



NEWS RELEASE

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USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT ANNOUNCES NEARLY \$1 MILLION AVAILABLE FOR BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

TEMPLE, TEXAS, March 22, 2006 -Bryan Daniel, USDA Rural Development State Director announced today the availability of \$990,000 via the Rural Business Opportunity Grant (RBOG) Program for Fiscal Year 2006 as published in the March 15, 2006 Federal Register. Additional funds of \$990,000 have been earmarked for Empowerment Zones. Applications will compete nationwide for the funding.

The primary objective of the RBOG Program is to improve the economic conditions of rural areas. Assistance provided to rural areas under this program includes technical assistance for business development and conducting economic development planning. The grants are available to public bodies, non-profits, federally recognized Tribal groups and cooperatives.

Applications for the RBOG non-earmarked funds will not exceed \$50,000 and for multi-state projects \$150,000. There are no project dollar amount limitations for ear-marked funds. Completed applications must be submitted to the Texas USDA Rural Development Office, 101 South Main, Suite 102, Temple, Texas 76502, by May 26, 2006. Applications will be tentatively scored by the State Office, with the two highest scoring project applications being considered for funding and submitted to the National Office for final review and selection.

USDA Rural Development works to ensure that rural citizens can participate fully in the global economy by providing technical assistance, funding, and other programs that help rural Americans build strong economies to improve their quality of life. For additional information or an application package, contact Daniel Torres at (254) 742-9780. For further information regarding USDA Rural Development programs, visit our web site at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov>.

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