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NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture • Rural Development

Office of the State Director Florida/U.S. VI

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Residents of LaBelle to Benefit from USDA Rural Development Funding

LaBelle, Fla., August 6, 2010 – The City of LaBelle is replacing its 30-year-old water treatment plant with a new facility thanks to \$15,310,430 in United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development funds.

Facing near term treatment capacity with its existing facility, which is operating at approximately 86 percent of its 999,999 gallons per day (gpd) production capacity, the City of LaBelle has secured a \$10,091,000 loan and a \$5,219,430 grant from USDA Rural Development to construct a new water treatment facility. Loan terms include a 3.25 percent interest rate with a 40-year term.

“The city leaders of LaBelle are to be commended for their foresight and efforts to ensure clean, safe drinking water is available to the current and future residents and businesses of this community,” said USDA Rural Development State Director Richard A. Machek. “USDA Rural Development is proud to play a role in this important project.”

The new facility, to be built on land south of the city in the central part of the service area, will consist of a new 1.5 million gallons per day (mgd) reverse osmosis water treatment plant withdrawing water from the Lower Hawthorn Aquifer, three wells, a ground storage tank, high-service pump stations and associated transmission and distribution piping. To accommodate potential growth, expansion of the distribution system is part of the planned project.

USDA Rural Development is committed to the future of rural communities and provides financing and technical assistance to foster growth in homeownership, business development, and critical community and technology infrastructure. More information about USDA Rural Development can be found at www.rurdev.usda.gov/fl.

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