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News Release

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USDA Invests \$26,231,000 in Rural Electric Infrastructure in Florida to Improve Service for Residential and Commercial Consumers

Infrastructure Will Provide Improved Electric Reliability

GAINESVILLE –Florida Rural Development State Director Sydney Gruters announced today that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is investing over \$26 million in Rural Electric Infrastructure in Florida.

“Delivering dependable and reasonably priced electricity to power rural Florida will assist in creating a foundation for improved rural prosperity and strong economic prospects,” Gruters said. “USDA’s partnering with rural electric utilities and cooperatives helps further vital infrastructure improvements to provide the electric power that those who live and work in rural areas rely on.”

USDA is making this investment through the [Electric Infrastructure Loan Program](#). It helps finance generation, transmission and distribution projects; system improvements; and energy conservation projects in communities with 10,000 or fewer residents.

Nationwide awarded Rural Electric Infrastructure loans include \$7.9 million for smart grid technology. This includes computer applications, two-way communications, geospatial information systems and other tools to increase the reliability and efficiency of electric power systems.

In Florida, a Rural Development investment to Seminole Electric Cooperative of \$26,231,000 will be used to finance renovation projects at the headquarters. Seminole’s nine-member distribution electric cooperatives provide service to portions of 46 counties in Florida. It is one of the largest generation and transmission cooperatives in the country. Seminole also owns and maintains more than 380 miles of transmission line. Significant portions of its members’ service areas are rural and adjacent to metropolitan areas.

USDA’s investments in electric infrastructure have increased productivity and improved the quality of life in rural areas for nearly 80 years.

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 services 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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