USDA Invests $281 Million in Rural Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Improvements in 36 States and Puerto Rico

Projects will Improve Water Infrastructure, Public Health and Environmental Quality for 350,000 Rural Residents and Businesses

WASHINGTON, May 27, 2020 – U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Deputy Under Secretary for Rural Development Bette Brand today announced that the department is investing $281 million in 106 projects to improve water and wastewater infrastructure in rural communities in 36 states and Puerto Rico. USDA is funding the projects through the Water and Waste Disposal Loan and Grant program.

“These investments will bring modern, reliable water and wastewater infrastructure to rural communities. They will replace deteriorating, leaking water pipes with new ones and upgrade water handling systems that are decades old. These investments create jobs and improve public health and safety for our rural neighbors,” Brand 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.”

USDA is funding projects in Alabama, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Georgia, Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Mississippi, Montana, Nebraska, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin and Wyoming.

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 Mabton, Wash., will use a $677,000 loan and a $296,195 grant to drill a new well. The city owns and operates a domestic water system that serves 632 active, metered connections. Ground water is currently pumped from two wells, delivered to an 800,000-
gallon reservoir, treated by chlorination for disinfection and distributed to customers. The new well will augment water capacity, resulting in improved reliability.

- The city of Auburn, Ky., will use a $6.1 million loan and a $2.6 million grant to replace the wastewater treatment plant to accommodate increased discharge from a new industrial facility. The expanded treatment plant will continue to provide safe and reliable wastewater treatment services for customers in rural Logan County while expanding capacity for economic development.

- In Terlton, Okla., Pawnee County Rural Water District #2 will use a $1.7 million loan and a $597,000 grant to rehabilitate wells and bring the water treatment plant up to Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality standards. These improvements will enable the district to reduce the amount of water it is required to purchase. This will help lower operating expenses and increase the efficiency and sustainability of the system. The district provides water to 2,174 rural residents.

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

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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