



NEWS RELEASE

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USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT ANNOUNCES FUNDING FOR NORTH CHEROKEE COUNTY VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT, INC.

TROUP, TEXAS, September 18, 2006-- Bryan Daniel, USDA Rural Development State Director, today announced that North Cherokee County Volunteer Fire Department, Inc. was selected to receive a \$18,800 loan and a \$10,000 grant through the agency's Community Facilities Loan and Grant Program. This effort is part of the USDA Rural Development mission to help rural areas build and enhance essential community facilities.

"USDA Rural Development Community Facilities Programs help rural communities keep pace with the needs of their rising populations," said Daniel. "Rural residents can utilize our programs to help provide essential public services that will enhance the quality of life for all rural residents."

The funds will be used to build a fire station to house equipment and vehicles, currently kept at the homes of volunteers, in the Tecula Community. The Department provides service to the northern section of Cherokee County and provides mutual aid with the City of Jacksonville.

In Fiscal Year 2005, \$31.8 million in Community Facility Direct and Guaranteed Loans and over \$900,000 in grants were obligated in Texas. Funds are used to enhance the quality of life for residents of rural areas by providing the means for construction, expansion, or enhancement of community facilities, telecommunication and distance education programs, and water and waste disposal systems. These programs are important because they supply a number of growth opportunities to communities with improved utility facilities, increased job availability, and technology and educational resources. Since 2001, USDA Rural Development Community Programs have awarded \$1.8 billion for these purposes, and touched the lives of more than 1.16 million households in the process.

USDA Rural Development strives to see 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 further information regarding USDA Rural Development Programs, contact the Henderson Local Office at (903) 657-8221, Extension 4, or visit our website at <http://rurdev.usda.gov/tx/>.

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