

# RURAL AMERICA RELIES ON RURAL DEVELOPMENT



NATIONAL RURAL WATER ASSOCIATION



USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT WATER PROGRAMS CREATE SUSTAINABILITY

## SUSTAINABILITY FOR RURAL COMMUNITIES

Small and rural communities rely on access to affordable loan and grant opportunities through USDA Rural Development to make repairs, upgrades, and to build new critical infrastructure for their communities.

While affordable financing is a vital component for these communities, it is not the complete solution. After these projects are completed, the need for training for water and wastewater operators does not go away. Technical assistance ensures the government's and public's investment is secured. For small and rural communities to remain sustainable, they need ongoing training and technical assistance.

Last year, Circuit Riders directly helped to protect the health and safety of 30,721,691 people - 42% of rural America.

**1 in 5**

**Americans Live in a Rural Community**

Technical assistance for small and rural communities includes providing training, energy audits, certification, financial management, environmental compliance, governance, and on-site technical assistance necessary to ensure that water and wastewater facilities operate at the highest possible level. Through the grants provided through USDA WEP, these services are provided at no cost through technical assistance providers like NRWA and its State Affiliates. The loss of funding for this essential technical assistance will jeopardize the sustainability of rural water systems and their communities. System managers will be forced to choose between not addressing ongoing operational and management issues or contracting for these services at steep costs.

*Today's Congressional policies and funding decisions are jeopardizing the sustainability of every community in rural America. Budget cuts will leave USDA WEP unable to accomplish its mission. WEP is instrumental in helping rural America ensure their communities are sustainable now and into the future.*

## USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT WATER & ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS (WEP)

State Rural Water Associations in partnership with USDA RD WEP provide the following technical assistance to rural communities:

Circuit Rider Program

Disaster Recovery Circuit Rider Program

Wastewater Technical Assistance and Training Program

NRWA Apprenticeship Program

Manufactured Housing Program

Energy Efficiency Program

Decentralized Wastewater Technical Assistance and Training Program

## TELL CONGRESS NOW

**KEEP RURAL AMERICA STRONG!**

Scan the QR Code to learn more about how you can help keep Rural America Strong!



# THE IMPACT



WEP TRUSTED PARTNER FOR SUSTAINABILITY FOR UTE MOUNTAIN UTE TRIBE, COLORADO

## RURAL AMERICA DESERVES RURAL DEVELOPMENT

“From a cultural and spiritual standpoint water is very sacred to the Ute Mountain Ute people and the funding provided by USDA RD has allowed upgrades and extensions of water and wastewater lines. USDA project funding for the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe and the support of technical assistance from other supporting agencies drives our growing community.”

-Bernadette Cuthair, Ute Mountain Ute Tribe Director of Planning & Development



## IMPACT IN ACTION

The Ute Mountain Ute Tribe has lived on the Ute Mountain Ute Reservation located in Montezuma, County in Colorado for more than 140 years. The community has a median household income (MHI) of \$43,466, compared to the state's overall MHI of \$89,302.

The Ute Mountain Public Works Department is responsible for not only the water and distribution systems, wastewater collection and oversight of their ten lagoons, but are also responsible for repairs to water services i.e., water heaters and faucet replacement within the tribal homes as well as sewer issues associated with septic tanks and leach fields. They perform most all water testing, utility location and construction oversight.

Since 2016, USDA Rural Development has provided over \$15 million in WEP funding to the Tribe in both Colorado and Utah, helping fund much needed improvements.

The Tribe currently has in place a 9-phase project, only one of which is completed, to replace 20 total miles of water main line. The project started in 2019 when Ute Tribal Elders met with USDA Rural Development staff to discuss the federal funding necessary to help their disadvantaged community make upgrades to their community's utilities.

USDA Rural Development has committed to funding the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe a minimum of \$2 million per year for 10 years.

## CALL TO ACTION

### Fund Water Infrastructure - Stand Up for USDA Rural Development

Rural Development will continue to play a vital role in modernizing, preserving, and protecting rural America's infrastructure and public health. You can help secure its future today by signing the pledge and writing to your Congressional representatives today.

Providing adequate support and resources necessary to protect and enhance the environment, public health, sustainability of utilities, and economic vitality of rural America with clean, affordable, and safe water service is a primary responsibility for our federal elected officials.

Visit [www.ruralwaterstrong.org](http://www.ruralwaterstrong.org) to learn more.

**UTE MOUNTAIN TRIBE, CO**  
**2,000 TRIBAL MEMBERS**  
**MHI 48% OF STATE AVERAGE**