
USDA: CASTLE PRAISES EFFORTS TO IMPROVE ENVIRONMENT -- April 21, 2008

Millsboro, DE April 21, 2008 – In recognition of Earth Day, officially observed around the globe on April 22nd, Delaware officials gathered in the Town of Millsboro to celebrate the partnership and successful efforts that are underway to reduce harmful nutrients from reaching our Inland Bays. "This is about improving the quality of life for the residents in the area by ensuring there is a means for safe, sanitary disposal of wastewater," said Congressman Castle. "This is a pristine area and it is our responsibility to serve the residents living here and to protect the environment with the resources that we have."

The Town of Millsboro's wastewater treatment facility is under construction to comply with a 1998 State regulation to eliminate the discharge of treated effluent into the Tiger Branch tributary of the Indian River. With the support of federal and state funding the Town is able to proceed with necessary improvements to the sewer treatment plant. The plant is being upgraded with a "state of the art" nutrient removal system that will make the discharged effluent near drinking water quality. Originally constructed in 1964, the plant has had various upgrades over the years. It is currently operating at 80% of its wastewater treatment design capacity; the plant was designed to handle 650,000 gallons per day. In planning for current and long-term reasonable growth, the funding will also help increase their wastewater treatment capacity to handle existing residents and new user demands.

USDA Rural Development is providing a grant in the amount of \$1.5 million and a low-interest loan in the amount of \$5.8 million to help make the project affordable for the Millsboro community. "Environmental regulations and infrastructure costs are some of the most difficult and most expensive challenges that rural communities face," said Marlene Elliott Brown, USDA Rural Development State Director. "USDA Rural Development for many years has been a partner in helping small towns overcome these obstacles by returning your taxpayer dollars home to make the project as affordable as possible."

In addition to the USDA funds, the State of Delaware is providing a \$7.9 million loan. "Quote from the State"

USDA Rural Development is committed to the future of rural communities. Last year, the agency returned more than \$42 million to rural Delaware. They have more than 40 programs that support agriculture, business opportunities, home ownership, home repair, rental housing, broadband technology, public safety, health care, education, social and cultural needs and energy related projects. Additional information on rural programs is available by calling their Georgetown Office at (302) 856-3990, ext. 5 or by visiting their website at www.rurdev.usda.gov.

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