

DEPARTMENT OF RURAL SERVICES (250)

FISCAL YEAR 2016

As Enacted by Act 35 of 2015

I) AGENCY SUMMARY & REVENUE SOURCES

MISSION

The Department of Rural Services serves as a single contact point for local governments, state and federal agencies, and other private and non-profit organizations and individuals with an interest in the rural policies and programs of the state. The Arkansas Rural Development Commission oversees the functions and duties of the agency. The Agency and the Commission strive to enhance the quality of life for rural Arkansans by providing resources necessary to help themselves succeed in their community.

TOTAL APPROPRIATION

The total appropriation is \$ \$1,519,992.

FUNDING SOURCE

The budget is funded by general revenues and cash derived from fees charged to conference participants and donations received through corporate sponsorship. In addition, the agency receives an administrative fee of up to 1.5% of general improvement moneys distributed by this agency.

II) CHANGE LEVEL REQUESTS

STATE OPERATIONS

- Increase appropriation and general revenue funding of \$4,334 to cover rent increase and website maintenance.
- Increase appropriation of \$200,000 each for Rural Community Development and Rural Community Fire Protection grant programs and \$60,730 for Rural County Fair Improvement grants.

III) ADDITIONAL POSITIONS (Total FY2015 Authorized Positions: 5)

Total Positions for FY2016: 5

Total Base Level Positions: 5

Increase/Decrease Over Base Level:0

Extra Help Positions FY2016:1 (Total FY2015 Authorized Extra Help: 1)

IV) SPECIAL LANGUAGE

* General Improvement Projects Administrative Fee. Rural Services is authorized to retain and utilize 1.5% of the total amount of any General Improvement Fund moneys received for projects authorized to be disbursed.

* Fund Transfer. Establishes the transfer of the 1.5% General Improvement Fund moneys to the Miscellaneous Agencies Fund Account for the administrative fee.

* Carry Forward. Unexpended balance of funds transferred into the Miscellaneous Agencies Fund Account for administration of general improvement fund projects shall remain and be made available for the same purpose during the following year.

* County Fair Grants. Rural Services shall develop rules and regulations for disbursement of the funds. The grants are to be matched 50/50 with no county receiving more than \$30,000 for the biennium.

* Grant Award Criteria. The Office of Rural Services shall promulgate regulations to determine how grants are to be disbursed subject to approval of the Governor and approval of the ALC or Joint Budget Committee.

April 2015