



NEWS RELEASE

Nebraska *National Forest*

Date	May 23, 2003	Contact	Jerry Schumacher
Release	Immediately	Email	jschumacher@fs.fed.us

Short Time Frame for 2003 Forest Service RCA Grants

Due to a delay in receiving final confirmation on budget figures for the Nebraska National Forest, this year's applications for community development grants through its Rural Community Assistance (RCA) program will be due on June 20, 2003.

"Funding for the program was in question until just the last week or so," said program coordinator, Jerry Schumacher. "Putting together a grant application in only three weeks can be a challenge, but hopefully there are some good ideas that can be submitted within the available time. To help speed up the process we now have the application form on our website so people can fill it out and mail it to us electronically," said Schumacher.

Community organizations in the vicinity of the Nebraska and Samuel R. McKelvie National Forests and Oglala National Grassland in Nebraska, and the Buffalo Gap and Fort Pierre National Grasslands in South Dakota, are encouraged to apply for grants of up to \$7500.

"These grants can provide the resources to accomplish a smaller community project, or act as seed money to help to attract partners to a larger scale project," said Schumacher.

Priority will be given to those projects that are linked to broad-based community plans that address local needs, and are compatible with the RCA program goals.

MORE

Nebraska National Forest
125 North Main Street
Chadron, Nebraska 69337
(308) 432-0300

Program goals include:

- (1) increasing the skills, knowledge and abilities of local people through such things as training in community development, leadership, or technology;
- (2) promoting community initiative, responsibility, and adaptability by encouraging public participation in community planning and plan implementation;
- (3) strengthening relationships and communications by encouraging public/private partnerships, interagency and intercommunity cooperation, and dispute resolution processes;
- (4) supporting projects that promote sustainable, healthy ecosystems with multiple community benefits, such as environmental restoration, resource stewardship, or conservation education; and
- (5) encouraging healthy and diverse economies through local business retention and recruitment that enhances a community's ability to respond to economic change.

The grants require a 20% match of cash or in-kind services.

A major program focus is to help rural communities, especially those that rely upon a natural resource economic base, to move toward diversifying that base with sustainable options.

Again, the deadline for submitting grant applications is June 20, 2003. Successful applicants will be notified by the first week of July 2003.

For more information, or to receive a grant application, please contact Jerry Schumacher or Melody Herbert at (308) 432-0300 or download the application form at www.fs.fed.us/r2/nebraska .

###

Nebraska National Forest
125 North Main Street
Chadron, Nebraska 69337
(308) 432-0300