

# **NEWS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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## **Bois Forte Band of Chippewa hosts USDA Rural Development on Tour of Reservation Projects**

NETT LAKE, Minn., – Tribal Leaders from the Bois Forte Band of Chippewa will host Officials from the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Rural Development Agency on September 11 for two check presentations and a tour of projects throughout the Nett Lake and Vermilion Reservations which Rural Development has helped fund.

Rural Development has invested over \$9.5 million throughout the Bois Forte community since 1992. Over \$5 million has come through grants and \$4.5 million through low-interest loans that the Tribe has paid back to the Agency.

The tour will kick off Tuesday at 9 a.m. with a traditional ceremony at the Native Hearts Fitness Center in Nett Lake and the presentation of a check for \$740,000 by the USDA for a major waste water treatment system in the Indian Point residential community on Pelican Lake. The Bois Forte Tribal Government is also signing a \$247,000 loan that will be combined with the USDA grant to install a state of the art wastewater system that will serve the residents of Indian Point and protect Pelican Lake.

Bids from General Contractors interested in handling the Indian Point project are scheduled to be opened the day of the check presentation. Bois Forte plans to begin construction on this latest project within the next two months.

“We’ve been able to assist the Bois Forte community on a variety of development projects,” said Steve Wenzel, State Director of Rural Development in Minnesota. “The Tribe has been a valuable partner with USDA Rural Development for a long time and I look forward to assisting with future projects.”

The tour will include nine separate projects the group will review on both the Nett Lake and Vermilion sectors of the Bois Forte Reservation, including the Nett Lake Public Safety Building, the Tribes new Public Maintenance Building, the Indian Point Waste Water project and several neighborhood sewer and water projects in the Vermilion community.

The highlight of the afternoon will be USDA officials presenting a check for \$30,000 at the Vermilion Family Wellness Center. The Bois Forte Tribal Government is contributing \$25,000 as a prerequisite for the USDA grant. The money will be combined to purchase \$55,000 of equipment for the Tribe's Boys and Girls Club, Health Clinic and Family Wellness Center.

Tribal Chair Kevin Leecy credited the collaboration between USDA and the Band in rebuilding crumbling infrastructure as well as creating new buildings and equipment to improve the quality of life on and off the Reservation. "Together, we've pooled our resources and built some impressive facilities and programs that are enhancing vital services for the Bois Forte people and our neighbors in the surrounding communities."

USDA Rural Development has invested over \$4 billion throughout rural Minnesota since 2001. For more information, visit [www.rurdev.usda.gov/mn](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/mn) or call the local office in Virginia at (218) 741-3929 or the office in Baxter at (218) 829-5965.

Interviews with Bois Forte Tribal representatives can be arranged through Terri Hill, Bois Forte Communication Director (800) 221-8129 (office); (218) 780-4388; [thill@boisfortensn.gov](mailto:thill@boisfortensn.gov)

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