

# News Release



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## **Key Progress Announced for Financing of Avenue B & C Colonia Wastewater Collection System in Yuma**

PHOENIX (Oct. 5, 2009) – State and federal officials announced key progress Monday for Yuma’s Avenue B & C Colonia wastewater collection system with the submittal of paperwork for a \$2 million loan which is expected to be the final financing step before construction of the much-anticipated project begins.

The loan, which is expected to be approved by the WIFA board of directors by December, is part of more than \$23 million in grants and loans which will be used to connect more than 7,500 residents of the Colonia to the City of Yuma municipal sewer system.

A total of \$1.7 million of the \$2 million loan will be used for construction setup activities including possible easement and right of way acquisition. The other \$300,000 will be used for pre-design and design elements associated with the project.

Avenue B and C Colonia is one of Yuma’s oldest neighborhoods and residents have relied on household septic systems for wastewater disposal for decades. The septic systems leach in an area where the water table can rise sharply during irrigation of nearby farm land. The water table rising and the sewage percolating down can threaten the Colorado River, which is only one-half mile away from some residences in the Colonia.

“This is great news for all Yuma residents,” said Benjamin H. Grumbles, chairman of WIFA’s board of directors and Director of the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality. “This project will play a major role in protecting the Colorado River and groundwater in the Yuma area.”

Ernie Wetherbee, Arizona Acting State Director for USDA Rural Development, said that the agency provided just more than \$16.3 million in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) grant funds for the project, one of the largest grants ever awarded in Arizona, and a \$2 million loan.

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In addition to the anticipated \$2 million WIFA loan, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Border Environment Cooperation Commission and North American Development Bank provided nearly \$3 million in grants.

“This means that the more than 7,000 residents of Avenue B & C Colonia will be able to afford the improvements that will give them new pride and new hope for the future of their community,” Wetherbee said.

WIFA maintains and improves water quality in Arizona by providing communities and private water systems with access to low-interest financial assistance and technical assistance needed for basic water infrastructure. For more information, please visit WIFA’s Web site at [www.azwifa.gov](http://www.azwifa.gov).

USDA Rural Development’s mission is to increase economic opportunity and improve the quality of life for all rural Americans. The agency’s utilities programs address rural America’s needs for basic services like clean running water, sewers and waste disposal, electricity, and telecommunications. For more information, please visit USDA RD’s website at [www.rurdev.usda.gov/rd](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rd) .