



**IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **RCAP Secures USDA Disaster Relief Funding to Restore Small Communities**

*Washington, DC –*

The Rural Community Assistance Partnership, Inc. (RCAP) has received \$500,000 in funding from the U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development's Water and Environmental Programs to provide training and technical assistance, onsite repairs, and utility management advice for rural water and wastewater utilities impacted by the 2017 hurricane season. RCAP has been on the ground providing technical assistance to rural communities affected by hurricanes since the storms hit, and this funding will allow the RCAP network to expand that work.

“Ensuring safe drinking water has proven to be a critical first step in rebuilding the small Texas communities ravaged by Hurricane Harvey at the end of August 2017,” explained Ines Polonius, CEO of Communities Unlimited. “Once critical community backbone infrastructure -- a town's water and waste water systems -- is back in place and functioning properly, families can begin to rebuild their lives in the place they call home.”

With this funding, RCAP will assist rural communities, borrowers, and small water systems in Texas, the Southeast US, Puerto Rico, and the US Virgin Islands in their recovery from the recent hurricanes. RCAP regional partners including the Southeast Rural Community Assistance Project (SERCAP), Communities Unlimited (CU), and RCAP Solutions will assist small utilities to complete damage assessments and disaster technical assistance work plans, apply for Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) disaster programs, file insurance recovery claims, and update existing Security Vulnerability Assessments and Emergency Response plans.

“Our work in Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands is in higher demand than ever before.” says Karen A. Koller, CAE, President and CEO of RCAP Solutions. “The increased funding provided by the disaster recovery grants will allow RCAP Solutions to provide additional vital technical assistance and services to those in desperate need of safe, clean drinking water as we assist in the rebirth of those communities.”

Rural communities of 10,000 or less impacted by natural disasters are often the last to get assistance. This grant will provide RCAP the opportunity to provide long-term technical assistance to communities in need of basic capacity building expertise in immediate response to the hurricanes that impacted their communities.

“The funds awarded to the SERCAP region for disaster recovery will assist our communities impacted by the devastating 2017 hurricane season,” said Hope F Cupit, CPA, President & CEO of SERCAP. “SERCAP is committed to rebuilding small communities in Florida during the long-term period of recovery.”

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Rural Community Assistance Partnership is a national network of six regional non-profit organizations working to ensure that rural and small communities throughout the country have access to safe drinking water and sanitary wastewater disposal. The RCAP network provides a variety of programs to accomplish this goal, including direct training and on the ground technical assistance. For more information, visit [www.rcap.org](http://www.rcap.org).