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News Release

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

WASHINGTON, 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.

“As the one-year approaches of Hurricane Florence and Hurricane Michael that destroyed multiple areas throughout the State of Florida, the work of recovery and rebuilding is long term. The USDA/Rural Development is committed to aid all individuals whose lives have been affected. When rural America thrives, all of America thrives,” Philip L. Leary, Florida State Director said. “Under the leadership of President Trump and Agriculture Secretary Perdue, USDA stands with the Nation’s rural communities in their 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.

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](#).

The following counties that can apply for disaster grant funding are:

Alachua
Big Cypress Indian Reservation
Brighton Indian Reservation
Charlotte
Collier
Dixie
Flagler
Gadsden
Gulf

Baker
Bradford
Broward
Citrus
Columbia
Duval
Fort Pierce Indian Reservation
Gilchrist
Hamilton

Bay
Brevard
Calhoun
Clay
DeSoto
Escambia
Franklin
Glades
Hardee

Hendry	Hernando	Highlands
Hillsborough	Hollywood Indian Reservation	Holmes
Jefferson	Lafayette	Lake
Lee	Leon	Levy
Liberty	Madison	Manatee
Miami-Dade	Monroe	Nassau
Okaloosa	Okeechobee	Orange
Osceola	Palm Beach	Pasco
Pinnellas	Polk	Putnam
Santa Rosa	Sarasota	Seminole
St. Johns	St. Lucie	Sumter
Suwannee	Tampa Reservation	Taylor
Union	Volusia	Wakulla
Walton	Washington	

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.

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