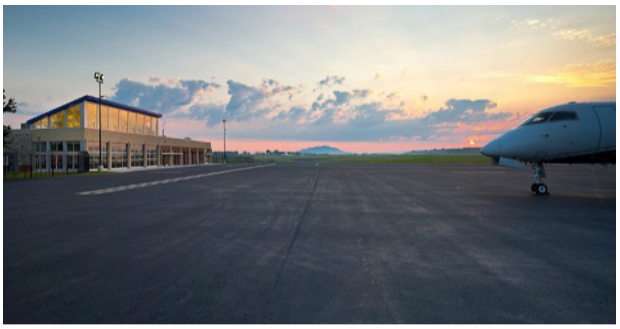
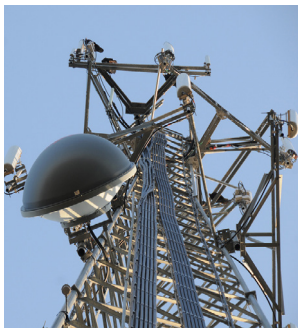
USDA
United States Department of Agriculture





USDA Rural Development - Virginia

Annual Progress Report 2015

Committed to the future of rural communities.

Organizing for the Success of Rural Communities

This year, USDA Rural Development in Virginia has reorganized and changed in some very big and exciting ways. All of which have cleared a path to expanded partnerships, more productive collaborations, greater capacity to serve and ultimately restored economic success and improved quality of life in rural Virginia.

One of the essential components of our reorganization has been a change in the agency's structure. We returned this year to a decentralized model of service that focuses on embedding more of our team members in Virginia's communities. This includes the addition of four Area Director positions that lead teams that cover every corner of the commonwealth. Their jobs are to know the areas and serve as contact persons for the people and organizations therein. This would include attending community and regional meetings to seek out and ensure collaborations. They are vitally important as the face of USDA Rural Development in their areas – leaving no doubt that we are involved in communities across Virginia.

Another new component of USDA Rural Development in Virginia is our Community and Economic Development (CED) initiative, which focuses on cultivating the capacity of our partners to take better advantage of all of our programs. We provide guidance, help individuals and organizations through application processes and make sure they have the knowledge, ability, understanding and opportunity to work with us. Our team members in this area, as well as our team members agency-wide, focus on transforming USDA Rural Development into a strategic partner rather than simply a lending institution.

These growing USDA Rural Development components, along with a Policy, Data and Research Unit, a Public Affairs Department and various program expansions have accounted for 26 new USDA Rural Development team members in Virginia this year. I am extremely proud of each and every new staff member, as well as all of our dedicated veteran staff members, as they are qualified, motivated, eager and committed to improving the economy and quality of life in rural Virginia communities. I want to thank each team member of USDA Rural Development Virginia for the tremendous accomplishments of FY 2015.

Ultimately, our most significant goal is to be a key part of rural communities across the commonwealth, cultivating and nurturing partnerships with municipalities, nonprofit organizations, private businesses, agricultural producers and farmers. These partners are essential because I believe USDA Rural Development is the first rung in a ladder to economic success – a ladder the communities place and climb to achieve their own visions.

I believe the foundation this year's reorganization has established will be the best support for Virginia communities to climb their own economic ladders for years to come.

Sincerely,

Basil Gooden

Basil Gooden, Ph.D
USDA Rural Development State Director, Virginia

Table of Contents

Overall Data

Fiscal Year 2015 Investments....2
Total Investments in Virginia Counties....4
Investments in Virginia Service Areas....5
Public-Private Partnerships....6

Rural Housing

Data and Statistics....7
Affordable Homes Celebrated....8
A Push for Homeownership....9
Programs....10

Rural Business

Data and Statistics....11
Success Story: Turkey Farm Builds Working Capital....12
Success Story: An Example in Clean Energy....13
Programs....14

Rural Utilities

Data and Statistics....15
Success Story: Broadband in the Mountains....16
Success Story: Sewer Repairs in Appomattox....17
Programs....18

Community Facilities

Data and Statistics....19
Success Story: Health on the Hill....20
Success Story: Loan Unites a School District....21
Programs....22

Community Economic Development Initiatives

StrikeForce....23
Stronger Economies Together....24
Poverty Targeting Progress....25
Success Story: Hunger Takes No Vacation....26
Success Story: Community Excels in Engineering....27
Success Story: Stonger Economies Together Expands....28

Virginia Overview
Data and Statistics

Fiscal Year 2015 Investments

Rural Housing

$677 million invested in loans and grants.

$29 million toward rental assistance.

4,140 low and moderate income families helped through Single Family Housing programs.

Rural Business

661 jobs created/saved.

33 local food projects funded throughout the state.

Rural Utilities

17 communities gained improved water and sewer access.

32,000 people in Southwest Virginia provided broadband access.

Community Facilities

$40,000 to support mobile health services in Appalachian region.

9 public safety vehicles funded.

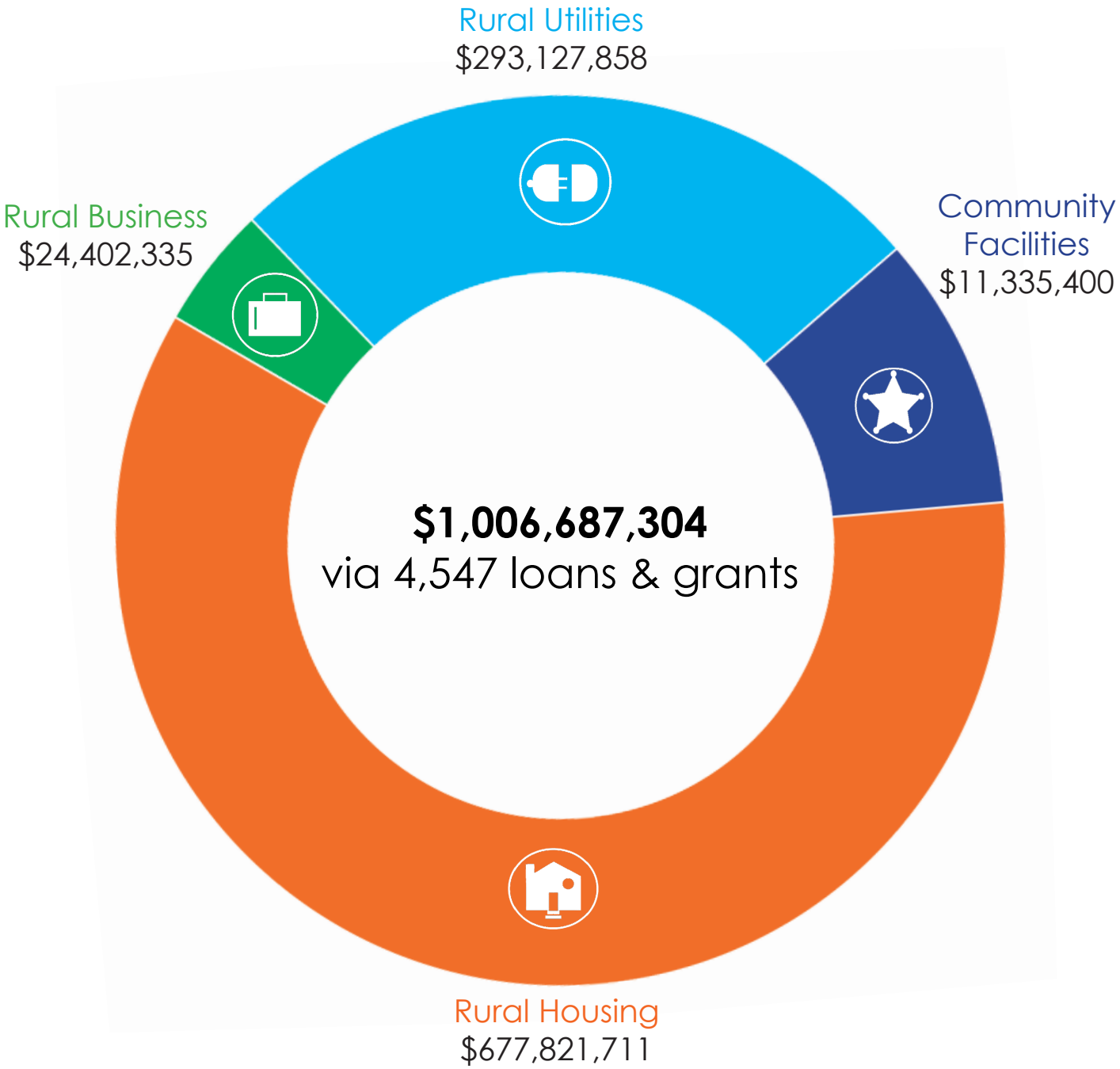
	Award	Amount
Business & Industry	7	$16,801,707
Renewable Energy	27	$2,159,960
Business Grants	10	$607,000
*RCDG/SDGG	3	$460,116
*VAPG	30	$3,969,140
*SFH Direct	113	$14,267,347
SFH Guaranteed	3,858	$626,215,261
SFH Repairs	169	$1,115,908
Multi Family Housing	22	$2,888,735
Farm Labor Housing	3	$4,250,000
Rental Assistance	211	$29,084,460
CF Loans	16	$10,560,900
CF Grants	21	$774,500
*WWD Loans	12	$24,034,000
WWD Grants	20	$11,482,700
Telecommunication	2	$3,373,158
Electric	2	$254,238,000
All Other Programs	21	$404,412
TOTAL	**4,547**	**$1,006,687,304**

More than $1 Billion

in Rural Development loans and grants invested in the fiscal year.

*Rural Cooperative Development Grant Program/ Socially Disadvantaged Groups Grant Program

*Value Added Producer Grants
*Single Family Housing
*Waste and Water Disposal



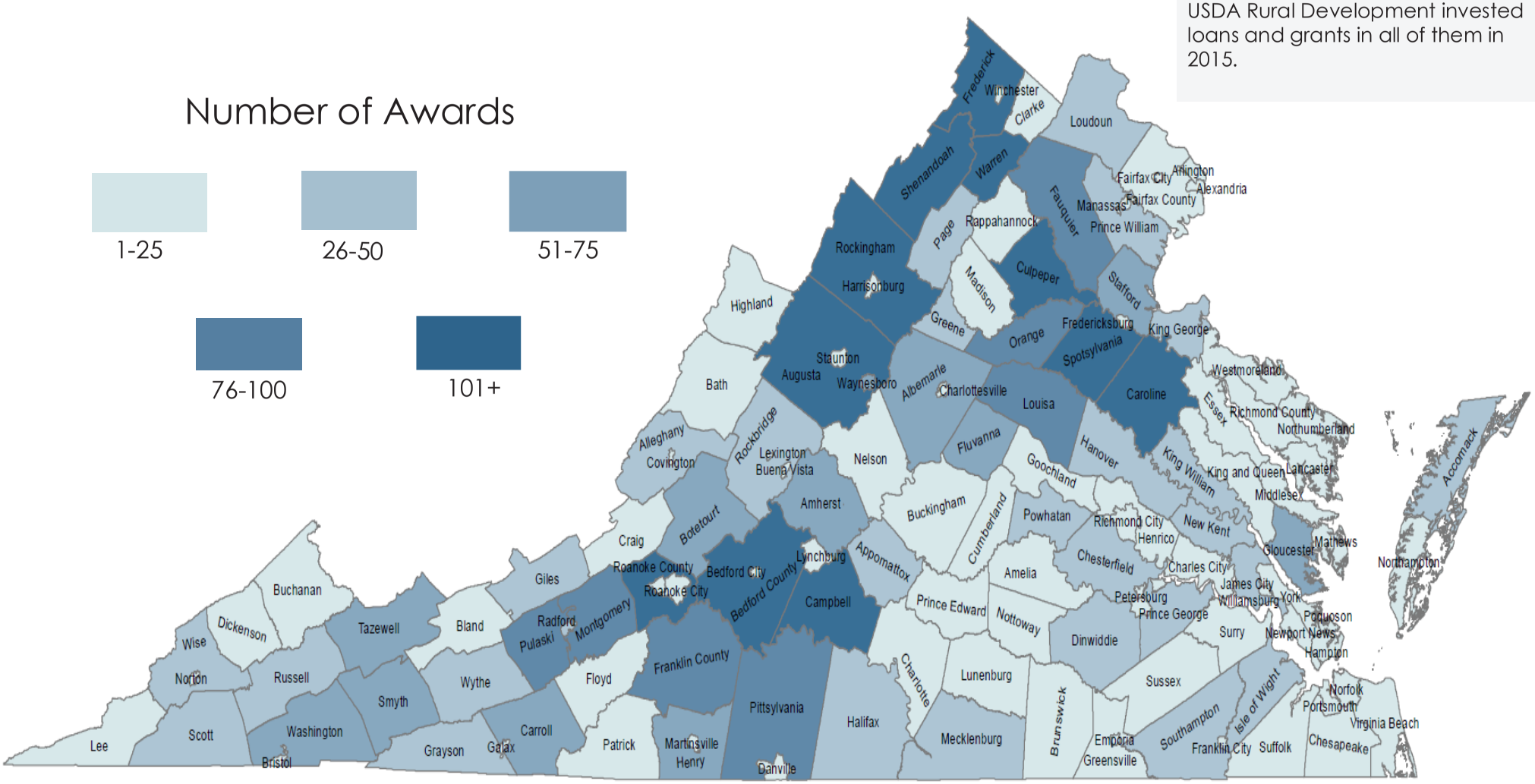
A Need For Investment

USDA Rural Development is working to improve the lives of rural Virginians through strategic investments that help their communities thrive. Nineteen percent of Virginians live in rural localities. During the fiscal year the agency invested more than $1 billion in loans and grants across its core mission areas: Rural Business, Community Facilities, Rural Utilities and Rural Housing. Rural Development made more than 4,000 awards to support access to health care, public safety, job creation, local food project expansion, improvements to sewer and drinking water quality and access, access to broadband, safe and affordable housing for low income families, improved transportation for rural school children and many other awards that serve to improve the quality of life for rural Virginians.

Total Investments in Virginia Counties

Every County
Will be Served

There are 95 counties in Virginia. USDA Rural Development invested loans and grants in all of them in 2015.



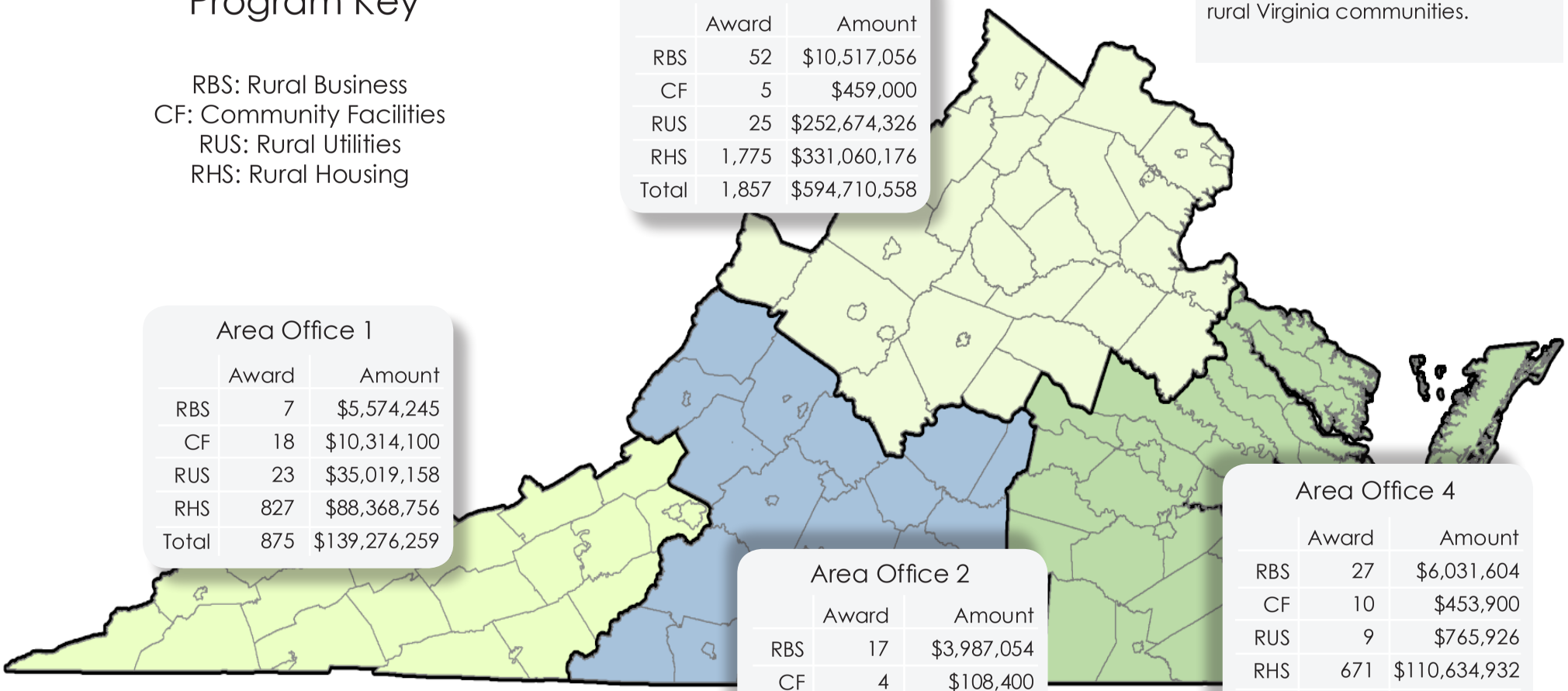
Total Investments in Virginia Service Areas

Better Service
Better Communities

Virginia has four service areas, each equiped with an area office and satellite offices to better serve rural Virginia communities.

Program Key

RBS: Rural Business
CF: Community Facilities
RUS: Rural Utilities
RHS: Rural Housing



Area Office 3

	Award	Amount
RBS	52	$10,517,056
CF	5	$459,000
RUS	25	$252,674,326
RHS	1,775	$331,060,176
Total	1,857	$594,710,558

Area Office 1

	Award	Amount
RBS	7	$5,574,245
CF	18	$10,314,100
RUS	23	$35,019,158
RHS	827	$88,368,756
Total	875	$139,276,259

Area Office 2

	Award	Amount
RBS	17	$3,987,054
CF	4	$108,400
RUS	15	$7,385,408
RHS	860	$110,215,932
Total	896	$121,696,794

Area Office 4

	Award	Amount
RBS	27	$6,031,604
CF	10	$453,900
RUS	9	$765,926
RHS	671	$110,634,932
Total	717	$117,886,362

* Please note: Area numbers do not match the total investment of Rural Development in Virginia. Some of the projects were not attributed to a geographical service area.

Public-Private Partnerships

In order to increase access to funding, create jobs and stimulate rural economies, USDA Rural Development partners with private lenders to guarantee home and business loans. The agency guaranteed more than 3,800 home loans for moderate-income Virginians in 2015. Through business loan guarantees USDA Rural Development is projected to create or save 483 jobs. In addition, the agency matched 75 percent of its Rural Business funds through leveraged lending partnerships.

$17,714,453
leveraged through Rural Business private partners

483 Jobs
projected to be created and saved through Business & Industry loan guarantees

Loan Guarantee Programs

	Award	Amount
Business & Industry	7	$16,801,707
Single Family Housing	3,858	$626,215,261
Total	**3,865**	**$643,016,968**

Virginia Overview
Data and Statistics

FY 2015 Rural Housing

Multi-Family Housing

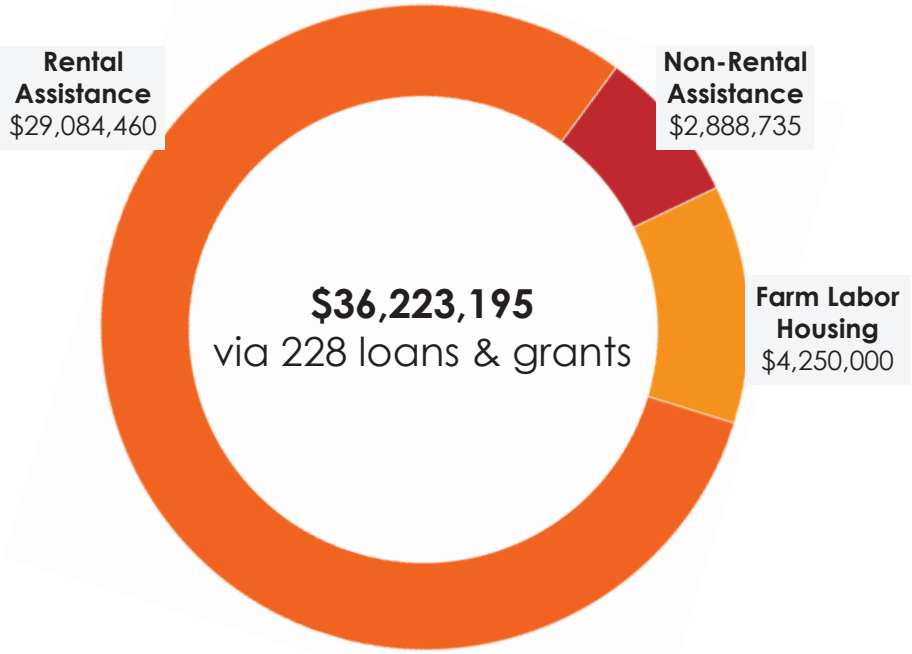
Twenty-two percent of renters in Virginia are very low income and face a significant housing cost burden. According to the National Low Income Housing Coalition there is a deficit of affordable housing in Virginia, increasing the potential for homelessness amongst very low income families. The Multi-Family Housing program provided 211 rental assistance awards to low and very low income families in 2015. In addition, the Multi-Family Housing program has partnered with USDA's SNAP program to address food security issues facing these families in the summer months. The partnership provided almost 4 million meals to very low income children.

Single Family Housing

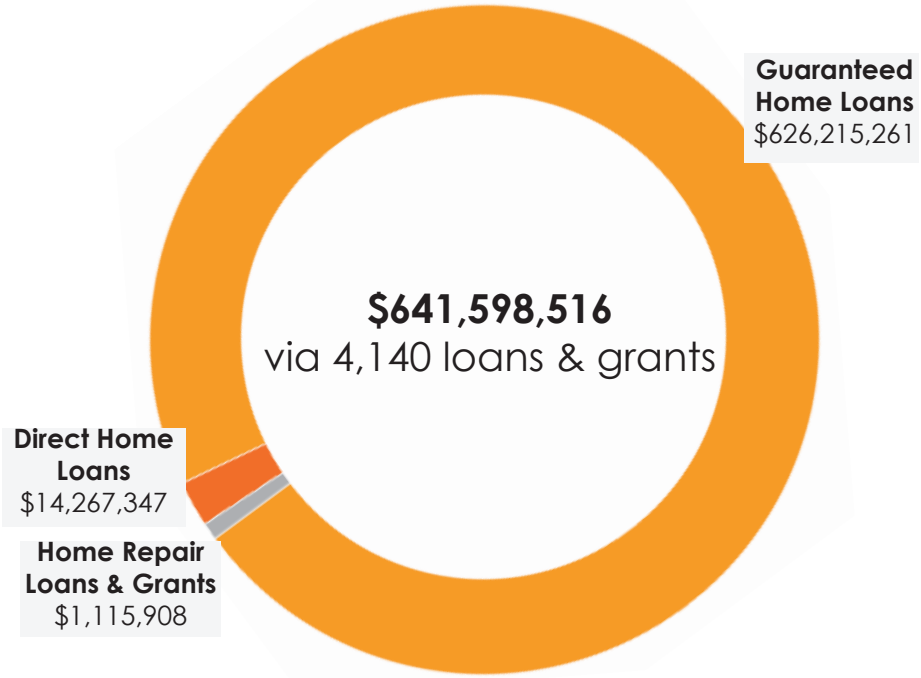
Twenty-four percent of the population in rural Virginia is over the age of 60.* Overall, populations in rural localities are aging at a higher rate than other areas of Virginia. The Rural Housing Home Repair program assisted 114 elderly homeowners. The program funded plumbing, heating and structural repairs for 55 additional low income families to reside safely and comfortably in their homes. Rural Housing programs make homeownership a reality for many families that would not qualify for a traditional mortgage. In 2015, 113 low and very low income families purchased homes with low interest rates.

*Housing Assistance Council. Tabulations of the Census 2010 SF1 Population Counts. www.ruraldataportal.org

Multi-Family Housing



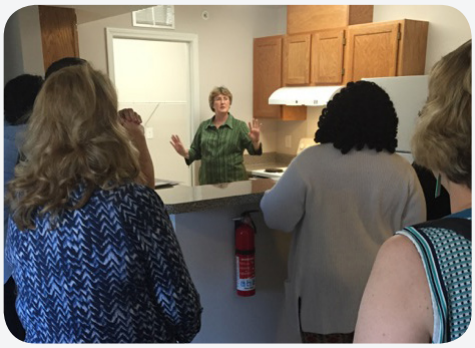
Single-Family Housing



Rural Housing
Success Stories

Affordable Housing Celebrated

Members of Virginia Housing Development Authority, Surber Development and Consulting LLC, and USDA Rural Development Virginia gather to cut ribbon at Lily Ridge Apartments ribbon cutting ceremony.



Lily Ridge site manager giving Rural Development national office employees a tour of Lily Ridge Apartments during open house.

USDA Rural Development national office employees applauded the completion of Lily Ridge Apartments in Ruckersville at a ribbon cutting ceremony and open house in early November. The ceremony celebrated the development of affordable rental homes that can house nearly 50 families from Greene County and surrounding areas.

During the ceremony, Jen Surber of Surber Development and Consulting LLC, recalled that the apartment complex moved in its first 12 residents on Sept. 15. She said 22 units were already occupied with expected closings on the remaining units by the end of the month.

Lily Ridge Apartments is a part of a larger community development effort that was prompted by a 2014 market study that showed a need for approximately 402 affordable rental units in the area. Lily Ridge is supplying 48 units, representing 11.9 percent of that need. In a revitalization certification, chairman of the Greene County Board of Supervisors, David Cox certified that affordable rental housing will economically benefit Greene County.

In this fiscal year, USDA Rural Development Virginia funded a Multi-Family Housing Loan Guarantee of $2,222,564 to support this effort. It was also supported by the Virginia Housing Development Authority which reserved $4,415,470 in tax credit equity for Lily Ridge's development.

Lily Ridge is targeted to individuals and families earning less than 60 percent of the area median income. The apartment complex consists of four buildings that include eight one-bedroom, 28 two-bedroom and 12 three-bedroom units. Twenty-four of those units have universal designs and five are 504 Home Repair accessible which are actively marketed to individuals with disabilities.

The facility's community amenities include a community building with a full kitchen, shared laundry facilities and a resident office center equipped with computers, printers and broadband. In addition, a tenant council will be organized to improve the quality of life of tenants and maintenance of the property.

Fast Facts

Investment Amount: $2.2 million
Location: Ruckersville
Program: Multi-Family Housing

A P.U.S.H. For Homeownership

Jill Burcham has spent the last nine years building P.U.S.H. Ministries, an organization in Galax that today helps nearly 800 people per month put food on tables, learn life skills, transition from prison and climb out of addiction. This year, in an attempt to further help her fellow residents, she ended up helping herself too.

Burcham, the pastor at P.U.S.H. Ministries, changed directions in life at age 50 and went to seminary in Georgia. By the time she had made her way home to Galax and started her ministry, the city had fallen on hard times.

"Galax was a furniture town, and several years ago the furniture factories virtually shut down and took their business overseas," she said recently. "Galax today has an unemployment rate of somewhere between 21 and 28 percent … the housing market here is tough, there are very little livable apartments available right now."

The local housing problem was one P.U.S.H. Ministries hadn't addressed until Burcham began looking into opportunities she'd heard about with USDA Rural Development. She connected with Jeanie Barbrow in the USDA Rural Development Wytheville office and the two identified some available opportunities for addressing needs in Galax and the surrounding counties. The decision was made with careful, detailed consideration.

"I tried it myself first, I didn't want to recommend something I wasn't sure of," Burcham said. "I'd been living in an apartment and thought I was too old to get a house." USDA Rural Development approved her for its Section 502 Direct Loan Program in July and she was in a new home by October.

"Now there is no fear, there is a peace because – especially when you rent in rural areas – you deal with mold, you deal with roaches, you deal with bats," she said. "In this area a lot of the landlords don't have the money to repair what needs to be repaired. There is a security in knowing that you can control your own destiny."

With that control comes responsibility, and Burcham points to the homeownership education that accompanies USDA Rural Development loans as having been a great tool for her personally in homeownership and also in allowing her to coach and guide her clients at P.U.S.H. Ministries.

"That's one of the reasons I can recommend the process," she said. "They educate you, and education is empowerment. Going through Rural Development was a pleasant experience because everybody was so encouraging, saying things like, 'We're going to find your forever home,' and making sure I understood."

"There's a security in knowing you can control your own destiny,"

-Jill Burcham,
Pastor of P.U.S.H. Ministries,
Homeowner

Jill Burcham, pastor at P.U.S.H. Ministries in Galax, applied for and received a USDA Rural Development direct home loan in 2015. She now helps her P.U.S.H. Ministries clients navigate the same process to become homeowners themselves.

P.U.S.H. Ministries in Galax serves nearly 800 people per month. Pastor Jill Burcham has connected several of her clients with USDA Rural Development to set them on the path to homeownership, a path Burcham experienced first.

Fast Facts

Investment Amount: $161,000
Location: Galax
Program: Single Family Housing

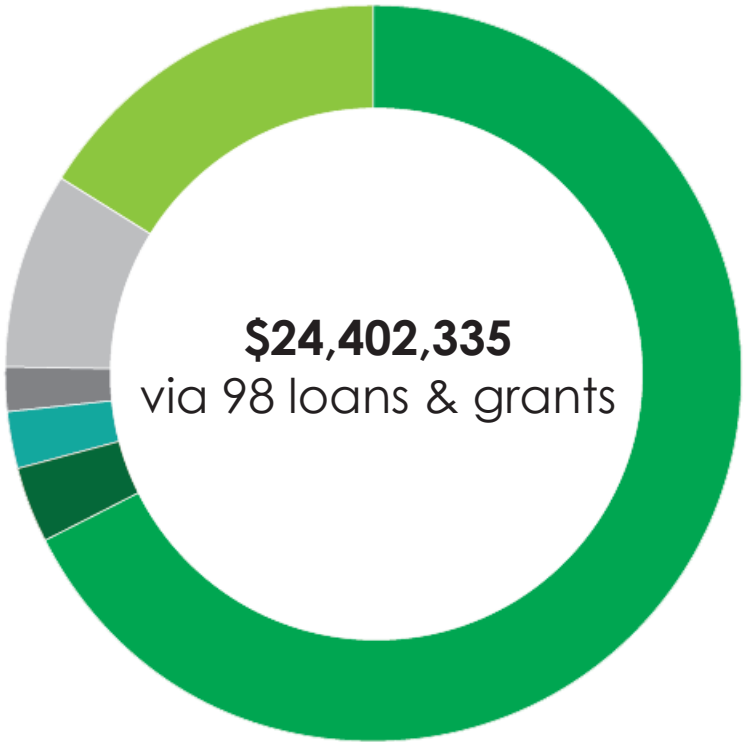
Rural Housing Programs

Program	Objective	Applicant	Uses	Population	Loan/Grant	Terms/Conditions
Single-Family Home Ownership Direct Loans	Safe, well-built, affordable homes for rural Americans.	Families and Individuals.	Buy, build, improve, repair or rehabilitate a rural home as the applicant's permanent resdence.	Rural areas with populations of up to 35,000.	Direct loan.	Up to 100% of market value or cost. Loan term 33/38 years. Applicant may be eligible for subsidy.
Single Family Home Ownership Gauranteed Loans	To assist moderate income applicants/ household in buying their homes by guaranteeing loans made by private lenders.	Families and Individuals.	Purchase new or existing homes and refinance existing Rural Development guaranteed or direct loans.	Rural areas with populations of up to 35,000.	Loan guarantee.	30 year, fixed. The interest rate is negotiated b/t lender and borrower. Loans up to 100% of market value plus the amount of the up-front guarantee fee being financed.
Single Famiy Repair Loans and Grants	To help very low income applicants remove health and safety hazards or repair their homes.	Families and Individuas who currently own their own home.	Repair/Replace roof, winterizing purchase or repair heating system, structural repair, water/sewage	Rural areas with populations of up to 35,000.	Direct loan and grant.	Loans up to $20,000 up to 20 years at 1%. Grants available to very low-income applicants 62 years or older unable to pay 1% loan.
Mutual Self-Help Housing Grants	Assist lower-income families in building their own homes.	Non-profits and public bodies	Technical assistance to help small groups of families to build each other's homes.	Rural areas with populations of up to 35,000.	Grant.	Grant agreement.
Rural Rental Housing Direct Loans	Safe, well built, affordable rental housing for very-low-income individuals and families.	Individuals, trusts, tribes, associations, for-profits, non-profits, public bodies, limited partnerships,	New constuction or substantial rehabilitations of rental housing.	Rural areas with populations of up to 35,000.	Direct loan.	Up to 100% of total development cost (non-profits); 97% (for-profits); 95% (for-profits with Low-Income Housing Tax Credits). 30-year term with up to 50-year amortization.
Rural Rental Housing Loan Guarantees	Provides loan guarantees on loans to build or preserve affordable housing for very-low to moderate-income tenants.	For profit and non-profit lenders	Build or rehabilitate affordable rental housing.	Rural areas with populations of up to 35,000.	Loan Gaurantee.	At least 25-year term with fixed interest rate. Loan guarantees up to 90% of the principal.
Housing Preservation Grants	Repair and rehabilitate housing owned or occupied by very low and low-income rural families	Public bodies and non-profit organizations	Operation of a program which finances repair and rehabilitation activities for single-family and small rental properties.	Rural areas with populations of up to 35,000.	Grant.	Grant agreement.
Farm Labor Housing Loans and Grants	Safe, well-built affordabe rental housing for farmworkers	Individuals, public & private non-profit organizations	New construction or substantial rehabilitation of rental housing.	Not applicable.	Direct loan and grant.	Up to 102% of total development cost. Up to 33 years to repay at 1% interest.

Virginia Overview
Data and Statistics

FY 2015 Rural Business

USDA Rural Development's Rural Business mission area made 98 awards for an investment of more than $24 million in the economic growth and development of Virginia's rural communities in 2015. Through our Rural Business Development Grant program we are investing in farmers markets making the option of eating "farm to table" a reality for more families. Thirty businesses are better positioned to enter into value added activities related to the processing and/or marketing of bio-based, value-added products. Nationally, Virginia was a leader in fiscal year 2015 in supporting business capability expansion through this program.



98
Rural Business awards invested in FY 2015

Program	Awards	Amount
Business & Industry Loans & Grants	7	$16,801,707
Other Business Programs	21	$404,412
Rural Business Enterprise Grants	10	$607,000
*RCDG/SDGG	3	$460,116
Rural Energy Assistance Program	27	$2,159,960
Value-Added Producer Grants	30	$3,969,140
Rural Business Obligation Totals	**98**	**$24,402,335**

*Rural Cooperative Development Grant Program/ Socially Disadvantaged Groups Grant Program

Rural Business
Success Stories

Turkey Farm Builds Working Capital

"Through awards like these we are able to help improve products and businesses throughout rural America,"
-Sam Rikkers, Acting Administrator, USDA Rural Business-Cooperative Service

Cari and Judd Culver (center) accept recognition of their USDA Rural Development Value Added Producer Grant from Basil Gooden, Ph.D., state director, USDA Rural Development – Virginia, and Sam Rikkers, acting administrator for USDA Rural Business-Cooperative Service.

Fast Facts
Investment Amount: $250,000
Location: Crozet
Program: Value-Added Producer Grant

On a rainy, perfectly autumn Tuesday in October USDA Rural Development announced a $250,000 Value Added Producer Grant for Kelly Turkeys USA, a free-range turkey farm in Crozet.

Kelly Turkeys USA produces a unique, high value turkey marketed specifically for Thanksgiving and Christmas. The farm uses a specific breed of turkey, KellyBronze, and employs free-range farming methods and unique finishing processes.

Sam Rikkers, acting administrator for USDA Rural Business-Cooperative Service, announced the grant.

"Through awards like these we are able to help improve products and businesses throughout rural America," Rikkers said. "It is our goal to ensure these agricultural entrepreneurs and their employees have the best opportunity to thrive."

This grant is one of more than 30 USDA Rural Development Value Added Producer Grants invested in Virginia during fiscal year 2015, totaling more than $3.9 million.

Value Added Producer Grants help agricultural producers enter into value-added activities related to the processing and/or marketing of bio-based products. They help generate new products, create and expand marketing opportunities and can create jobs in rural America.

Independent producers, agricultural producer groups, farmer- or rancher-cooperatives, and majority-controlled producer-based business ventures are eligible to apply for the program.

Grants are awarded through a national competition. Each fiscal year, applications are requested through a notice published in the Federal Register and through an announcement posted on Grants.gov. The maximum amount is $75,000 for planning grants and $250,000 for working capital grants. Matching funds are required.

Beginning farmers or ranchers, socially-disadvantaged farmers or ranchers, small or medium-sized farms or ranches structured as family farms, or farmer or rancher cooperatives may receive priority.

Kelly Turkeys USA grant funds will be used to support expanded production through the hiring of a general manager and seasonal labor, and through the purchase of packaging supplies. Funds will also be used to enhance marketing efforts through development of promotional materials and support of in-person promotional visits.

"The more than $3.9 million in Value Added Producer Grants we've awarded in Virginia over the past year has contributed to one of the most vital parts of our economy – agriculture," said Basil Gooden, Ph.D., Virginia state director, USDA Rural Development. "From breweries and cideries to meat processors and organic producers, these businesses provide recreation, nutrition and employment throughout Virginia."

An Example in Clean Energy

Lunchtime at E&S Mart in Altavista hums. A stable tide of customers and deliveries keeps the gas pumps ticking, the grill hot and the register open. Most of the faces are familiar ones. Many make small-talk over one of the high-top tables in the deli. Some will be back later for dinner and a pint of beer.

At the center of it all is Mike Mattox, the owner of the convenience store/deli/tap room. Almost simultaneously he calls most of the people moving through the store by name, talks business with the delivery drivers, asks patrons about their families and helps in the kitchen. He's a man the people of Altavista have come to trust so much that in 2012 they elected him, a former high school earth science teacher, mayor of their small rural town.

That trust and position of influence is a main catalyst behind a renewable energy partnership this year between Mattox and USDA Rural Development.

"I want to set an example, to be cutting edge," Mattox said. "I realize that there are finite resources, especially energy, on this planet."

The example Mattox sets sits above his commercial storage units just outside the E&S Mart window. There, facing due south, are 96 solar panels that produce clean, renewable energy.

"I'm a rational environmentalist," he said. "I think we can certainly take steps on our own that can really make a difference."

Mattox knew for many years that he wanted one day to install solar panels, but he never quite knew how to make it happen – mainly due to cost. Then, when speaking in 2014 with a USDA Rural Development employee about opportunities to partner, he learned about the USDA Rural Energy for America Program (REAP). REAP helps increase American energy independence by increasing the private sector supply of renewable energy and decreasing the demand for energy through energy efficiency improvements.

"I probably had 50 people come up and want to see it and talk about it during construction," Mattox said of his project. "If I can plant that seed in their head maybe they'll want to do something with solar one day."

The project was completed in April, and now Mattox is able sell his solar energy to the local utility company for almost double what he pays to buy it back.

"You have to look at the entire cost and know that you're going to get a reasonable return on investment, and you can," he said. "You just have to be willing to make the jump."

And partners in the process are essential.

"There wasn't a question Rural Development wasn't willing to answer, they explained what we needed to do and made sure we did it right the first time," Mattox said.
People still come in often to ask Mattox about his solar energy, and the first place he always takes curious customers is out to the meter. "This is energy actually going out onto the grid," he says. "It's amazing."

"The USDA and the Rural Energy [for America] Program can help people, they certainly did me,"

-Mike Mattox,
E&S Mart owner

Solar panels atop the storage units outside E&S Mart in Altavista.

When patrons and constituents ask Mike Mattox, owner of E&S Mart and mayor of Altavista, about the 96 solar panels at his business, he always takes them out to the meter – "This is energy actually going out onto the grid," he says. "It's amazing."

Fast Facts

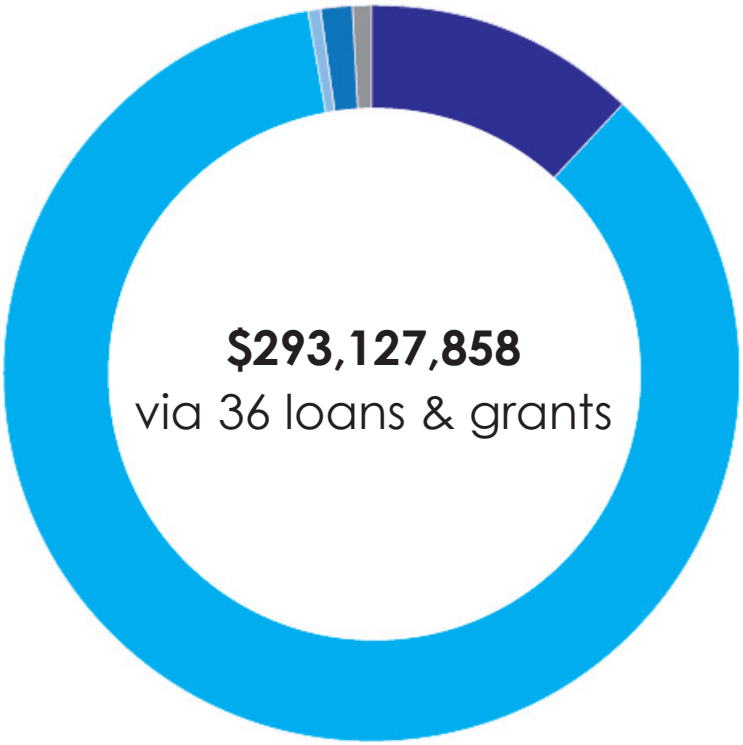
Investment Amount: $39,125
Location: Altavista
Program: Rural Energy for America Program

Rural Business Programs

Program	Objective	Applicant	Uses	Population	Loan/Grant	Terms/Conditions
Business and Industry Loan Guarantees	Create jobs/stimulate economy w/financial backing for rural businesses	Lender/ Businesses	Real estate, buildings, equipment, supplies, working capital, and some debt refinancing	All areas except cities over 50,000	Loan guanantee	Lender & borrower negotate terms; up to 30yrs for real estate, 15yrs for machinery & equipment, & 7yrs working capital
Rural Business Development Grants	Assist startup or expansion of small business or nonprofit	Public bodies, gov't entities, non profit & Tribes	Acquire or develop land, buildings or infrastructure; support training; establish revolving loan funds	All areas except cities over 50,000	Grant	Refer to new rules, when available, for grant terms and conditions.
Intermediary Relending Program Loans	Establish revolving funds for businesses and community development	Public bodies, non-profit corps. Tribes and co-ops.	Create or save jobs, establish or expand businesses, community development	Rural areas w/less than 50,000	Direct loan	Intermediary makes loans to businesses from its revolving loan fund on terms consistent w/ security offered
Rural Micro-entrepreneur Assistance Program	Establish revolving funds to target assistance to small rural enterprises	Microenterprise Development Organizations	loans, technical capacity building assistance to businesses w/10 or fewer employees and proprietors	All areas except cities over 50,000	Loans, grants	Rural microenterprises apply directly to the intermediary
Rural Economic Development Loans and Grants	Finance economic development & job creation	Financed electric and telephone utilities	Business startups or expansion projects that create rural jobs	Rural areas w/priority less than 2,500	Direct loan, grant to establish revolving loan	Intermediary makes loans to for profit or non profit businesses and public bodies. Loans are 0% for 10 years
Rural Cooperative Development Grants	Establish/operate centers for co-op. development	Non-profits and higher-ed institutions	Centers to provide technical assist, training, research for coop development	All areas except cities over 50,000	Grant	Min. 25 % fund match (5% for 1994 Institutions. Grants awarded competitvely
Socially Disadvantaged Groups Grants	Funds to co-ops to provide technical assistance to small, socially disadvantaged producers	Co-ops whose membership & board of directors is comprised of 75% socially disadvant.	Technical assistance	All areas except cities over 50,000	Grant	Grants are awarded on competitive basis. There is no matching requirement.
Value Added Producer Grants	Help independent agricultural producers add value to crops	Ind. producers, farmers and rancher coops, producer groups, producer-based business ventures	Feasibility studies, business plans; working capital	All areas	Grant	Grants are awarded on a competitive basis. Funds cannot be used to build facilities or purchase equipment. Funds must be matched on a dollar-to-dollar basis
Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) Loan Guarantees and Grants	Provide assistance for energy efficiency improvements or purchase of renewable energy system of operations	Rural small businesses and agricultural producers	Energy efficiency improvements, renewable energy systems, land acquisition and working capital	cities, towns, unincorporated areas less than 50,000	Loan guarantee and/or grant	Grants up to 25% of project costs not to exceed $250,000 for rnergy efficiency projects & %500,000 for renewable energy. Loan guarantees upt o 75% not to exceed $25 million
REAP Audit/ Development Grants	Provide grant to entity to pass through to a small business or agricultural producer for 75% of the cost of an energy audit.	State, tribal, or local gov't institutions of higher-ed., rural electric co-ops, public power orgs	$100,000 grant to entities, smaller ones to small business & ag. producers for 75% of energy audit or renewable energy development assistance	cities, towns, unincorporated areas less than 50,000	Grant	$100,000 to entities and up to 75% of the cost of energy audit for renewable energy development assistance
Biorefinery Assistance Program Loan Guarantees	Development of commercial-scale biorefineries or to retrofit facilities using eligible technology to develop adv. biofuel	Individuals, Tribes state/local gov. corps. farm co-ops, associations of ag producers, nat'l labs, higher-ed., consortiums, rural electric coops, public power orgs.	Loan guarantees to develop & construct commercial-scale biorefineries or retrofit facilities to use eligible tech. for the development of adv. biofuels	No restrictions	Loan	90% max. guarantee on loans up to $125 million; 80% max guarantee on loans less than $150 million; 70% max. guarantee on loans of $150 million but less than $200 million; 60% max. guarantee on loans of $200 million up to $250 million
Repowering Assistance Program	Provide payments to biorefineries to replace fossil fuels w/biomass	Biorefineries	Grant to biorefineries that use electricity required for fermentation	No restrictions	Loan	As funds are available. Complete applications submitted to National Office for review
Advanced Biofuel Payment Program	Provide payments to producers of advanced biofuels	Eligible producers of advanced bio refineries	Grant to producers of advanced biofuels (non-commercial-based)	No restrictions	Grant	As funds are available. Complete applications submitted to National Office for review. Grant awards determined by National Office

FY 2015 Rural Utilities

Every year Rural Utilities expands access and affordability to key resources that are often taken for granted in urban areas. In 2015, 36 awards totaling more than $200 million were made to improve public access to broadband, telecommunications, electricity and water and wastewater facilities. Virginia is a leader in providing grants to low-income communities to develop engineering plans and support other technical assistance needs. These investments are key to the prosperity of rural communities and their ability to attract new business.



36
Rural Utilities awards invested in FY 2015

Program	Awards	Amount
Community Connect	1	$2,135,158
Distribution	1	$4,238,000
Power Supply	1	$250,000,000
Telecommunication	1	$1,238,000
Water & Environmental	32	$35,516,700
TOTAL	**36**	**$293,127,858**

Rural Utilities
Success Stories

Broadband in the Mountains

The project is expected to boost the area's economy and promote economic development.

In today's digital age, broadband Internet access seems like it's just about everywhere on everybody's personal electronics and smart phones. In rural Edwards Ridge in Dickenson County, however, the Appalachian Mountains are a physical barrier that has made broadband delivery in the area costly. Installation costs are so high that large broadband suppliers wouldn't invest, and Scott County Telephone Cooperative (SCTC), the local communications utility, didn't have the resources on its own to build a broadband network.

USDA Rural Development provided the cooperative with a $2.1 million Community Connect Grant for a broadband IP Ethernet network that will serve about 580 homes and businesses in Edwards Ridge and the surrounding region.

Some residents around Edwards Ridge commute to Clintwood, Coeburn or Wise, where they have broadband access at work, but they are eager to have it in their own homes and local hangouts.

The Scott County Telephone Cooperative broadband project is expected to boost local economic development. It will allow workers to telecommute, and also encourage businesses and healthcare providers to consider relocating in Edwards Ridge, creating more employment opportunities for people in a rural area where unemployment is high. Additionally, broadband will increase education options for Dickenson County school students.

Thanks to USDA Rural Development, high-speed access to the world-wide web is finally coming to this rural Virginia mountain community.

A business and one of its surrounding mountains in Dickenson County. Mountainous topography in rural America has kept many residences and businesses from benefiting from broadband access.

Fast Facts

Investment Amount: $2.1 million
Location: Dickenson
Program: Community Connect

Sewer Repairs in Appomattox

When the town of Appomattox began inspecting its sewer collection and treatment system, which provides service to approximately 695 residential and 70 commercial connections, it found problems that were contributing to raw sewage overflows, incompliance with state code and reduced ability to serve residents. Video revealed significant cracks and deterioration in the existing sewer pipes.

The existing trickling filter wastewater treatment plant was approximately 75 years old and had reached the end of its useful life. It also lacked back-up power and real-time monitoring and control capability. In addition, the plant had no flow equalization ahead of the treatment process which causes major flow issues and backups on wet weather days due to extensive inflow during storm events.

In 2015 USDA Rural Development worked with the town to fund a loan for $3.7 million and a grant for $1.8 million. The financial assistance allowed Appomattox to begin making the repairs it needed.

The project includes the replacement and/or repair of collection pipe and the rehabilitation of manholes. The trickling filter plant will be abandoned, and wastewater from the drainage basin will be pumped to the town's water reclamation facility. A new wet well with screening and a new raw wastewater pump station with influent pumps will be constructed. A new equalization basin with blowers and a sludge press will be installed along with a supervisory control and data acquisition system. Construction will begin in 2016.

This project will correct the health hazard, bring the system into compliance with Virginia code and enable the Town to continue providing sanitary sewer to its residents.

This project will correct the health hazard, bring the system into compliance with Virginia code and enable the Town to continue providing sanitary sewer to its residents.

In 2015 USDA Rural Development worked with the town of Appomattox to fund a loan for $3.7 million and a grant for $1.8 million. The financial assistance allowed Appomattox to begin making vital repairs on its outdated sewer collection and treatment system, which serves approximately 695 residential and 70 commercial connections.

Fast Facts

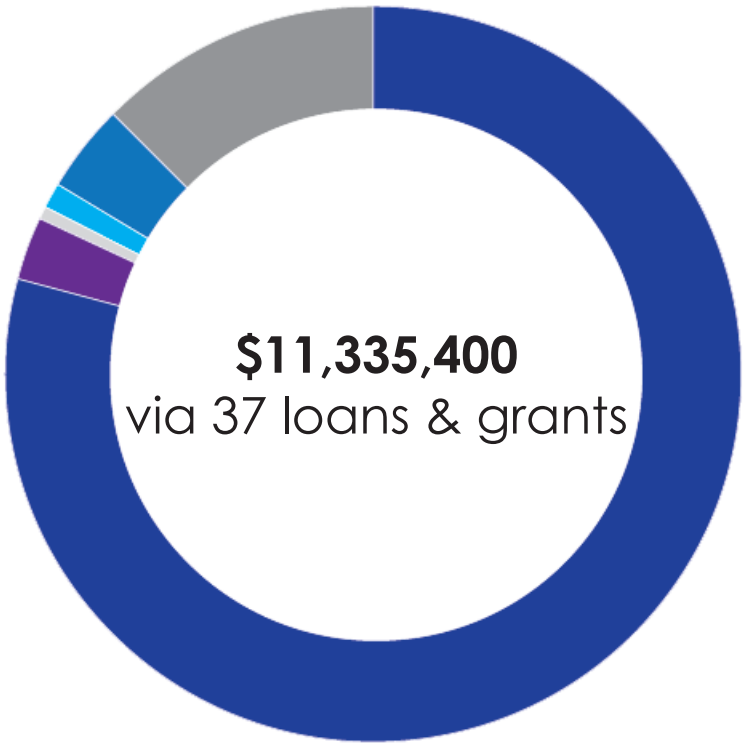
Investment Amount: $5.5 million
Location: Appomattox
Program: Water & Waste Disposal Loan & Grant

Rural Utilities Programs

Program	Objective	Applicant	Uses	Population	Loan/Grant	Terms/Conditions
Water and Waste Disposal Loans and Grants	Provide infrastructure for rural areas	Public entities, Indian Tribes and non-profit corps	Build, repair and improve public water systems and waste collection systems	Rural areas, and towns up to 10,000	Direct loan and grant	Repayment period is 40 year max. Grant funds may be available
Water and Waste Disposal Loan Guarantees	Provide infrastructure for rural areas.	Public entities, Indian Tribes and non-profit corps	Construct, repair and improve water supply and distribution systems and waste collection and treatment systems	Rural areas, and towns up to 10,000	Loan guarantee	Eligible lenders obtain up to 90% guarantee or loans they make & service
Solid Waste Management Grants	Provide technical assistance and/or training to those who operate and maintain active landfills.	Public bodies, private non-profit organizations, Indian Tribes, academic institutions	Technical assistance and training to improve landfill conditions and protect against threats to nearby water resources	Rural areas, and towns up to 10,000	Grant	Applications accepted year-round. Complete applications submitted to National Office for review
Technical Assistance/ Training/ Circuit Rider	Provide technical assistance and training	Public, private, and non-profit organizations	Provide technical assistance and training to assist with management of water and waste projects	Rural areas, and towns up to 10,000	Grant	As funds are available. Complete applications submitted to National Office for review.
Rural Broadband Loan and Loan Guarantee	Deployment of broadband service to eligible rural communities	Entities seeking to provide broadband services in rural areas	Finance the construction, improvement and acquisition of facilities and equipment to provide broadband service in eligible rural communities.	Refer to new rules	Refer to new rules	Refer to the new rules, when available, for loan terms and conditions.
Electric and Tele-communications Loans	Assist rural communities in obtaining affordable, high-quality electric & telecommunications services	Non-profit and cooperative associations, public bodies, and other utilities	Generation, transmission facilities and distribution of electric power, including alternative, renewable, conservation and energy efficiency programs. Enhance 911 emergency service, digital switching equipment, and fiber optic cable, along with traditional main system telecomm service.	Electric: areas served by an exist-ing electric borrower, or rural areas more than 20,000 Telecomm: areas under 5,000.	Direct loan or loan guarantee	Interest rates are established in accordance with 7CFR 1714, Contact RUS at www.rd.usda.gov or 1(800)670-6553
Distance Learning and Telemedicine	Deployment of advanced tele-comm services throughout rural America to improve education and health care.	Incorporated entities, including municipalities, for-profit, and non-profit coporations that operate rural schools, libraries, health care clinics and other educational or health facilities.	To provide end-user equipment and pro-gramming that delivers distance learning and telemedicine services into eligible areas.	Rural areas outside incorp. or unincorp. cities up to 20,000	Grant.	Awards range from $50,000 to $500,000. A minimum of 15% in matching funds is required.
Community Connect	Provide public access to broadband in otherwise unserved communities.	Public bodies, tribes, coopera-tives, non-profits, limited dividend or mutual associ-ations; corpora-tions and other legally organized entities	To build broadband infra-structure and establish a community center that offers free public access to broadband for two years.	Single community outside incorp or unincorp. cities w/ population over 20,000 w/out broadband	Grant.	Minimum: $50,000; Maximum: $1 million. Amounts are published in Notices of Funding Availability and may vary.

FY 2015 Community Facilities

In 2015, USDA Rural Development invested more than $11 million in rural infrastructure through the Community Facilities mission area. Community Facilities improved access to healthcare in medically underserved communities. These communities will benefit from a mobile health unit and ambulances. Other key awards supported education infrastructure through building a dormitory, purchasing buses and facilitating distance learning.



37
Community Facility awards invested in FY 2015

Investment Type	Amount
Cultural and Education	$8,973,000
Fire, Rescue, & Public Safety	$339,000
Healthcare	$40,000
Public Buildings/Improvements	$131,400
Water Meters	$441,000
Other Facilities	$1,411,000
Total Investments	**$11,335,400**

Community Facilities
Success Stories

Health on the Hill

In 2013 USDA Rural Development helped the Health Wagon purchase its mobile health unit, shown above. In 2015 USDA Rural Development invested $40,000 to help the nonprofit organization purchase a new sport utility vehicle and trailer that will help transport equipment and personnel to remote locations in the Appalachian mountains.

In the medically underserved central Appalachian Mountains a much-needed healthful vehicle has been navigating the winding tree-lined roads since 1980.

Known as the Health Wagon, today this mobile health unit visits eleven sites in Virginia's Buchanan, Dickenson, Russell, Lee, Scott and Wise counties and the City of Norton to provide mobile health services for a population very much in need of its services. Ninety-eight percent of the Health Wagon's patients are uninsured and 70 percent have an income of less than $20,000 annually, despite working multiple jobs in some cases.

To continue its important mission, the Health Wagon in 2013 needed the help of USDA Rural Development and others to replace its main mobile unit – an aging RV that could barely navigate the thoroughfares of Appalachia. At that time USDA Rural Development supplied a $25,000 community facilities grant to help the organization buy a new mobile unit that, in addition to boasting newer tools and other updated features, rested on a stronger truck chassis that helped it navigate twisting roads.

By 2015 the Health Wagon had grown, and in order to serve as many people as possible the organization needed extra space for transporting equipment and personnel. It became apparent that a properly equipped, all-wheel drive sport utility vehicle and enclosed trailer were necessary to accompany the existing mobile clinic.

In response to the need, USDA Rural Development partnered again with the mobile health organization and awarded a grant for $30,000 and a loan for $10,000.

"The vehicle and trailer will be beneficial for the Health Wagon to provide outreach care throughout the coalfields of Virginia," said Marcus Adkins, Health Wagon's director of development. "The partnership with USDA has been so important to the sustainability and program success for the Health Wagon. "

The SUV and trailer will provide adequate space for transportation of employees and supplies, as well as ensure the safe travel of personnel to remote, mountainous locations.

Through the use of this innovative, growing mobile health fleet, health care will be better provided to underserved individuals, families and communities who may not otherwise receive care.

"The partnership with USDA has been so important to the sustainability and program success for the Health Wagon."

-Marcus Adkins,
Development Director
of Health Wagon

Fast Facts

Investment Amount: $40,000
Location: Appalachain Mountains
Program: Community Facilities Loan & Grant

Loan Unites a School District

The 2015-2016 school year is the beginning of a new era for thousands of students in Dickenson County, When they walked through the doors on the first day of classes in August, the students became members of the Ridgeview High School and Middle School Wolfpack.

Before this year, their learning environments – three separate high schools – all presented scholastic and even health concerns.

"There was declining enrollment, drastic state budget cuts, 50 plus-year-old buildings, increasing cost of maintenance and operation and declining local revenues," said Haydee Robinson, Dickenson County Public Schools superintendent. "With three high schools, it was not feasible to offer an expanded curriculum at each."

"Students need a clean, safe and inspiring school in order to fully absorb, create and inquire," said Basil Gooden, Ph.D., Virginia's USDA Rural Development State Director. "We are proud to have helped make that a reality for the students and families in Dickenson County."

The reality began to take shape in June of 2010 when USDA Rural Development awarded its largest community facilities loan ever originated in Virginia. The $42 million investment served as the major funding source for a new campus that would consolidate the three high schools in Dickenson County and house a middle school and a technical center.

This year, almost 1,300 Dickenson County students are learning at the newly completed state-of-the-art facility. The consolidation of the three high schools offered all students the opportunities to participate in expanded curriculum offerings, a fine arts program and expanded athletic programs and athletic facilities.

"The Rural Development loan provided the necessary financing for a once in a lifetime opportunity for the children of Dickenson County and for the community at large," Robinson said. "Ridgeview is a beautiful school that has exceeded our expectations as an advanced, exemplary learning facility, and among the students, faculty and staff is a sense of school pride and unity that we have not seen for a long time."

Dwight Pierson, USDA Rural Development area specialist, worked closely with many community partners to make the new learning facility possible. They include the Army Corp. of Engineers, Dickenson County Board of Supervisors, Dickenson County School Board, the Industrial Development Authority of Dickenson County and many others.

"This beautiful new campus is a community investment in the future of Dickenson County," Gooden said. "These young people will be the leaders that continue to improve the economy and quality of life in Southwest Virginia and beyond."

Their new journey to becoming leaders began this year – together, stronger – as a Wolfpack.

"Students need a clean, safe and inspiring school in order to fully absorb, create and inquire." -Basil Gooden, USDA Rural Development State Director, Virgina

Ridgeview High School and Middle School in Dickenson County.

Ridgeview High School and Middle School library.

Fast Facts

Investment Amount: $42 million
Location: Dickenson
Program: Community Facilities Direct Loan

Community Facilities Programs

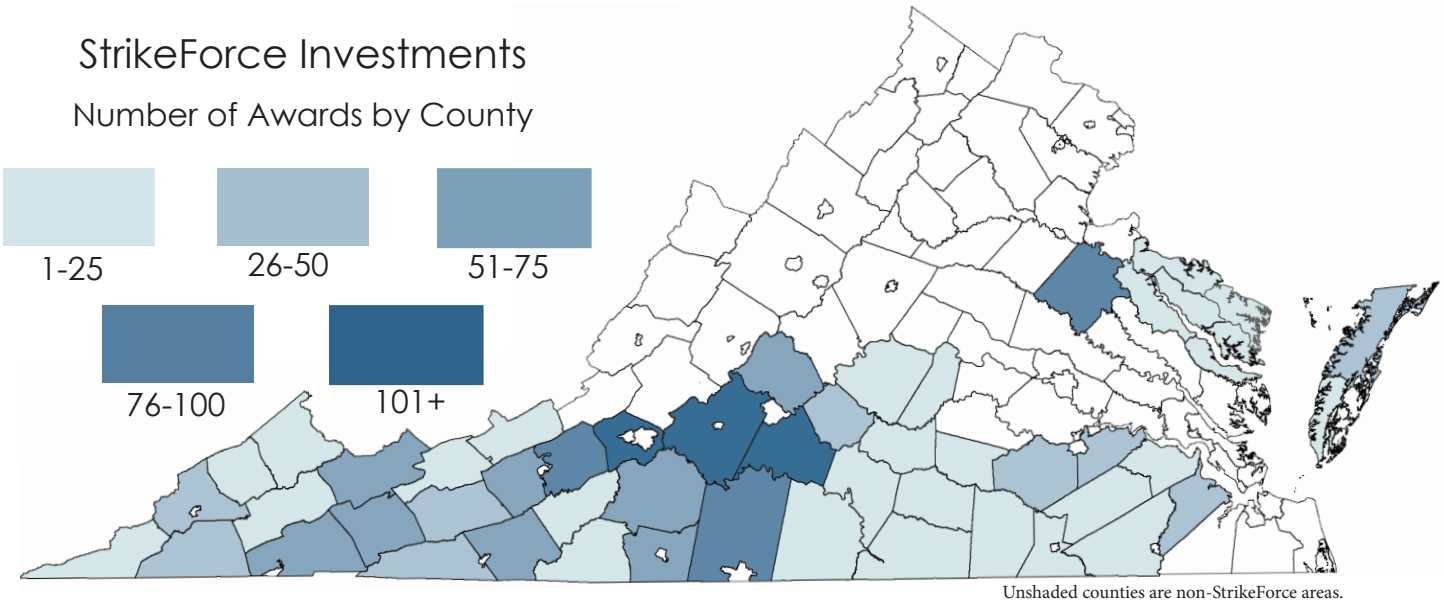
Program	Objective	Applicant	Uses	Population	Loan/Grant	Terms/Conditions
Community Facilities Loans and Grants	Improve, develop, or finance essential community facilities for rural communities	Public bodies, non-profits, and Federally recognized Indian Tribes	Construct, enlarge or other wise improve essential community facilities, such as public safety, fire and rescue, telecommunications, schools, libraries, hospitals, other health care facilities, etc. This may include furnishings, fixtures and other required equipment	City, town or unincorp. area of 20,000 in population. Facilities must primarily serve rural residents	Direct loan, loan guarantee, or grant	Up to 100% of market value. Term is for useful life of the facility or equipment, the State statue, or 40 years. Maximum grant 75% of project cost. Grant eligibility based on income, population, and need.
Rural Community Development Initiative	To facilitate housing, community facility and community and economic development projects	Private non-profit or public organizzations, philanthropic foundations, low-income communities	Technical assistance grants of $50,000 to $300,000 to develop the capacity and ability of the awardees to carry out needed projects	City, town or unincorp. area of not more than 50,000 in population	Grant	Matiching funds required for grant.

Community Economic Development Initiatives

Community Economic Devlopment (CED) helps USDA Rural Development assist communities in building their capacity and providing targeted technical assistance. By doing so, Rural Development will increases communities' readiness for sustainable economic development and builds project pipelines to take advantage of future rural developmnet. Additionally, CED staff can also help ensure that partnerships are established and that other resources are leveraged so unserved and underserved, socially disadvantaged, minority groups can be effectively assisted.

Virginia's StrikeForce Initiative

Program	Awards	Amount
Rural Business	31	$5,158,607
Community Facilities	26	$10,677,000
Rural Utilities	20	$3,610,715
Rural Housing	1,794	$258,419,169
Totals	**1,871**	**$277,865,491**



Unshaded counties are non-StrikeForce areas.

Rural Growth and Opportunity

In 2010, USDA Secretary Vilsack established the StrikeForce Initiative for Rural Growth and Opportunity to address challenges associated with rural poverty. Virginia's StrikeForce region includes the most rural and impoverished counties in USDA Rural Development's service area. StrikeForce partnerships formed across USDA agencies and with external collaborators invested more than $270 million in 2015 to create jobs, build homes, feed children, assist farmers, grow new business ventures, expand broadband access, improve water systems and develop safe and high quality buildings for schools, hospitals and other infrastructure. Through StrikeForce, USDA Rural Development is able to promote the well-being of rural communities and focus on rural areas experiencing chronic poverty.

Virginia's Stronger Economies Together Initiative

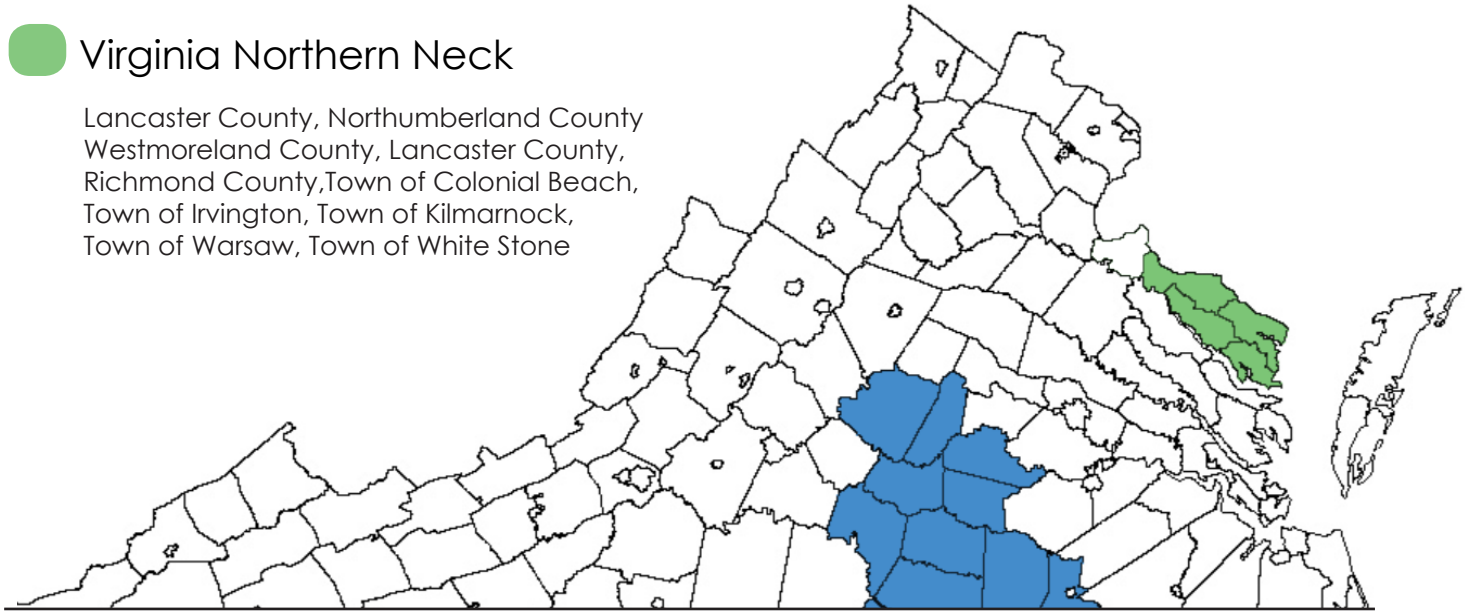
Stronger Economies Together is a program that brings regions together to work as teams in pursuit of shared economic advancement. Virginia's USDA Rural Development office has participated in the national program's Phase III and, currently, Phase V. Rural Development's SET Phase III communities, Virginia Growth Alliance and the Northern Neck, are supporting the projects outlined in their individual Regional Economic Development Plans with funding from RD mission areas. For example, the Northern Neck has created a Business Incubation program for its region through startup funding from a Rural Business Development Grant program. The Virginia Growth Alliance utilized funds to support improved water and waste systems in its region.

Virginia Growth Alliance

Amelia County, Brunswick County, Buckingham County, Charlotte County, City of Emporia Cumberland County, Greensville County, Lunenburg County, Mecklenburg County, Nottoway County, Prince Edward County

Virginia Northern Neck

Lancaster County, Northumberland County Westmoreland County, Lancaster County, Richmond County,Town of Colonial Beach, Town of Irvington, Town of Kilmarnock, Town of Warsaw, Town of White Stone



	VA Growth Alliance	VA Northern Neck
Rural Housing	$4,505,858	$3,704,538
Rural Business	$441,430	$170,174
Rural Utilities	$1,567,132	0
Community Facilities	$71,200	$245,000
Totals	**$16,585,620**	**$4,119,712**

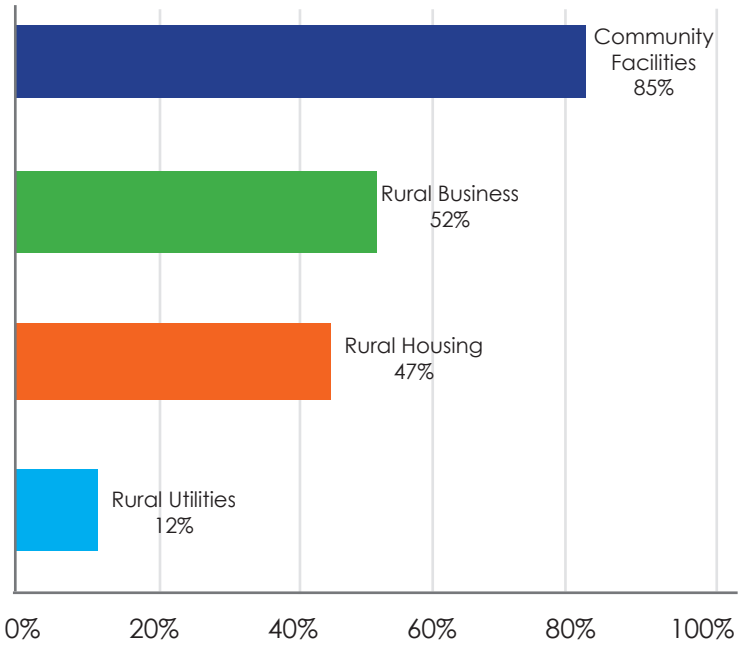
Virginia's Povery Targeting Progress Initiative

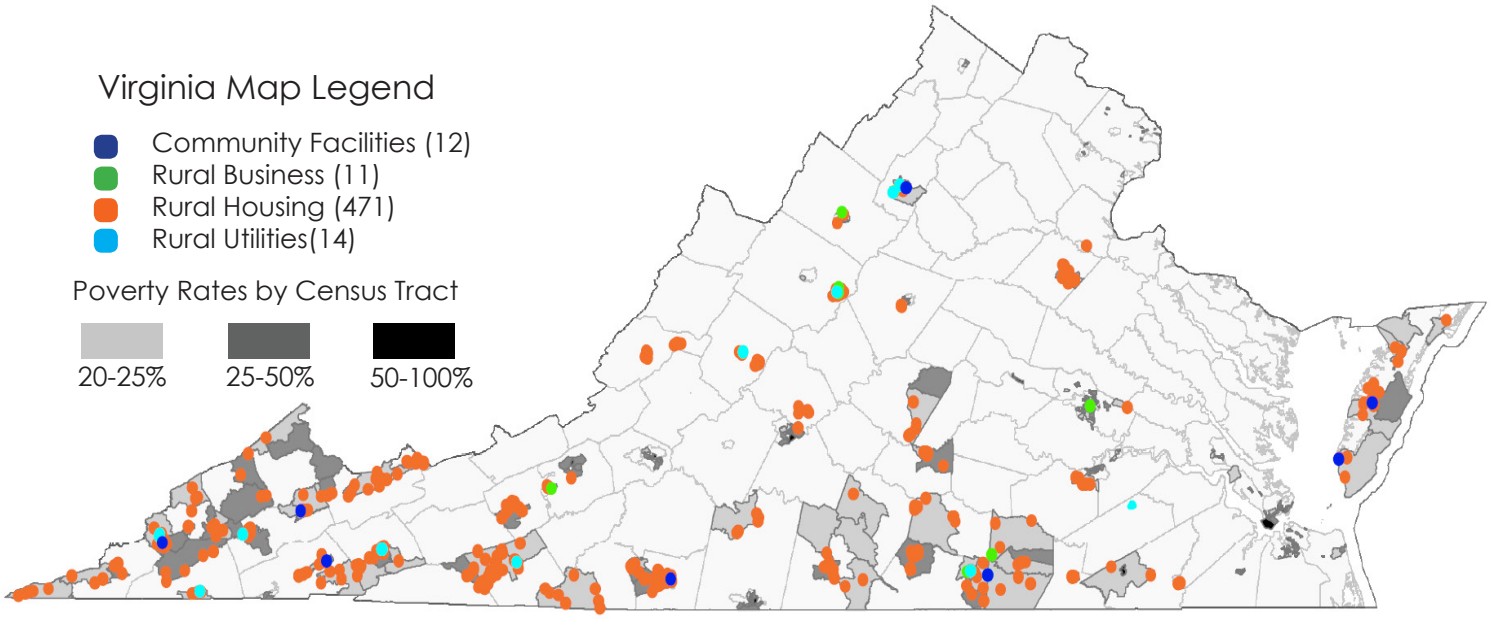
Rural Virginia has a poverty rate of 16.8 percent with 23.8 percent of rural children living in poverty.* USDA Rural Development makes strategic community investments to address poverty issues in rural Virginia. In 2015 the agency invested 14 percent of its funds in Virginia's high poverty areas and $33 million in counties with persistent child poverty. Forty-two percent of Rural Housing funding assisted very low or low-income families in high poverty areas. We continue to demonstrate our commitment to rural Virginians and fulfill our mission to improve economic opportunities and the quality of life for rural communities.

Investments in Counties with Persistent Child Poverty

	Awards	Amount
Accomack County	28	$3,367,520
Brunswick County	17	$1,108,510
Buchanan County	6	$193,320
Buckingham County	13	$2,249,421
Charlotte County	4	$482,651
Dickenson County	16	$1,851,652
Dinwiddie County	45	$6,095,326
Franklin County	66	$8,661,946
Lee County	21	$525,985
Lunenburg County	15	$2,332,836
Mecklenburg County	21	$1,595,414
Northampton County	8	$642,505
Prince Edward County	12	$1,428,011
Southampton County	22	$2,824,109
Totals	**294**	**$33,359,206**

Percent of Program Investments in High-Poverty Areas





* Housing Assistance Council. Tabulations of the American Community Survey 2009-2013 Economic Data. www.ruraldataportal.org

Initiative
Success Stories

Hunger Takes No Vacation

Children eating at a Summer Food Service Program event.

Most students look forward to summer vacation with anticipation of relaxing and having fun, but many students don't have that luxury because when the school year ends their next healthy meal isn't guaranteed. In fact, more than 21 million students in the United States depend on free or reduced-price school meals nine months out of the year under the National School Lunch Program. In Virginia, more than 1.25 million students qualify for this program.

For these reasons, USDA created the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), an interagency partnership comprised of USDA Rural Development and USDA Food, Nutrition and Consumer Services that aims to help ensure low-income children continue to receive nutritious meals during the summer months.

One of the biggest challenges that SFSP faces is providing access to children in rural areas. While hunger exists in every community across the country, the rate of food insecurity among rural households is higher than the national average. USDA Rural Development uses its multi-family housing complexes as feeding sites, which are a part of the 174 communities nationwide that hosts SFSP activities.

As the program has flourished with record numbers in 2015, USDA Rural Development expanded in Virginia from two to 17 properties making the state's program one of the most active in the country. New properties are located in Halifax, Hanover, Mecklenburg, Amherst, Cumberland, Appomattox, Bedford, Nelson, Rockingham, Southampton, Sussex and Henrico.

A Virginia SFSP partnership between Laurel Woods Apartments in Ashland and Richmond Parks and Recreation was celebrated in August when USDA Rural Development's Under Secretary Lisa Mensah and USDA Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services' Under Secretary Kevin Concannon visited Laurel Woods.

USDA Rural Development will look to capitalize on SFSP's 2015 success by significantly increasing program service area in 2016. Plans include expansion to StrikeForce zones in Southwest Virginia where the poverty rate is highest. In this expansion, USDA Rural Development will continue to build relationships with sponsors, nonprofits and local community leaders.

SFSP's steady momentum will ensure children in rural Virginia have the nutrition necessary to return to school each fall ready to learn.

As the [Summer Food Service] program has flourished with record numbers in 2015, USDA Rural Development expanded in Virginia from two to 17 properties making the state's program one of the most active in the country.

Fast Facts

Program: Summer Food Service Program
Number of MFH properties used: 17
Number of Counties Served: 12
Initiative: StrikeForce

Community Excels in Engineering

What happens when businesses are eager to hire local employees, but an equally eager workforce lacks the necessary skills for employment? A stalemate.

South Hill, and its surrounding region has suffered this exact dilemma for the last five years with an unemployment rate ranging from 3 to 4.2 percent higher than the state average. Many may assume that numbers this high are due to a lack of employment opportunity when actually it's due to a lack of training opportunity. While the town strives to develop its engineering industry, employers struggle to place untrained workers.

Recognizing these factors, Lake Country Advanced Knowledge Center aims to facilitate skilled training to create a talented local workforce, but the resources the center has to offer can be outdated. In developing talent for South Hill's advancing industry, it is critical that software is updated to ensure that the level of training continues to meet industry demands.

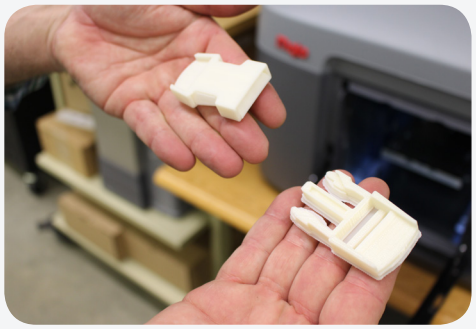
USDA Rural Development provided a $24,000 Rural Business Development Grant to upgrade software at the Lake Country Advanced Knowledge Center to allow students to gain skills that meet the needs of existing and future businesses in the region. The grant supports the acquisition of a 3D scanner and a PLC Software Controller that will allow students to develop engineering skills.

Residents of Brunswick, Lunenburg and Mecklenburg will benefit from the center's high performance curriculum as the three counties are the primary source of labor in the South Hill area. Over the next three years it is projected that a minimum of 200 persons trained at the center will be gainfully employed in local industries throughout the region.

This project takes South Hill one step closer to dropping its unemployment rate, increasing wage levels, and reviving its economy.

This project takes South Hill one step closer to dropping its unemployment rate, increasing wage levels, and reviving its economy.

Student manually developing 3D design at Lake Country Advanced Knowledge Center, a process that takes days - or even weeks.



A belt buckle students designed using PLC Software and printed on USDA Rural Development funded 3D printer, a process taking only a matter of hours.

Fast Facts

Investment Amount: $24,000
Location: South Hill
Program: Rural Business Development Grant
Initiative: StrikeForce

"The idea is to bring people to the table that aren't usually at these types of planning events,"
-David Foster, Area Director
USDA Rural Development

Stronger Economies Together Expands

Martha Walker (left), Ph.D., of Virginia Co-operative Extension, discusses Eastern Shore regional strengths with community members at their civic engagement meeting on Oct. 27.

In 2012 USDA Rural Development introduced a program in Virginia to help regions come together to work as teams in pursuit of shared economic advancement. The national program, known as Stronger Economies Together (SET), first brought together six counties in Southern Virginia and four counties on Virginia's Northern Neck.

In 2015 USDA Rural Development again brought SET to Virginia when it selected three more regions to join the program. In fiscal year 2016 the SET process will allow residents and community leaders from the Eastern Shore, the Mount Rogers Planning District and the Northern Shenandoah Valley to plan collaboratively and alongside experts who offer access to and analysis of economic data.

The first SET meetings are civic engagement forums, which offer an opportunity for people to engage in discussions and deliberations about the assets of the local communities and the issues that are limiting their ability and the region to realize their full potential.Beginning with the first meeting and continuing through the process, one of the main goals of SET is to include input from a diverse, complete representation of stakeholders.

"The idea is to bring people to the table who aren't usually at these types of planning events," said David Foster, area director for eastern and central Virginia at USDA Rural Development. "In being inclusive and getting input from everyone, we invite representatives from health care, education, industry, small business and the general citizenry to join in conversation with the region's familiar faces of economic development."

The four meetings that follow the civic engagement forums include a deep dive into economic data on the region, an examination of advantages and opportunities unique to the region, definition of assets and barriers in the region, and finally creation of a high quality regional economic development plan. Each region's meetings will conclude after several months, and implementation of their economic development plans will follow close behind.

The four-county Northern Neck Chesapeake Region Partnership, for example, continues to utilize and update its economic development plan.

"Through the SET process, the creation of an economic development plan has helped the Northern Neck of Virginia unite around common goals and strategies," said Lisa Hull, economic development and tourism coordinator, Northern Neck Planning District Commission. "The plan has resulted in grant awards, projects and initiatives that will affect the region positively for decades to come."

USDA Rural Development partners closely with Virginia Cooperative Extension, Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development, and the Southern Rural Development Center to make these economic development plans a reality, but all of the groups are facilitators – not prescribers.

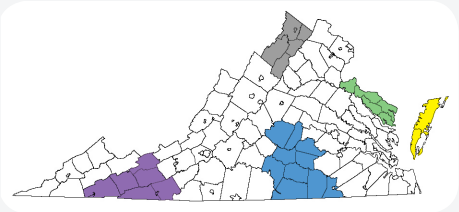
"Our job is not to dictate the process," Foster said. "This is the region's process and the region's plan."

Fast Facts

Initiative: Stronger Economies Together (SET)

Phase III Regions:
- Northern Neck
- Southside

Phase V Regions:
- Eastern Shore
- Mt. Rogers
- Northern Shenandoah Valley



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To File an Employment Complaint
If you wish to file an employment complaint, you must contact your agency's EEO Counselor (PDF) within 45 days of the dateof the alleged discriminatory act, event, or in the case of a personnel action. Additional information can be found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_file.html.

To File a Program Complaint
If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form (PDF), found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at program.intake@usda.gov.

Persons with Disabilities
Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities and you wish to file either an EEO or program complaint please contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339 or (800) 845-6136 (in Spanish). Persons with disabilities who wish to file a program complaint, please see information above on how to contact us by mail directly or by email. If you require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) please contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
For any other information dealing with Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) issues, persons should either contact the USDA SNAP Hotline Number at (800) 221-5689, which is also in Spanish or call the State Information/Hotline Numbers.

All Other Inquiries
For any other information not pertaining to civil rights, please refer to the listing of the USDA Agencies and Offices for specific agency information.

Culpeper Sub Area Office:
351 Lakeside Drive
Culpeper, Va. 22701-1945
Phone: 540-825-4200
Fax: 855-627-9829

Lebanon Sub Area Office:
140 Highland Drive, Suite 5
Lebanon, Va. 24266-4632
Phone: 276-889-4650
Fax: 855-744-0393

Richmond Sub Area Office:
1606 Santa Rosa Road, Suite 238
Richmond, Va. 23229
Phone: 804-287-1550
Fax: 855-636-4608

Christiansburg Satellite Office:
75 Hampton Boulevard
Christiansburg, Va. 24073-2707
Phone: 540-382-0267
Fax: 855-714-2707

Dinwiddie Satellite Office:
13195 Boydton Plank Road
Dinwiddie, Va. 23841
Phone: 804-469-3311
Fax: 855-636-4611

Farmville Satellite Office:
100 C. Dominion Drive
Farmville, Va. 23901-2381
Phone: 434-392-4906
Fax: 855-636-4609

Fredricksburg City Satellite Office:
Jackson Square Office Park
4805 Carr Drive
Fredricksburg, Va. 22408-2689
Phone: 540-899-9492
Fax: 855-627-9829

Gate City Satellite Office:
359 Gateway Plaza A1
Gate City, Va. 24251-3811
Phone: 276-386-3951
Fax: 855-621-0393

Lexington Satellite Office:
650 N. Lee Highway, Suite 3
Lexington, Va. 24450-3579
Phone: 540-463-7124
Fax: 855-982-3188

State Office:
1606 Santa Rosa Road, Suite 238
Richmond, Va. 23229
Phone: 804-287-1550
Fax: 855-621-7139
TDD: 804-287-1753

Wytheville Area 1 Office:
100 USDA Drive
Wytheville, Va. 24381-8366
Phone: 276-228-3513
Fax: 855-621-7140

Lynchburg Area 2 Office:
20311-A Timberlake Road
Lynchburg, Va. 24502-0337
Phone: 434-239-3473
Fax: 855-621-7142

Harrisonburg Area 3 Office:
1934 Deyerle Avenue, SD
Harrisonburg, Va. 22801
Phone: 540-433-9126
Fax: 855-627-9830

Courtland Area 4 Office:
22329 Main Street
Southampton Office Bldg 2
Courtland, Va. 23737-1026
Phone: 757-653-2532
Fax: 855-627-9828

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