



NEWS RELEASE

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Contact:
Weldon Freeman (202) 690-1384

USDA ANNOUNCES GRANTS FOR DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES TO STRENGTHEN RURAL COMMUNITIES

WASHINGTON, February 18, 2010 - Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack today announced the selection of community based organizations in 18 states to receive funding to promote economic growth. USDA Rural Development Rural Housing Administrator Tammy Trevino made the announcement on Vilsack's behalf while attending an event with Senator Blanche Lincoln at the Arkansas Studies Institute in Little Rock. The organizations will receive more than \$6.5 million in total grants to support rural economic development efforts.

"These funds support USDA's partnership with rural America to bring increased economic opportunity to rural citizens and communities," Vilsack said. "They will serve as investments that will help organizations build the capacity and expertise of local nonprofit groups."

For example, in Little Rock, Ark., Winrock International was selected to receive a \$251,706 grant to help local groups establish economic development projects, and deliver services including energy audits, teach sustainable business practices and management.

In Bozeman, Mont., Rural Community Innovations, d/b/a National Enterprise, was selected to receive a \$251,706 grant to develop a program that provides technical assistance to two non-profit tribal entities and three federally recognized tribes. Rural Community Innovations will help organizations develop community facilities and housing for low-income and elderly residents along with at-risk and homeless youth in rural communities.

Land-of-Sky Regional Council, in Asheville, N.C., was selected to receive a \$50,700 grant to provide technical assistance to help local organizations deliver housing assistance services. Training and technical assistance efforts involve financial planning and management; strategic planning; personnel selection; and sustainability.

The funding announced today is being provided through USDA Rural Development's Rural Community Development Initiative Program which helps community based development organizations, federally recognized Indian tribes and other groups promote economic growth in low-income, rural communities. Recipients are required to obtain matching funds, increasing the value of the grants. The grants are awarded to public or nonprofit intermediary organizations. The funds are then provided to recipients, which must be located in eligible rural areas. Funding of individual recipients is contingent upon their meeting the conditions of the grant agreement. The grant awards announced today are not provided through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

The complete list of the RCDI grant recipients is below.

Arkansas

- Winrock International: \$251,706

California

- Self-Help Enterprises: \$251,706
- Walking Shield, Inc.: \$251,706

Colorado

- Colorado Community Revitalization Association: \$136,268

Delaware

- National Council on Agricultural Life and Labor Research: \$66,800

Georgia

- Georgia Legal Services Program: \$150,000
- Southwest Georgia United Empowerment Zone, Inc.: \$251,706

Idaho

- University of Idaho: \$163, 846

Iowa

- Iowa League of RC &Ds: \$251,706

Kentucky

- Kentucky Highlands Investment Corporation: \$251,706

Massachusetts

- Youthbuild: \$251,706

Minnesota

- Corporation for Supportive Housing: \$200,000
- Greater Minnesota Housing Fund: \$251,706
- Minnesota Home Ownership Center: \$251,706
- Initiative Foundation: \$251,706

Montana

- Rural Community Innovations, \$251,706

North Carolina

- The Conservation Fund: \$225,000
- Land of Sky Regional Council: \$50,700
- Legal Aid of North Carolina: \$215, 785
- NC Rural Economic Development Center: \$251,706

Pennsylvania

- Pennsylvania Downtown Center, Inc., \$230,646

South Dakota

- North East South Dakota Community Action Program: \$251,706
- Rural Learning Center: \$225,000
- South Dakota State University: \$251,706

Texas

- Cen-Tex Certified Development Corporation: \$80,000

Wyoming

- Wyoming Community Network: \$251,706

Washington

- Community Frameworks: \$56,000
- Washington, D.C. - Headquarters Organizations
- Housing Assistance Council: \$251,706
- Neighborhood Reinvestment: \$181,000

West Virginia

- WV Community Development Hub, Inc.: \$251,706

USDA Rural Development administers and manages more than 40 housing, business, and community infrastructure and facilities programs. These programs are designed to improve the economic stability of rural communities, businesses, residents, farmers and ranchers and improve the quality of life in rural America. Rural Development has an existing portfolio of more than \$127 billion in loans and loan guarantees.

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