

Secretary Vilsack Announces Funding to Improve Electric Service in Rural Communities

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WASHINGTON, Oct. 11, 2012 – Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack today announced funding to modernize and improve the efficiency of rural electric generation and transmission systems. The announcement was made on the Secretary's behalf by Under Secretary Dallas Tonsager.

"USDA and the Obama administration continue to make key investments in rural electric cooperatives that will modernize service and improve reliability for rural businesses and residential customers," Tonsager said. "Today's announcement also includes funding that will enable rural electric cooperatives and utilities to adopt smart grid technologies in their operation as part of the ongoing efforts to modernize rural America's electric grid."

Secretary Vilsack announced in August that USDA had met its goal to finance \$250 million in smart grid technologies in fiscal year 2012. Today's announcement includes additional support of \$134 million in smart grid technologies.

The following is a list of rural utilities that will receive USDA funding, which is contingent upon the recipient meeting the terms of the loan agreement.

Alabama

- South Alabama Electric Cooperative: \$17,800,000. Funds will be used to build and

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improve 144 miles of distribution line and make other system improvements. The loan guarantee includes \$125,000 in smart grid projects.

Arkansas (Funding also covers communities in Louisiana, Missouri, Oklahoma and Texas.)

- Arkansas Electric Cooperative Corporation: \$245,000,000. Funds will be used to acquire Hot Spring Generating Facility, a 660 MW natural gas-fired, combined-cycle electric generating plant.

California

- Kirkwood Meadows Public Utility District: \$50,000,000. Funds will be used to build or improve 40 miles of distribution and transmission line and make other system improvements. The loan guarantee includes \$200,000 in smart grid projects.

Colorado

- Eagle Valley Clean Energy, LLC: \$40,000,000. Funds will be used to partially finance a renewable generating plant with a capacity of 11.5 MW. The plant will utilize wood biomass for fuel.

Hawaii

- Green Energy Team, LLC: \$72,883,000. Funds will be used to partially finance a renewable generating plant with a capacity of 7.5 MW. The plant will utilize wood biomass for fuel.

Iowa

- Southern Iowa Electric Cooperative, Inc.: \$10,000,000. Funds will be used to build and improve 106 miles of distribution line and make other system improvements. The loan

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guarantee includes \$135,000 in smart grid projects and \$2,043,387 for storm damage projects.

Maryland

- SMECO Solar, LLC: \$14,565,000. Funds will be used to finance the construction of the Herbert Farm Solar Project, a 5.5 MW renewable solar-powered generating facility.
- Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative, Inc.: \$87,160,000. Funds will be used to build 37 miles of transmission line and make other system improvements.

Minnesota and Iowa

- Federated Rural Electric Association: \$6,700,000. Funds will be used to build and improve 76 miles of distribution line and make other system improvements. The loan guarantee includes \$1,542,000 in smart grid projects.

Mississippi

- South Mississippi Electric Power Association: \$480,000,000. Funds will be used to finance a 15 percent share of the Kemper County Integrated Gasification Combined Cycle project.
- South Mississippi Electric Power Association: \$90,863,000. Funds will be used to build seven miles of transmission line and four new substations and make communications upgrades. The loan amount includes \$67,228,000 in smart grid projects.

Missouri and Oklahoma

- KAMO Electric Cooperative, Inc: \$154,600,000. Funds will be used to finance 116 miles of new transmission line, two substations and make other system improvements. The loan amount includes \$32,120,980 in smart grid projects.

Nebraska

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- KBR Rural Public Power District: \$13,314,000. Funds will be used to build and improve 129 miles of distribution line and nine miles of transmission line, and make other system improvements. The loan amount includes \$791,475 in smart grid projects.

New Mexico

- Otero County Electric Cooperative, Inc: \$30,886,000. Funds will be used to build and improve 200 miles of distribution line and 10 miles of transmission line, and make other system improvements. The loan amount includes \$345,000 in smart grid projects.
- Central Valley Electric Cooperative, Inc: \$44,973,000. Funds will be used to build and improve 589 miles of distribution line and 30 miles of transmission line, and make other system improvements.

New York

- Delaware County Electric Cooperative, Inc: \$5,000,000. Funds will be used to build and improve 53 miles of distribution line, two substations and make other system improvements. The loan amount includes \$50,660 in smart grid projects.

North Dakota and Minnesota

- Minnkota Power Cooperative, Inc: \$308,700,000. Funds will be used to build 260 miles of transmission line. The loan amount includes \$2,800,000 in smart grid projects.

North Dakota and Montana

- Mountrail-Williams Electric Cooperative: \$54,000,000, Funds will be used to build and improve 520 miles of distribution line and make other system improvements. The loan amount includes \$659,800 in smart grid projects.

Ohio

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- Firelands Electric Cooperative, Inc.: \$4,800,000. Funds will be used to build and improve 43 miles of distribution line, and make other system improvements. The loan amount includes \$1,122,000 in smart grid projects.
- Midwest Electric Cooperative, Inc.: \$9,000,000. Funds will be used to build and improve 115 miles of distribution line, and make other system improvements. The loan amount includes \$288,900 in smart grid projects.

Texas

- San Patricio Electric Cooperative, Inc: \$16,853,000. Funds will be used to build and improve 202 miles of distribution line, and make other system improvements. The loan amount includes \$2,157,754 in smart grid projects.

Texas and Louisiana

- East Texas Electric Cooperative, Inc.: \$151,000,000. Funds will be used to finance a 50 MW renewable generating plant. The plant will use wood biomass for fuel.

Washington

- Orcas Power and Light Cooperative: \$38,402,000. Funds will be used to build and improve 109 miles of distribution line, and make other system improvements. The loan amount includes \$24,296,000 in smart grid projects.

Wyoming and Nebraska

- Wyrulec Company: \$4,887,000. Funds will be used to build and improve 85 miles of distribution line, and make other system improvements. The loan amount includes \$155,700 in smart grid projects.

The \$1.95 billion in loan guarantees announced today are provided by USDA Rural

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Development's Rural Utilities Service. The funding helps electric utilities upgrade, expand, maintain and replace rural America's electric infrastructure. The agency also funds energy conservation and renewable energy projects.

For information on other Rural Development's projects, please visit the agency's new interactive web map at: <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/RDSuccessStories.html> . The map features program funding and success stories for fiscal years 2009-2011.

President Obama's plan for rural America has brought about historic investment and resulted in stronger rural communities. Under the President's leadership, these investments in housing, community facilities, businesses and infrastructure have empowered rural America to continue leading the way – strengthening America's economy, small towns and rural communities. USDA's investments in rural communities support the rural way of life that stands as the backbone of our American values. President Obama and Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack are committed to a smarter use of Federal resources to foster sustainable economic prosperity and ensure the government is a strong partner for businesses, entrepreneurs and working families in rural communities.

USDA, through its Rural Development mission area, administers and manages housing, business and community infrastructure programs through a national network of state and local offices. Rural Development has an active portfolio of more than \$172 billion in loans and loan guarantees. These programs are designed to improve the economic stability of rural communities, businesses, residents, farmers and ranchers and improve the quality of life in rural America.

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