



News Release

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Trump Administration Highlights Record Levels of Investment in 2020 to Build Rural American Prosperity

Vermont & New Hampshire Total Funding Exceeded \$359 Million

WASHINGTON, Dec. 17, 2020 – USDA Deputy Under Secretary for Rural Development Bette Brand today highlighted the department’s [investments in 2020 that are building prosperity and strengthening the nation’s rural businesses and communities](#).

“Under the leadership of President Donald J. Trump and Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue, USDA invested a record \$40 billion in rural communities in 2020,” Brand said. “This assistance is helping increase economic opportunities and improving the quality of life for rural residents across the 50 states and all U.S. territories.”

Vermont and New Hampshire State Director of USDA Rural Development Anthony Linardos was pleased to announce the landmark funding in a recent statement. “The 2020 investments in our rural communities reflect USDA’s urgent response to help those affected by the COVID-19 global pandemic,” he said. “We worked to bring modern community facilities and water and wastewater infrastructure to rural areas, provide rural residents homeownership opportunities and crucial home repairs, and invest in businesses and family-supporting jobs. As we all know, when rural America thrives, all of America thrives.”

Below is a summary of USDA’s Fiscal Year 2020 accomplishments in Vermont and New Hampshire:

Connecting Rural America with Accessible Healthcare

- Funded \$647,097 in projects through the [Distance Learning & Telemedicine Grant program](#). They include grants to the University of New Hampshire and Northern Vermont University to create and expand telehealth networks, offering prison inmates and low-income rural residents better access to healthcare and substance-abuse counseling.

Improving Rural Infrastructure

- Invested \$36.3 million to expand access to [safe drinking water and improve wastewater management systems](#) through the [Water & Waste Disposal Loan & Grant program](#). These investments included [\\$13 million to the town of Epping, NH](#), to replace sludge lagoons with a solar field, and \$11 million to Montgomery, VT, to build out and improve its water and wastewater treatment infrastructure.

Bolstering Rural Economic Development

- Invested [\\$1.7 million in grants](#) to rural small businesses through the [Rural Energy for America Program](#) (REAP), implementing energy-efficiency improvements, renewable-energy systems and energy-development assistance.
- Funded [\\$2.2 million](#) through [Value-Added Producer Grants](#) to help agricultural producers in rural communities develop products and widen areas of distribution.
- Provided \$4.1 million in funding for rural businesses through the [Business & Industry CARES Act program](#) to supplement their working capital to prevent, prepare for and respond to the economic impacts of the coronavirus.

Improving Rural Quality of Life

- Funded \$96.6 million in projects through the [Community Facilities Direct Loan & Grant program](#). This included a [\\$57.8 million loan to the Winooski School District](#) in Vermont, a [\\$26 million loan to the Peabody Home](#) in Lebanon, NH, and a [\\$500,000 disaster relief grant to the Vermont Food Bank](#).
- Invested \$177.8 million through [Single Family Housing Programs](#) to help 1106 low- and moderate-income families [buy](#) or [repair](#) their homes in Vermont and New Hampshire.

Enhancing Customer Service

- Cut red tape to increase private investment in rural America by making it easier for lenders to access four flagship loan programs under the [OneRD Guarantee Loan Initiative](#).
- Took immediate actions to assist rural residents, businesses and communities impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, USDA launched a [Federal Rural Resource Guide](#), provided loan forbearances, halted evictions and made additional funding available under existing programs. For more information, visit our [COVID-19 response page](#).
- Streamlined regulations to ease customer access to CARES Act programs, infrastructure improvements, business development, housing, community facilities and high-speed internet access in rural areas.

USDA Rural Development provides loans and grants to help expand economic opportunities and create jobs in rural areas. This assistance supports housing, infrastructure improvements, business development, high-speed internet access, and community facilities such as schools, public safety and health care. For more information, visit www.rd.usda.gov. If you'd like to subscribe to USDA Rural Development updates, visit our [GovDelivery subscriber page](#).

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