



# News Release

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## **USDA Invests \$2.13 Million in Vermont and New Hampshire to Create Economic Opportunities and Rehabilitate Housing for Socially Vulnerable Rural People**

*Funding to Widen Rural Access to Broadband, Energy Efficiency, Early Childhood Education, Career Training, Community Resources*

**MONTPELIER, Vt., December 16, 2022** – State Director for U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development (RD) in [Vermont](#) and [New Hampshire](#), Sarah Waring, today announced \$2,136,062 in grant funding to improve housing and economic opportunity for socially vulnerable rural residents in the Twin States. USDA is making the investments through its [Rural Community Development Initiative](#) (RCDI) program, [Housing Preservation Grants](#) (HPG), [Community Facilities Disaster Relief Grants](#) (CF) and a partnership with the [Northern Border Regional Commission](#). Nationally, [the agency is funding 263 projects across 47 states and American Samoa with nearly \\$102 million.](#)

“Every rural resident, no matter their zip code, deserves a safe and secure home, and a chance to build their own vision for the future,” said Waring. “With today’s investments, we can help more people live in safety and comfort, advance their careers and communicate with the world, provide early education for their children, and lower the costs to heat their homes and power their communities. Too often, having the access to resources is not available to everyone, but we are proud of these investments, and the Biden-Harris Administration’s commitment to equitable access and opportunity for all.”

“USDA invests in rural America because we know a strong community is rooted in its people,” said USDA RD Under Secretary Xochitl Torres Small. “Thanks to the leadership of President Biden, Vice President Harris, and Agriculture Secretary Vilsack, USDA can help invest in opportunity and prosperity for all people, regardless of background or financial status, who make up the character and personality of our great country’s rural lands.”

The investments are part of the Biden-Harris Administration’s commitment to ensure that people living in rural America have equitable access to the infrastructure and economic opportunities they deserve. For example:

- After suffering several floods and the economic impact of the coronavirus, Tamworth, New Hampshire, received a [\\$493,000 USDA Community Facilities disaster relief grant](#) to help modernize and expand its transfer station. The project will save the town \$60,000 each year from landfill costs and reduce household waste by 371 tons annually through increased composting and recycling.
- Through a \$3 million [Northern Border Regional Commission grant](#), Vermont and New Hampshire organizations each received \$335,834 for equity initiatives. In

Franconia, NH, the Franconia Soaring Foundation will construct a multi-functional training and operations facility to support STEM programs, and the Pittsford Village Farm in Pittsford, Vt., will renovate and repurpose a historic building in the village center for childcare programming and community functions.

- A \$156,394 USDA Rural Community Development Initiative grant will help the New Hampshire Sustainable Energy Association expand its energy circuit rider program to help lower costs for low-income residents. The Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation will use \$250,000 to help stimulate the local economy, and the Vermont Program for Quality in Healthcare received \$240,000 to aid in COVID recovery by increasing broadband access for rural communities.
- With funding through USDA Housing Preservation Grants, three Vermont non-profit housing organizations will provide hazard removal, accessibility upgrades and needed repairs for low-income homeowners with disabilities. In the Northeast Kingdom (NEK), Rural Edge received \$150,000, and the Vermont Center for Independent Living, \$100,000. In Southern Vermont, \$75,000 went to Southeastern Vermont Community Action (SEVCA).

The awards announced today are being made in Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, Alabama, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Kansas, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Maryland, Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, North Carolina, North Dakota, New Hampshire, New Mexico, New York, Nevada, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Virginia, Vermont, Washington, West Virginia, Wyoming and American Samoa.

These investments are in addition to the [recent expansion](#) of the Rural Partners Network (RPN), which is central to President Biden's commitment to ensure all rural people can benefit from federal resources. Led by USDA with support from more than 20 federal agencies and commissions, RPN is part of an all-of-government strategy to champion rural people and places, including Native American communities.

Under the leadership of the Biden-Harris Administration, Rural Development provides loans and grants to help expand economic opportunities, create jobs and improve the quality of life for millions of Americans 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, tribal and high-poverty areas. For more information, visit [www.rd.usda.gov](http://www.rd.usda.gov).

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