

FHA Reports on Rural Progress

Rural community progress in Pennsylvania has been spurred by financial assistance through the Farmers Home Administration, U. S. Department of Agriculture, for 108 separate projects for water systems, sewer systems, rural development, watershed and recreation centers, State Director Penrose Hallowell of the rural credit agency, said recently.

Hallowell reported on the benefits brought to the state under the Rural Community Facilities programs that have been enlarged under President Nixon's efforts to improve living conditions in rural areas.

Loans and grants to rural communities totalling \$34,223,155 have been approved and funded for Pennsylvania since the current programs began in 1966.

Hallowell said that water supply problems have been or will be solved for more than 48,421 people in rural Pennsylvania through the completion of 55 water systems made possible by the Farmers Home Administration loans and grants. The new systems serve both rural towns and countryside where the people have had to exist on uncertain, sometimes unsafe water supplies.

Hallowell reported that 27 rural communities in the state will have new or improved sewer systems through projects to provide these facilities for some 38,613 rural residents.

An additional eight communities will have combined projects that provide for both water and sewer systems for 11,131 people through the Farmers Home Administration assistance.

The Farmers Home Administration, through insurance of private loan financing, also has made possible the construction of 14 outdoor oriented recreation centers developed by community associations and serving an estimated 14,410 people in rural Pennsylvania. These centers give the rural families the same opportunity as the city and suburban dwellers to enjoy in their home communities such facilities as modern swimming pools, picnic areas, tennis courts, fishing, riding trails, and other popular forms of outdoor recreation.

The Farmers Home Administration makes community facility loans through its county offices. The loans are made to local public agencies and nonprofit associations that cannot

obtain other sources of financing.

Grants may supplement loans for water and sewer systems only when the projects provide for modest facilities and the projects cannot be financed entirely on a loan basis to result in a reasonable user charge.

Hallowell said the Farmers Home Administration has also made grants to 47 counties in Pennsylvania for comprehensive planning of the future development of water and sewer systems in rural areas. These grants have totaled \$903,150.

Another benefit derived through the construction of the water, sewer, and the recreation projects has been the employ-

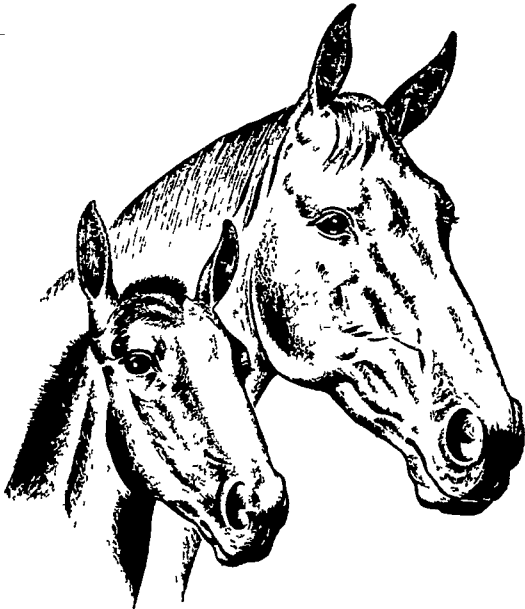
ment during the past five years of construction and building trade workers in rural areas that has totaled more than 684,446 man days.

Funds are available, according to Mr. Hallowell, for financing water systems to nonprofit organizations; however, funds are very limited for public organizations and are disbursed on a priority of need.

All communities interested in assistance must apply by the use of Form SF-101, obtained at one of the 26 county FHA offices located throughout Pennsylvania, or directly from the State Office located in the Federal Building, P.O. Box 905, 228 Walnut Street, Harrisburg, Pa. 17108.

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