RCAR 2014 ANNUAL REPORT



The Rural Community Assistance Partnership (RCAP) is a national network of nonprofit organizations working to ensure that rural and small communities throughout the United States have access to safe drinking water and sanitary wastewater disposal. The six regional RCAPs provide a variety of programs to accomplish this goal, such as direct training and technical assistance, leveraging millions of dollars to assist communities develop and improve their water and wastewater systems.





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LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

FINANCIALS

Statement of Financial Position September 30, 2014 (With Summarized Financial Information as of September 20, 2013)

ASSETS

Current Assets Cash and cash equivalents Grants receivable Accounts receivable Prepaid expenses

Total Current Assets

Note receivable Other assets

TOTAL ASSETS

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

Current Liabilities Accounts payable and accrued liabilities Accrued salaries and related benefits Grants payable Refundable advances

Total Current Liabilities

Note payable

Net Assets

TOTAL LIABILITIES

TOTAL LIABILITIES AND N

Unrestricted TOTAL NET ASSETS



Robert Stewart RCAP Executive Director

n behalf of the Board of Directors of the Rural Community Assistance Partnership (RCAP) I am happy to present this annual report for 2014. This past year was one filled with significant accomplishments and new programs that have further strengthened our ability to provide a variety of resources to small rural communities across America.

Within this report you will find summary information on programs carried out as a result of financial support from the United States Department of Agriculture's Rural Utility Service (RUS) and the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). In addition, we report on our work to provide a voice for rural communities through education and advocacy and our ongoing efforts to train our staff to be better able to provide the highest level of services to rural communities. While RCAP has received EPA funding previously, this last year's program allowed RCAP to direct our assistance activities to the many regulatory, compliance-related issues being faced by small utility systems. Through direct, on-site assistance and targeted training sessions we have been able to work together with communities as they resolve often long-standing compliance deficiencies. Our six regional partners have been working in every state under this program and those funded by RUS. We are also very pleased to be partnering with the American Water Works Association, the University of Illinois, the Inter Tribal Council of Arizona, and the United South and Eastern Tribes to deliver services to communities, rural homeowners, and on tribal lands.

New to 2014 was a program, also funded by EPA, to assist private water well owners through on-line training courses, local workshops, and by providing a wealth of information through our collective websites and electronic communications. Also new this year was the initiation of a national solid waste program. RCAP has provided communities with assistance on solid waste and recycling programs for years, however, we were able to obtain additional RUS funding that has significantly expanded our outreach in this area.

After a short hiatus we again conducted a national training conference that provided dozens of timely training sessions for 150 RCAP staff from across the country. In March, we conducted our seventh annual legislative fly-in which provided an opportunity for our regions to meet with Congressional members and their staff on issues of importance to rural America.

Our success this past year further motivates us all to continue to seek out new opportunities, new programs, and new means to provide those services that help rural communities meet their infrastructure and development needs.

Please feel free to visit our website, give us a call, or get in touch with our regional partners should you desire additional information on any of the services that we provide to rural America.

Sincerely,

RURAL COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE PARTNERSHIP, INC.

	2014	2013
	\$ 286,369	\$ 213,085
	1,056,194	1,184,298
	36,925	24,587
	20,046	13,319
	1,399,534	1,435,289
	250,000	250,000
	7,979	7,979
	\$ 1,657,513	\$ 1,693,268
	\$ 95,507	\$ 105,852
	49,685	49,247
	973,168	1,066,279
	113,506	45,506
	1,231,866	1,266,884
	250,000	250,000
	1,481,866	1,516,884
	175,647	176,384
	175,647	176,384
IET ASSETS	\$ 1,657,513	\$ 1,693,268
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PROJECTS



EPA NATIONAL PRIORITY AREA 1

In May 2014, RCAP was awarded \$4,500,000 through a competitive process to implement a cooperative agreement with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Office of Groundwater and Drinking Water. The agreement addresses EPA's National Priority Area 1: Training and Technical Assistance for Small Public Water Systems to Achieve and Maintain Compliance with the SDWA (Safe Drinking Water Act).

SUMMARY OF THE PROJECT

The project, Training and Technical Assistance for Small Drinking Water Systems to Achieve and Maintain Compliance Through Assessing and Addressing Deficiencies, provides compliance-based, capacity-building training and technical assistance for operators, board members, and managers of tribal and non-tribal small community and non-community water systems with the objective of protecting human health by reducing exposure to contaminants in drinking water. The project targets small public water systems (those serving populations of fewer than 10,000 people). RCAP has partnered with the American Water Works Association (AWWA), University of Illinois (UI), Inter Tribal Council of Arizona, Inc. (ITCA), and United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc. (USET). In addition to traditional training and technical assistance activities, the unique aspects of the RCAP approach include an analysis of drinking water system failures and the root causes of those failures, and a way of reaching remote water systems through "Distance Assistance." The sequence and relationship between the project activities are shown in the table below.

Sequence and Relationship of Project Activities

Time=>	Query EPA & IHS databases to identify top co		
	Consult with primacy agencies to identify prio		
	Assess causes for compliance failures in priori		
	Deliver Trainings		
	Trainings on Specific	Trainings for Mai	
	Compliance Issues for	and Advancing W	
	Priority Systems	force Competence	

SCOPE OF WORK

The strategy to accomplish the purpose and objectives of the project is based on identifying the top compliance deficiencies and contaminants in each state, working with primacy agencies to focus training and technical assistance efforts, and delivering training and technical assistance in a number of accessible formats. Compliance-related training is being delivered through face-to-face sessions, web-based learning modules, video demonstrations, hands-on activities, and blogs. Technical capacity-building is accomplished through technical assistance that is on-site and comprehensive as well as compliance-focused. Technical assistance visits are augmented with web-based assistance and access to resources and social media outreach efforts.

Outputs (products) of the project include: assessments of the types and causes of compliance failures and risks thereof and strategies for targeting assistance; training and assistance resources addressing compliance issues; and remote and on-site training and technical assistance activities. Outcomes (effects) of the project include: an increase in the knowledge and competency of operators in the areas of regulatory requirements and water system operations; a measurable improvement in the performance of small, public water systems where operational changes or other recommendations were implemented following a system assessment; an increased number of small, public water systems in compliance with the National Primary Drinking Water Regulations or making substantial progress toward compliance as indicated by measured performance, reduced enforcement priority status, or other indicators; an increase in the knowledge and competency of small, public water system managers on the concept and practice of source water protection; an increase in the competence of the operator workforce; and an increase in the number of tribal operators maintaining their certification.

ompliance deficiencies & contaminants					
iority systems best-suited for compliance assistance					
ity systems & develop workplans					
	Deliver Technical Assistance (TA)				
intaining Vork- ce	On-site TA to Priority Systems	Distance Assistance TA to Priority Systems			

... continued from previous page

Training and assistance are being provided across all 50 states and to tribal communities, plus Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, and American Samoa. The "Distance Assistance" initiative is being implemented, whereby web-based, person-to-person technical assistance will be followed up through video-chats as well as direct, system-specific trouble-shooting via phone calls and email.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

RCAP National Office staff researched EPA's Safe Drinking Water Information System (SDWIS), plus state sanitary survey data to generate state-specific reports on compliance violations and challenges. Nationwide, RCAP field staff consulted with primacy agencies to discuss findings and agree on priority water systems and actions to improve compliance. Jointly, state and RCAP staff developed state work plans for training and assisting priority systems.

Causes for compliance failure or risks were further defined using RCAP's Technical, Managerial, and Financial (TMF) Assessment Tool. Assessments identified specific needs for training and technical assistance. These needs, in turn, served as the basis for community-specific work plans.

The RCAP regulatory compliance project spans the calendar years of 2014 and 2015. By the end of 2014, RCAP Technical Assistance Providers were implementing 174 projects in 163 communities in 38 states. These projects benefited 929,589 residents, of which 18% were low-income. Four tribal technical assistance projects were being carried out by RCAP partner organizations.

The RCAP team convened 47 face-to-face training events reaching plant operators and utility managers. Eleven of the training events were for audiences of Native American Water Master Associations.

The American Water Works Association completed its "eLearning" module developed collaboratively with RCAP, and finalized the delivery logistics and publicity for an early 2015 launch. That module addresses the Revised Total Coliform Rule (RTCR), with which systems must comply by April 2016.

RCAP staff developed and field-tested practical, hands-on curricula to train operators on water-related chemistry and math. RCAP field-tested the curricula and finalized the training designs. Web-based trainings and Distance Assistance modules were under development for delivery in 2015.

RCAP updated a brochure for attracting people to the water and wastewater operations professions. The brochure, which summarizes benefits and typical duties of operators, was customized for each state and distributed widely to employment and vocational technology centers and high schools.

NEXT STEPS

RCAP is on track to achieve its project goals by the project end date of October 2015.

In December of 2014, RCAP was notified that it had won another EPA award through a competitive process. RCAP will receive \$4 million for another 18-month cooperative agreement to help communities achieve and sustain drinking water regulatory compliance. The new award will allow RCAP to build on its successful partnerships, innovative tools, and strate-gic communications to assist small drinking water systems across the 50 states, dozens of tribal communities, and five U.S. territories in protecting public health by providing safe drinking water. The new project is expected to start in the summer of 2015.



EPA NATIONAL PRIORITY AREA 4

Approximately 30 million Americans receive their drinking water from private wells. Private well owners face many challenges in providing safe water. Protection of private wells does not fall under the authority of the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA), so these well owners often face challenges in obtaining the assistance they need to keep their wells in good working order and to protect the quality of their water supply. These challenges include where to go or whom to contact for good and timely information and technical assistance on all aspects of private well ownership, including well construction, operation, maintenance, testing, local and state health requirements as well as other relevant regulations or programs, local ground water quality concerns, and well emergency contacts and procedures. Under National Priority Area 4, Training and Technical Assistance for Private Well Owners to Help Improve Water Quality, EPA solicited applications to provide training and technical assistance to private drinking water well owners.

Rural Community Assistance Partnership, Inc. (RCAP) has partnered with its six regional RCAPs (affiliates) and with the Illinois State Water Survey and Illinois Water Resources Center at the University of Illinois (UI) to provide training and technical assistance to owners and managers of private drinking water wells. This partnership combines UI's ground water and well expertise with the information-dissemination and training capabilities of RCAP's technical assistance providers across the United States and in the U.S. Territories. The objective of RCAP's activities is to protect the quality of water in private drinking water wells and to protect water quality by minimizing contamination via drinking water wells. Technical assistance is being provided on-site as well as through phone and electronic communications. Training for private well owners is being accomplished through multimedia learning, face-to-face presentations, and webinars.

There will be 36 workshops around the country about private wells and the responsibilities of the owner to manage their well such that it is a sustainable, safe drinking water supply. RCAP is also planning workshops in Puerto Rico and Guam.

In addition to the workshops, RCAP is reaching out to well owners through the UI Private Well Class. The class, which comes in 10 emailed lessons, has had tremendous positive feedback. To date, there have been 3,649 people who have signed up and are moving through the different stages of the class.

USDA TECHNITRAIN

The 2013-2014 program year for Technitrain, funded by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Utilities Service (RUS), concluded in August. Under Technitrain 13-14, RCAP committed to provide technical assistance and training to at least 550 projects and deliver at least 65 trainings to 800 or more system personnel. The RCAP network provided technical assistance to 761 projects in 47 states and Puerto Rico, including 477 related to drinking water and 266 related to wastewater. The network also delivered 72 trainings in 25 states, reaching a total of 1,294 local officials.

Under Technitrain 13-14, the average population of a project system receiving assistance was 2,030 residents, and 73 percent of projects had populations under 2,500. In total, RCAP assistance benefited 1,544,789 rural residents in 600,283 households, of whom 353,495 persons, or 23 percent, are classified as low income. 22 percent of the total population served are members of one or more minority groups. Additionally, RCAP staff helped communities obtain \$73,890,074 for 39 projects in 18 states. That translates to a ratio of over \$14 received by communities for every \$1 RCAP received.

The 2014-2015 program year for Technitrain began on September 1, and has been funded at \$5.5 million. RCAP has agreed to provide technical assistance and training to 550 systems and deliver at least 70 training sessions to 800 or more system personnel. Through the end of the calendar year, the RCAP network had already enrolled 540 project communities serving 1,020,984 people and held 30 trainings for 461 system personnel.

In addition, 2014-2015 marks the first time RCAP has been funded for a separate Tribal Technitrain program. Under Tribal Tech, RCAP is expanding the Native American Water Masters Association (NAWMA) concept originally developed by RCAC in Southern California. Under the NAWMA model, RCAP helps to establish working groups of tribal water and wastewater operators that meet regularly to network, share best practices, and receive targeted training on topics of concern to the NAWMA members. For the \$500,000 RCAP received for Tribal Technitrain, we will create six new NAWMA groups and support four existing ones. We will also provide on-site technical assistance to 48 tribal systems or systems serving a large number of tribal members. While the work under Tribal Technitrain began in the fourth quarter of 2014, the bulk of the work will be done in 2015.



2013-2014 TECHNITRAIN OUTCOMES





RCAP received

from USDA



SOLID WASTE

After going more than ten years without a national solid waste program, the RCAP network is once again offering a national solid waste program funded by the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Rural Utilities Service (RUS). For many years, individual RCAP regions successfully applied for solid waste grants, but this year, the network decided to pool resources and put together a national application for RUS's Solid Waste Management Grant program. We successfully applied for \$852,700 in solid waste funding to provide technical assistance to 14 projects identified at the time of application.

RCAP SOLID WASTE PROJECTS

STATE	PROJECT NAME	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF RCAP SERVICES
CALIFORNIA	BIG SANDY RANCHERIA	Big Sandy Rancheria is completing an Integrated Waste Management Plan (IWMP) and considering the construction of a transfer station to serve the tribe and the surrounding area. RCAP will help the tribe evaluate their alterna- tives and implement the IWMP.
DELAWARE	COVERDALE AND LUCAS (UNINCORPORATED SUSSEX COUNTY)	Both Lucas, which was built on top of a landfill, and Coverdale, which is littered with trash, risk water contamination from the lack of sanitary solid waste removal and disposal. RCAP staff will perform public outreach and education about the importance of sanitary solid waste disposal and work to start a recy- cling program at local schools to help reduce litter.
FLORIDA	SUMTER AND DIXIE COUNTIES	This project expands on a successful pilot project launched in nearby counties under past solid waste management grants. The goal is to establish recycling programs at county schools to educate children about the importance of re- cycling and help them develop good habits to help divert recyclables from the waste stream.
IDAHO	FORT HALL INDIAN RESERVATION	RCAP will help the tribe to create a solid waste management group comprised of various stakeholders that will come up with an integrated solid waste management plan.
INDIANA	FRENCH LICK	Currently, French Lick recycles only 2% of the solid waste the town generates. County officials will work with RCAP to increase the recycling rate, offer more recycling options, and revise ordinances as necessary to facilitate additional recycling.
INDIANA	WEST TERRE HAUTE	West Terre Haute is served by a new, county-wide solid waste management dis- trict. RCAP will assist the district to establish a district plan, operating policies, and operational procedures to support community recycling programs.
KENTUCKY	ALBANY	Currently, Albany has no solid waste collection system, but residents do have access to curbside pickup through a private hauler that they pay individually. RCAP will work with the community to establish a community-wide recycling program.
MARYLAND	DORCHESTER AND SOMERSET COUNTIES	RCAP will assist these counties to close the Golden Hill landfill. In addition, we will work with them to develop solid waste management plans to increase community recycling and increase the waste diversion rate in both counties.
NEW MEXICO	MORA COUNTY	Local forests are dying from severe extended drought conditions and insect infestations that make the area ripe for superfires. There is significant need to reduce forest biomass volumes. RCAP will help the county as it looks to the biomass as a potential source of energy for a courthouse they are seeking to fin- ish. The bio-waste converted to energy will meet the courthouse's heating needs while creating local jobs.

STATE	PROJECT NAME	BRIEF D
NORTH CAROLINA	ROBESON AND DUPLIN COUNTIES	RCAP w the state's National its own v landfill.
PUERTO RICO	MUNICIPIO JUANA DIAZ	To help r RCAP to begin wi dumping
SOUTH CAROLINA	BAMBERG, CHESTER, CLARENDON, COLLETON, DILLON, HAMPTON, MCCORMICK, AND WILLIAMSBURG COUNTIES	RCAP is cling cen waste ma successfu program
WYOMING	TEN SLEEP	Ten Sleep to ongoin stopping Sleep's so recycling
WYOMING	WIND RIVER TRIBE	RCAP w program for a soli the tribes ordinanc



DESCRIPTION OF RCAP SERVICES

vill work with both counties to increase their waste diversion rates to e's target of 40%. We will also be assisting Robeson county to obtain a al Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit to operate wastewater treatment system for the leachate that is collected by its

meet the island's 35% recycling goal, the community will partner with o institute a new recycling program in its rural barrios. The project will ith a volunteer clean-up day and will continue by closing down illegal g sites and promoting the new recycling program.

s partnering with these 8 low-income counties to evaluate existing recynters, train recycling center attendants, and update each county's solid nanagement plan. This project is a continuation of Southeast RCAP's ful work in many of the same counties under its SMART Solid Waste

ep has been identified by Wyoming as a priority solid waste project due ing ground water contamination from its current landfill. In addition to g the contamination, RCAP will assist with plans to further develop Ten olid waste operations, to eventually operate their own hauling services, g services, and solid waste transfer station.

vill assist the tribe with upgrades and improvements to its solid waste n. We will also work with the tribe to identify and apply for funding lid waste bulk management and recycling facility. RCAP will also assist es with developing policies and procedures to implement solid waste cces adopted in 2011.

NATIONAL CONFERENCE

RCAP staff from across the country gathered in Madison, Wisconsin October 6-9th, 2014 to connect and learn from leaders in the field and each other at the annual RCAP National Training Conference. The program kicked off with opening remarks from Jill D. Jonas, Director of the Bureau of Drinking Water and Groundwater, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources; Mindy Eisenberg, Chief of the Drinking Water Protection Branch, Office of Groundwater and Drinking Water, US EPA; and Stan Gruszynski, Wisconsin State Director of USDA Rural Development, who welcomed the group to Madison and discussed water issues in Wisconsin. Following a lively question and answer session with all the presenters, Robert Stewart, RCAP's Executive Director, welcomed new RCAP staff and reflected on the 40-year history of the organization and future plans. Ari Neumann, RCAP's Policy Director, closed the morning session with a presentation on rural advocacy and advancing the RCAP cause at the State and Federal level.

Opening remarks were followed by the annual RCAP Awards Luncheon. The following staff were recognized for their dedication and service to RCAP's mission to ensure that rural and small communities throughout the US have access to safe drinking water and sanitary wastewater disposal:

- Art Astarita (RCAP Solutions), Outstanding Service Award
- Josefa Torres Olivio (RCAP Solutions), Bill French Bridge Builder Award
- Holly Baker (CU), Pillar Award
- Callie McIntosh (MAP), Outstanding Mentor Award
- Marty Ostransky (MAP), Outstanding Rookie Award

Sukhwindar Singh (RCAP Solutions), Jerry Kopke (CU), and Dave Harvey (RCAC) were all inducted into the RCAP Hall of Fame (pictured right).

Over the following three days, 150 RCAP Technical Assistance Providers (TAPs) participated in training sessions on everything from Sanitary Surveys to Conflict Resolution. Outside of session rooms, RCAP staff enjoyed the city of Madison and shared experiences and lessons from the field. On the final day of the conference, Jacqueline M. Ponti-Lazaruk, Acting Administrator for the USDA Rural Utilities Service, spoke on the role of Rural Development in communities and where the department was a year ago, this year, and outlooks for the future.

Motivated by speakers and armed with new training information, the conference reinvigorated RCAP staff to tackle the challenges facing rural communities today.





ADVOCACY

The year began with a fierce debate over the passage of the Farm Bill in the House of Representatives. It passed by a final vote of 251-166 in the House and the Senate quickly followed suit by a vote of 68-32. The bill featured a number of provisions for which RCAP actively advocated, including \$150 million in mandatory spending to help address the backlog of applications for water and wastewater infrastructure at the Rural Utilities Service and an authorization for technical assistance for the Essential Community Facilities program at Rural Housing Service. President Obama signed the bill into law on February 7, 2014.

In March, RCAP successfully completed its annual legislative fly-in in Washington, DC. The event featured 61 RCAP staff, RCAP board members, and several leaders from communities where RCAP has performed work who all came to Washington, DC to meet with their members of Congress to educate them about the importance of Rural Development programs. In total, the event featured meetings with 189 members of Congress, included a breakfast briefing from USDA and EPA officials, and concluded with an RCAP board meeting at which representatives from USDA and HHS discussed their technical assistance programs with the board.

Throughout the year, RCAP maintained its relationship with Rapoza Associates, which provides RCAP with lobbying services on the appropriations that fund the work that we do. 2014 was another successful year on the appropriations front, as the accounts that fund RCAP's work remained at or above the previous year's level. In fact, the Rural Community Facilities account at HHS's Office of Community Services increased by \$500,000. At a much broader level, the picture for water and wastewater appropriations was similar: funding for the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (SRF) program stayed level at \$1.45 billion, funding for the Drink-



From Left to Right: Senator Mike Rounds (SD), Midwest RCAP's Jan Kittay, Senator John Thune (SD), and Representative Kristi Noem (SD)

ing Water SRF stayed level at just over \$900 million, and funding for the Rural Utilities Service Water and Waste Disposal grants was \$347 million.

RCAP's other major advocacy focus in 2014 was in shaping the implementation of the Water Infrastructure Financing Authority (WIFIA) pilot program that passed as part of the Water Resources Reform and Development Act. WIFIA is designed to attract private capital to water infrastructure projects by offering a federal loan guarantee for up to 49% of the project. In order to qualify for the program, projects must be of national or regional significance and have an expected cost of \$20 million or more. There is a carve out for rural projects that requires a minimum project cost of \$5 million. Our advocacy efforts on WIFIA focus on ensuring that the program does not negatively affect the availability of SRF funding for small systems and on working with EPA to determine how best to implement the portion designated specifically for rural projects.



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