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News Release

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USDA to Provide \$150 Million to Help Rural Communities Affected by Natural Disasters

The Department Declares Tennessee Counties Eligible for Disaster Relief

NASHVILLE, Tenn., Sept. 10, 2019 – U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Housing Service Administrator Bruce Lammers today announced that USDA is making \$150 million in grants available through the [Community Facilities Program](#) to help rural communities continue their recovery from the devastating effects of hurricanes, fires and other natural disasters. Tennessee Rural Development State Director Jim Tracy announces that there are more than 50 counties eligible for Community Facilities funding.

“It is imperative that our rural communities receive the relief necessary to continue on with everyday life,” Tracy said. “Our agency stands with efforts to implement long-term recovery following natural disasters.”

The \$150 million is included in the [Additional Supplemental Appropriations for Disaster Relief Act](#) that President Trump signed into law on June 6, 2019. The grants may be used for relief in areas affected by Hurricanes Michael and Florence; wildfires in 2018; and other natural disasters where the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has provided a notice declaring a Major Disaster Declaration and assigned a FEMA disaster recovery (DR) number. View the [list of designated communities](#) as of Sept. 8, 2019. Please check the [FEMA website](#) for regular updates and names of additional communities that may be added.

To check if your Tennessee county has been declared eligible, view the [list of designated communities](#).

Grant applications will be accepted at USDA [state offices](#) on a continual basis until funds are exhausted. Grant assistance will be provided on a graduated scale; smaller communities with the lowest median household income are eligible for a higher proportion of grant funds. For application details and additional information, see page 47477 of the Sept. 10 [Federal Register](#).

More than 100 types of projects are eligible for Community Facilities funding. Eligible applicants include municipalities, public bodies, nonprofit organizations and federally recognized Native American tribes. Projects must be in eligible rural areas with a population of 20,000 or less.

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 cornerstone 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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