



MEDIA RELEASE

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USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE SPONSOR SUCCESSFUL TRIBAL INFRASTRUCTURE WORKSHOP

Olympia---For the past two days Indian Tribes from the region have participated in a workshop to learn more about getting their infrastructure and community facilities needs met. USDA Rural Development and Indian Health Service (IHS) co-sponsored the event, which was well received by the Tribes.

Approximately 110 people attended the one and a half-day workshop in Olympia, representing 19 of Washington's 29 federally recognized tribes, one tribe from Idaho and one from Oregon, federal and state agencies, technical assistance providers and commercial lenders. The emphasis of the meeting was to bring technical and funding resources together who can assist tribes with infrastructure and community facilities projects. Topics included grant/loan application development, strategic planning, lessons learned from past projects and partnerships, success stories, etc. Tribes were also able to request on-site assistance from technical teams for specific projects.

Jackie J. Gleason, Washington State Director of USDA Rural Development welcomed the participants on Tuesday morning and talked about the successful partnership that exists between their agency and Indian Health Service. The two agencies have worked hard to streamline processes and avoid duplication of activities, for the benefit of the government and the tribes. One example is the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding to allow one environmental process and review that is acceptable to both agencies, along with the subsequent construction monitoring and funding oversight.

USDA Rural Development is dedicated to enhancing the ability of rural communities to develop, grow, and improve their quality of life by targeting financial assistance and technical resources in areas of greatest need, which includes federally recognized tribes, through activities of greatest potential. In the past two fiscal years USDA Rural Development has invested more than \$11 million in infrastructure, housing, community facility and business projects for the Tribes in our state.

To learn more about the programs administered by USDA Rural Development, contact the nearest USDA Service Center or visit their website at www.rurdev.usda.gov/wa. ###