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United States Department of Agriculture - Rural Development  
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## VERMONT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **CALAIS RESIDENTS GET EXPANDED TELECOMMUNICATIONS CAPABILITIES**

Montpelier, VT- April 24, 2007: Curtis Anderson, Deputy Administrator of USDA Rural Development Rural Utilities Programs presented a \$50,000 Rural Business Enterprise Grant check to Carol Ellison, President of Central Vermont Economic Development Corporation (CVEDC). The money will be used to purchase telecommunications infrastructure equipment to establish a leasing program for Wireless Internet Providers. Qualified wireless providers will deploy the leased equipment at customer sites, increasing telecommunication capabilities of residents and local businesses. The leases will have a purchase option which will allow for continual upgrades. The project will initially save six jobs and create two or three additional jobs with an indirect impact on over 160 residents in this town.

Governor Douglas said this project supports his “e-State Initiative” – an effort to provide universal broadband and wireless service in Vermont by 2010. “Vermont can become the nation’s first true ‘e-state’ and projects like this will play an important role in our effort,” Governor Douglas said. “Working together, we will build a universal wireless system that will form the platform for innovation, economic growth and job creation in every sector of our economy.”

Central Vermont Economic Development views this as a pilot project. Once successfully completed, this model can be utilized throughout our rural communities and delivered through the already recognized network of regional development corporations. It will permit the Wireless Internet Providers to become established with a customer base and a track record that will enable them to seek conventional funding for further expansion. It will provide businesses and residents with the necessary tools to advance economic vitality. In addition, this infrastructure will help to preserve our landscape as well as foster the entrepreneurial sector of our economy.

“Broadband is having a profound effect on the nation’s economy, its strength, and its growth,” said Anderson. “Our programs encourage investment in broadband infrastructure to enable all rural communities, residents and businesses to have equal, affordable access to high-speed internet technology, to live locally and compete globally.”

CVEDC has a long established record of providing service and programs to the municipalities and business community of Central Vermont. “On behalf of the Board of Directors of Central Vermont Economic Development I would like to express our sincere appreciation to the USDA Rural Development for this grant,”

said Ellison. “Our initiative will hopefully encourage more entrepreneurship, business development and real time access for our next generation. We are delighted to have the opportunity and we are excited about the possibilities that this grant will provide.”

USDA Rural Development’s mission is to increase economic opportunity and improve the quality of life in Rural America. This is done by providing financial and technical assistance to foster growth and new opportunities for business development, home ownership, and critical community and technology infrastructure. To learn more about USDA Rural Development programs visit the web site at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/vt>.