USDA Invests in Drinking Water Quality and Wastewater Management for 784,000 Rural Residents and Businesses in 42 States

Projects will Improve Water Pressure, Address Public Health and Environmental Issues

WASHINGTON, Nov. 19, 2019 – U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Deputy Under Secretary for Rural Development Donald “DJ” LaVoy today announced that the department is investing $635 million in 122 projects to improve water systems and wastewater handling services in rural communities in 42 states. USDA is funding the projects through the Water and Waste Disposal Loan and Grant program.

“These investments will bring reliable infrastructure to rural communities. They will replace old, fragile, leaking water pipes with new ones and allow upgrades to water handling systems that are decades old, boosting water pressure and cutting water losses. Working with our partners, these investments create jobs and improve public health and safety,” LaVoy said.

“Under the leadership of President Trump and Agriculture Secretary Perdue, USDA is committed to partnering with rural communities to help them improve their infrastructure, because when rural America thrives, all of America thrives.”

The projects announced today are in Alabama, Arizona, Colorado, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Iowa, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Mississippi, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Washington, West Virginia and Wisconsin.

Eligible applicants include rural cities, towns and water districts. The funds can be used for drinking water, stormwater drainage and waste disposal systems in rural communities that meet population limits.

Below are examples of water and wastewater projects in rural communities that will receive funding:

- The city of Amity in northwest Oregon will use a $1.6 million loan and a $1.7 million grant to upgrade the municipal water system, which can no longer reliably provide the volume of clean drinking water the community needs. The investment will be used to
improve the water treatment intake system. Additionally, larger pumps will be installed in reservoirs and at the water treatment plant.

- The Forest Park Tenants’ Association Cooperative in Jaffrey, N.H., will use a $2 million loan and a $1.4 million grant to make water, wastewater and stormwater improvements at a 116-unit housing park. The current system no longer works properly, causing water loss and frequent sewage line blockages. All water mains and a section of the sewer main will be replaced, and a stormwater management system will be installed. The project also includes roadway improvements that will be funded through a Community Development Block Grant.

- Starke, Fla., will use an $8.8 million loan and a $7.8 million grant to improve the city’s wastewater treatment facility, which is more than 40 years old. System improvements will correct health and sanitary issues and improve service to 2,331 customers.

View the interactive RD Apply tool or contact one of USDA Rural Development’s state or field offices for application or eligibility information.

In April 2017, President Donald J. Trump established the Interagency Task Force on Agriculture and Rural Prosperity to identify legislative, regulatory and policy changes that could promote agriculture and prosperity in rural communities. In January 2018, Secretary Perdue presented the Task Force’s findings to President Trump. These findings included 31 recommendations to align the federal government with state, local and tribal governments to take advantage of opportunities that exist in rural America. Increasing investments in rural infrastructure is a key recommendation of the task force.

To view the report in its entirety, please view the Report to the President of the United States from the Task Force on Agriculture and Rural Prosperity (PDF, 5.4 MB). In addition, to view the categories of the recommendations, please view the Rural Prosperity infographic (PDF, 190 KB).

USDA Rural Development provides loans and grants to help expand economic opportunities and create jobs in rural areas. This assistance supports infrastructure improvements; business development; housing; community facilities such as schools, public safety and health care; and high-speed internet access in rural areas. For more information, visit www.rd.usda.gov.

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