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For Immediate Release

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Cresson, PA - USDA Rural Development Pennsylvania State Director Gary H. Groves and Congressman John Murtha joined Cresson Volunteer Fire Company No. 1 representatives in a ceremonial check presentation to highlight the \$275,000 Community Facility loan to Cresson Volunteer Fire Company No. 1 by Rural Development for a ladder fire truck. Attending were local officials and others.

"The loan to Cresson's first responders for a fire truck demonstrates Rural Development's commitment to the future of our rural communities, and the residents of Cresson Borough and surrounding townships benefit from the resulting improved fire and rescue protection," said Gary H. Groves, USDA Rural Development Pennsylvania State Director.

Congressman Murtha added, "Our volunteer firefighters put their lives on the line to protect the lives and property of their neighbors, and especially in small, rural communities, it's very difficult for them to raise the money to modernize their equipment. That's why this USDA program is so important and why we appreciate the efforts of Rural Development."

The funds will be used to purchase a 2005 Crimson 100' tower ladder fire truck with equipment that will meet all current safety standards and improve fire protection for Cresson Borough and surrounding townships in Cambria County. The \$675,000 project cost was met with the \$275,000 loan from Rural Development, a \$150,000 loan from Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency and the balance from the fire company.

USDA Rural Development serves as the lead federal agency for rural development needs by offering financial and technical assistance to individuals, businesses and communities. USDA Rural Development programs include funding for day care centers, fire trucks and other community facility projects; the purchase, construction or repair of homes; loans and guarantees to rural businesses to save or create jobs; and loans and grants for water and sewer utility projects. For more information on programs offered by USDA Rural Development, contact the Pennsylvania State Office at (717) 237-2299 or visit its website at www.rurdev.usda.gov/pa.