

KENNY LAKE PUBLIC BUILDINGS GET NEEDED UPGRADE WITH USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT FUNDING SUPPORT

Outline of Need: Two community halls at the Kenny Lake Fairgrounds



were of limited use due to needed upgrades to meet State fire codes and weatherization to make them affordable to heat; one had been closed for several years in the winter and the well was no longer operable.

How Rural Development Helped:

USDA Rural Development provided a grant of \$26,300 through the Community Facilities Program. Those funds were used to upgrade the buildings to the point where they can be used by the community. Improvements upgrading the kitchen fire extinguisher system, installing more fuel-efficient stoves; rebuilding two entry stairs and deicing, repairing and improving the well systems, installing heat tape so that it won't freeze in temperatures that range to -60.

The Results: The Kenny Lake community, located off the Edgerton Highway between Glennallen and Valdez, now has two usable public buildings, including one with a State-approved community kitchen.

The Kenny Lake fairgrounds has two large community buildings on it: A log hall and a newer nearby building which includes a large community space, kitchen and offices. Both buildings were showing signs of deterioration and the kitchen in the newer building was unusable because it didn't meet fire code. "Rural Development provided much of the funding needed to make these buildings useful," said Arlene Rosenkrans, a Kenny Lake resident and the area's USDA RC&D Coordinator. "We use both halls for the annual community fair and local gatherings, but both buildings needed to be fixed." In addition to the kitchen project, the water well was unusable and bathrooms were not handicapped accessible. "Thanks to Rural Development, some State funds and local community support, much has been addressed," said Rosenkrans. "We hired local contractors to pull the pump and thaw the well, also repairing broken pipes. The well line was heat-taped; one contractor donated almost \$1,000 in labor. Now we have water into

the hall and an accessible bathroom. The log hall is important to us as a meeting place and also serves as an emergency shelter; the stove purchased for that hall can run without electricity.” Two fuel-efficient stoves were purchased with grant funds and flooring was repaired by a local resident for the newer hall. As a bonus, offices that were of limited use in the new building now can be rented out, defraying some of the cost of building maintenance. “It was a slow, tedious process, but we persevered and the entire community came together over this,” Rosenkrans said. “It is a win-win situation for the community.” Rosenkrans acknowledged the efforts of Kim Morse, who oversaw the project and Fairbanks Rural Development Area Director Jim Pohlman and his staff who helped with the application and grant administration. She also thanked the members of the Kenny Lake Community League and volunteers who assisted in completing the project.

10/18/09