes.

Rural Business - Cooperative Service (RBS)

Specialty Lending and Grant Programs (continued)

Intermediary Relending Program (IRP) loans finance business facilities and community development projects in rural areas. RBS lends these funds to intermediaries, which, in turn, provide loans to recipients who are developing business facilities or community development projects. One of the two IRP loans made last fiscal year was to help small farmers develop a regional farmer's market at the Victory Road Industrial Park. Victory Road Industrial Park is a 78-acre site set-aside for business development in Clinton Township, Butler County. Pictured right, the Jean Bonnet Tavern, built in 1760, was purchased, in part, with IRP money through The Progress Fund Revolving Loan Fund. Four full-time jobs were created at the Tavern, located in Bedford County.



A **Rural Economic Development Loan (REDL)** was made to United Electric Cooperative, Inc. The funds will be used in a business expansion and job creation project for purchasing equipment and funding a working capital account.

Cooperative Services

In 2001, USDA recognized 75 years of providing research, education, information and technical assistance through Cooperative Services programs. There are about 3,500 farmer-owned agricultural cooperatives (co-ops) in the nation today, which record about \$72 billion per year in sales of crops and livestock, and approximately \$23 billion in farm supply sales. Co-ops help members market their products and, increasingly, add value to the products through further processing, as well as helping members obtain farm supplies and services at fair prices. Utility cooperatives use the same principles to bring quality electrical and telecommunications services to many rural and urban parts of the nation.



Best Milk Producers' Cooperative

Mr. David Duncan, II of the Best Milk Producers' Cooperative in Williamsport, PA was awarded a fiscal year 2001 Value-Added Agricultural Product Market Development Grant (VADG) for his proposal "Sustain and Grow the Pure Country Dairy Store."

The \$90,000 grant will be used to establish a working capital account used to pay salaries, utilities, and other operating costs; to finance inventories and other related activities necessary to establish alliances or business ventures that allow producers to better compete in domestic or international markets for value-added products.

Keystone Development Center

On June 1, 2001, State Director Ross presented a check to Don Fretts, President, Keystone Development Center. This Rural Cooperative Development Grant (RCDG) was made to help establish and operate a Pennsylvania center for cooperative development.



Community Development

There are twelve specific communities that have been targeted for particular focus by our Community Development staff. Two of those communities, the City of Lock Haven (Clinton County) and Fay-Penn (Fayette County) were identified through nationwide competition for the Empowerment Zone/Enterprise Community (EZ/EC) program, which provides Federal grant funds to assist with implementing each eligible community's strategic plan.

By the end of the year, Lock Haven had completed 86% of its progress milestones toward reaching the plan's goals and objectives. Fiscal Year 2001 marked the 20% completion in Fay-Penn's ten-year strategic plan for economic and community development. The other nine targeted communities are:

- Community of Whitsett, Fayette County
- Township of Oley, Berks County
- Borough of Honesdale (and surrounding townships), Wayne County
- Borough of Central City (and surrounding townships), Somerset County
- Borough of Northern Cambria, Cambria County (KOZ)
- Hawley Lake Region, Wayne County
- Ford City, Armstrong County (KOZ)
- Clinton Township, Butler County (KOZ)
- Piper Airport (City of Lock Haven), Clinton County

The communities were selected on the basis of need and opportunity identified through a strategic planning process. These communities do not receive lump sum grants, but they receive technical assistance in obtaining resources to turn those plans into reality. Several of the communities are rural participants in the Commonwealth's new "Keystone Opportunity Zones" (KOZ) program. KOZ uses tax abatement as incentive to revive economically distressed communities, and also relies on broad-based planning.

"Hawley-Lake Region for Progress" *Vision Statement Unveiled*



Hawley and the surrounding municipalities in Wayne County have been receiving technical assistance for visioning and strategic planning from Rural Development. For the past year the municipalities have been collecting information about their communities; appraising their strengths and weaknesses, and developing a vision for the future.

The Hawley - Lake Region Plan for Progress Steering Committee unveiled its Vision Statement on March 31, 2001. The complete vision statement is:

"Hawley and the Lake Wallenpaupack Region are a diverse collection of rural communities, which value the unique environment, history and culture of the area for residents and visitors of all ages. These communities work together to create and enhance numerous economic, educational, health, safety, and recreational opportunities for all segments of the community."

Single Family Housing (SFH)

Rural residents of Pennsylvania have improved their quality of life by participating in Rural Development Housing programs that ensure access to affordable, well built homes. Homeownership promotes economic stability for families, and this stability enables families to generate equity to finance education, start small businesses, or save for retirement. Single Family Homeownership helps to stabilize neighborhoods, thereby enhancing the quality of life in rural communities. By providing direct and guaranteed loans to low and moderate income families, the USDA Rural Housing Service promotes community building in rural Pennsylvania. These loans are for the purchase, construction, rehabilitation or relocation of an eligible dwelling.

Section 502 Home Purchase Program

Pennsylvania families with limited household income may be eligible to participate in our Section 502 Direct Single-Family Housing (SFH) program that provides payment assistance to qualified borrowers by subsidizing mortgage interest rates as low as 1%. This payment assistance makes homeownership affordable for many rural residents in Pennsylvania.



Partnerships

During Fiscal Year 2001, the Single Family Housing program successfully leveraged Rural Development funding with funding from non-profit organizations and local lenders. Through these partnerships, SFH helped 253 families access approximately \$2 million of conventional market financing and other participating resources. By providing assistance with loan closing costs, participating resources have greatly improved housing affordability for low-income families.

Pamela Whitfield and her two children, Gary Lee, 17, and Deanna, 8, were all smiles this Christmas season. They put up a Christmas tree in their newly constructed home located in Franklin County. Their three bedroom, split-level home was built by S & A Homes of Chambersburg and financed with Section 502 funds through Rural Development. Rural Opportunities, Inc. also contributed \$2,500 of 0% non-amortized funds that were used for closing costs.



Pam became eligible for the closing cost assistance after attending 12 hours of homeownership counseling provided by Rural Opportunities, Inc. As a single mother who is a self-employed house cleaner, Pam never imagined that she could own a home. Pam learned valuable lessons about managing her income from Rural Opportunities, Inc. homeownership counseling sessions, and as a result she was able to qualify for a Rural Development loan.

The Whitfield family is extremely grateful for the special assistance they received from USDA Rural Development and Rural Opportunities, Inc. which helped make their dream of homeownership a reality.

Single Family Housing (SFH)

Section 504 Home Repair and Rehabilitation Program

Home improvement, repair loans, and grants under the Section 504 program are available to very low-income rural homeowners to improve health and safety standards in their homes, and also to make them accessible for individuals with disabilities. Payments remain affordable with loan interest rates fixed at 1% and a twenty-year amortization period. Grants are also available for Pennsylvania residents, 62 years or older, who cannot afford to repay a home loan.



Section 502 Guaranteed Single Family Housing Program

The Rural Housing Service also offers a guaranteed loan program for families with low to moderate incomes. No down payment is required and the participating lender often includes closing costs in the mortgage. Lack of a down payment often prevents prospective homebuyers from obtaining a loan from private lenders, but the RHS guaranteed loan program has greatly increased the number of rural Pennsylvania homeowners. During FY 2001, the guaranteed loan program enabled 922 families, who were unable to obtain conventional credit, to purchase their own homes.



Alison Swanson of Allied Mortgage Capitol Corp. and Bernie Linn, RD Guaranteed SFH Loan Specialist

Awards were presented to the top 6 producing Originators for the Guaranteed Housing Loan Program for FY 2001. Over 300 loan originators participated in the RHS guaranteed loan program, and the top 6 originators produced 18% of the loan dollars. The award recipients were:

- **Larry Hutchinson**
Omega Bank
- **Stephen Argen**
North Atlantic Mortgage
- **Alison Swanson**
Honesdale National Bank
- **Brenda Thompson**
Jersey Shore National Bank
- **Mary McDonough**
Allied Mortgage Capitol Corp.
- **Rick Conner**
Express Financial Services

Packaging Applications

Often, very-low and low-income applicants need additional assistance in preparing and submitting an application. Therefore, Rural Development has enlisted the assistance of non-profit organizations to assist applicants in completing applications and in meeting the Agency's requirements for assets, credit history, and repayment ability. Packagers are valuable resources because some refer applicants to or provide them with credit counseling and homebuyer education information.

Summary

In 2001, the Rural Housing Service assisted 1,832 families in the purchase, construction, and repair of homes. Our Single Family Housing program funded \$37,801,380 in direct loans, \$1,029,659 in repair loans, \$1,244,050 in repair grants, and \$68,956,473 in guaranteed loans. Funds leveraged with other sources contributed an additional \$1,997,362. USDA Rural Development's Single Family Housing programs made it possible for many Pennsylvania residents to obtain safe, affordable housing.

Rural Utilities Service (RUS)

Through its Water and Wastewater programs, Pennsylvania RUS was able to improve the quality of life in several rural communities this past year. We provided over \$48 million in loans and grants to serve over 6,000 homes and more than 15,200 people in Pennsylvania with clean drinking water and modern sewer facilities.

Redstone Township Municipal Authority

On December 19, 2000, a dedication ceremony was held for the Redstone Township Municipal Authority's new sewer system. Rural Development's loan of \$4,220,100 and a \$1,552,500 grant, together with local contributions of \$674,010 and a \$500,000 grant from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers were used to construct a public sewerage collection system and sewer treatment plant that will serve more than 1,137 residents in the communities of Allison, Republic, Merrittstown, and Cardale in Fayette County.



Northeastern Schuylkill Joint Municipal Authority

In October 2000, Rural Development announced the RUS funding for the Northeastern Schuylkill Joint Municipal Authority (NSJMA). Rural

Development provided a \$5,074,500 loan and \$4,007,050 grant to construct this wastewater collection system that will serve more than 1,900 residents in Park Crest and Hosensock within Ryan Township, and Barnesville, Grier City, Quakake and Tamamend in Rush Township.

Kinzua-Warren Municipal Authority

Rural Development and local officials joined together for the groundbreaking ceremony of the Kinzua-Warren (Warren County) Municipal Authority's new sewer system early in 2001.

Rural Development's \$4,250,000 loan and \$2,267,000 grant together with local contributions of \$670,000 and a \$350,000 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) will be used to construct a public sewerage collection system and sewer treatment plant that will serve over 1,800 residents in the communities of Claredon Borough and Mead Township.



Work in progress at the Kinzua-Warren site.



More than 6,000 homes have been provided with clean drinking water and modern sewer facilities this year.

Gilberton Borough

Rural Development provided a \$2,013,000 loan and \$1,390,000 grant to be used for construction of a sewerage treatment plant that will serve more than 950 residents in Gilberton Borough, Schuylkill County.

Rural Utilities Service (RUS)

East Nittany Valley Joint Municipal Authority



East Nittany Valley Joint Municipal Authority held its ground breaking ceremony to mark the beginning of the \$14.9 million project to fulfill the sewer needs for sections of Lamar and Porter Townships in Clinton County, and Walker Township in Centre County. Work on the project began in early August and is expected to be completed in one year.

RUS FUNDED PROJECTS IN FISCAL YEAR 2001

COUNTY	PROJECT	LOAN AMOUNT	GRANT AMOUNT
Carbon	Weissport Municipal Authority	\$ 292,700	\$ 661,000
Clinton	East Nittany Valley Joint Municipal Authority	1,511,300	
Fayette	Luzerne Township Sewage Authority	2,988,300	1,998,160
Fulton	Dublin Township	894,000	2,227,000
Indiana	Conemaugh Township Municipal Authority	196,000	140,700
Indiana	Indiana County Municipal Services Authority	7,000,000	6,272,265
Jefferson	Brockway Borough Municipal Authority	500,000	855,000
Luzerne	Hazle Township Municipal Authority	4,253,500	4,232,700
Luzerne	Twin County Joint Municipal Authority	1,687,700	2,987,100
Northumberland	Upper Augusta Township Municipal Authority	555,000	277,800
Potter	Roulette Township	491,900	380,700
Schuylkill	Pine Grove Joint Municipal Authority	2,258,000	
Tioga	Delmar Township	335,500	579,900
Venengo	Sandycreek Township	467,000	350,000
Washington	East Bethlehem Township Municipal Authority	1,420,000	1,181,700
Washington	Burgettstown-Smith Township Joint Sewer Authority	1,237,900	
Wyoming	Westgate Water and Sewer	260,200	106,800
		\$ 26,349,000	\$ 22,250,825

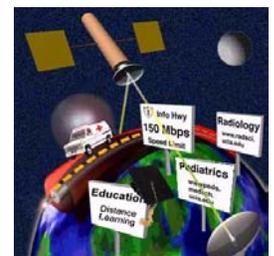
SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT GRANTS

PA Cleanways of Westmoreland County was awarded a \$20,000 solid waste management grant. The grant funds will be used to help communities in Westmoreland County institute a countywide paper recycling program, continue public awareness about recycling benefits, and educate youngsters about recycling.

DISTANCE LEARNING AND TELEMEDICINE (DLT) GRANT

The Distance Learning and Telemedicine Program (DLT) is designed specifically to meet the educational and health care needs of rural America. Through loans, grants, and loan and grant combinations, advanced telecommunications technologies provide enhanced learning and health care opportunities for rural residents.

The Cooperative Extension and Outreach Office at Pennsylvania State University (Penn State) was awarded a \$364,087 DLT Grant to develop a multi-dimensional model for disseminating health messages and motivating rural residents to improve health related behavior. The Penn State Cooperative Extension Service will promote and support community-based health activities in conjunction with coordinated health messages developed through Penn State Public Broadcasting (television, radio, interactive web), World Campus, continuing education, and various print media. This motivational/educational outreach project promises maximum public access and engagement throughout Pennsylvania.



Other Programs

Environmental Awareness

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) establishes the Federal government's environmental policies. Its primary goal is to help public officials make decisions that are based on an understanding of the environmental consequences of their actions, and to take actions that protect, restore, and enhance the environment.

To accomplish this, USDA - Rural Development requires its applicants and current borrowers to consider environmental impacts before taking actions financed by the Agency. The same is true for private lenders whose loans are guaranteed by the Agency. Before any Rural Development assistance can be approved, the Agency will assess the environmental impact of the proposed action to ensure that steps are taken to avoid or reduce adverse effects.

In carrying out its mandates, Rural Development must ensure compliance with numerous Federal environmental laws, regulations, and Executive orders. Some of these are: the Endangered Species Act, the Safe Drinking Water Act, the Farmland Protection Policy Act, the National Historic Preservation Act, Departmental Regulation 9500-3, Land Use Policy and Executive Order 11988, Floodplain Management.

In Pennsylvania, Rural Development spearheaded action with the PA Department of Environmental Protection, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the PA Department of Community and Economic Development to formulate a Uniform Environmental Review format. This will save municipal sewer or water loan/grant applicants both time and money since all the state and Federal agencies that can provide financial assistance will accept the same environmental documentation.

Outreach



Pennsylvania residents will find us many places throughout the year -- The Farm Show, Home and Builder's shows across Pennsylvania, Penn State's AG Progress Days, and County Fairs.

These are just a few places Pennsylvania residents have the opportunity to meet our program specialists and discover the USDA Rural Development programs available to them and their communities.

Our Program Specialists also visit local community leaders and groups to advise rural residents of the programs available to them.

Civil Rights

Assuring equal opportunity in employment and program delivery is essential in administering Rural Development Programs. Each Rural Development employee is responsible for ensuring the highest quality of services for all recipients and beneficiaries of our programs. Rural Development is committed to fair and equal treatment to employees and customers.

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