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News Release

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USDA Invests in Rural Water and Wastewater Infrastructure in 24 States

Investments will Benefit Residents in Crockett, Hancock, Henry and Tipton County

NASHVILLE, Tenn., Aug. 8, 2019 – U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Utilities Service Administrator Chad Rupe today announced that USDA is investing [\\$135 million in 49 projects to improve rural water infrastructure in 24 states](#). Included in this announcement, Tennessee State Director Jim Tracy announces four projects in Tennessee with an investment of over \$13 million in loans and over \$3 million in grants.

“Rural Development is committed to strengthening rural communities, with the improvement of water and waste disposal systems being a top priority,” Tracy said. “These investments will improve the functionality of water systems, which will in turn be more cost effective to operate.”

USDA is making the investments through the [Water and Waste Disposal Loan and Grant](#) program. Rural cities and towns, water districts and other eligible entities can use the funds for drinking water, stormwater drainage and waste disposal systems in rural communities with 10,000 or fewer residents.

Below are examples of projects announced today that show how USDA is partnering to improve rural water and wastewater infrastructure.

- The County Wide Utility District will receive a \$765,000 loan and \$610,000 grant to replace approximately ten miles of existing water lines. The lines in question have suffered numerous failures over the last 12 months. These failures result in an unreliable and unsafe drinking water supply to the customers affected.
- The town of Sneedville will receive a \$209,000 loan and \$203,000 grant to upgrade the wastewater treatment plant. The treatment plant is more than 30 years old and needs to be upgraded. The city has completed three phases of inflow and infiltration work in the past ten years, which has significantly reduced inflow and infiltration. Improvements to the headworks include the addition of a mechanical screen with an integrated compactor unit at the headworks channel, two new surge pumps in the surge basin, and piping and valve additions to operate the surge basin. A new flow splitter box will be built, two clarifier units will be installed, and a new air compressor and miscellaneous other support hardware will be added. There is additional funding of a \$500,000 grant from the Appalachian Regional Commission.

- The city of Paris will receive a \$11,914,000 loan and \$ 2,216,000 grant to upgrade the wastewater collection system and treatment plant. The modifications to the wastewater treatment plant after the improvements, will include the conversion of the holding pond into an equalization basin, an equipment upgrade, and installation of fine screen as part of the Phase 2 Wastewater Treatment Plant Improvements project. The project will also rehabilitate the collection system at the Clifty Creek sub-basin and replace approximately 7,000 linear feet of the Jones Bend Trunk Sewer.
- The Poplar Grove Utility District will receive a \$1,050,000 loan to make the distribution system more fail-safe and make well operations more energy efficient. Poplar Grove Utility District (PGUD) experienced a flood event that caused a major disruption to the district's ability to serve the west side with water. The flood caused scouring of Big Creek, which exposed the 20-inch main that feeds the west side. This is the only main feeding on the west side. Customers were required to boil water for approximately two and a half days. It should be noted that this repair was done under duress and may not be up to construction standards expected under normal conditions. A proposal to install a new 20-inch water main to feed the west side of the system is necessary to meet the district's needs.

In addition to Tennessee, USDA is also announcing investments today in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Montana, North Carolina, New Mexico, New York, Nevada, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Carolina, Texas, Utah, Washington and West Virginia.

USDA had \$2.9 billion available for USDA [Water and Environmental Program](#) loans and grants at the beginning of fiscal year 2019. USDA will make additional funding announcements in coming weeks.

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/tn.

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