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FIRST SOUTHWEST RECEIVES ALMOST \$6 MILLION THROUGH USDA
Community Bank Will Use Capital to Facilitate Critical Community Infrastructure and Development

ALAMOSA, COLO., (Oct. 18, 2016) First Southwest Bank’s nonprofit affiliate First Southwest Community Fund was one of thirty one entities nationwide, and one of two in Colorado, to receive an award from the USDA’s Rural Development Intermediary Relending Program. Through a competitive application process, First Southwest Community Fund was awarded \$750,000, which will be invested back into the community as low-rate, fixed loans to spur economic development in Southern Colorado.

“This money will be offered exclusively to small businesses that create or retain jobs in rural Colorado,” First Southwest Bank CEO Kent Curtis said. “Recognizing the economic impact of these businesses, we will use this money to create a revolving loan fund that supports new and expanding small businesses.”

Additionally, First Southwest Bank is proud to receive \$5,000,000 through the USDA Rural Development Community Facilities Program. First Southwest Bank was one of 26 entities nationwide, and the only one in Colorado, to receive an award this year. This money will be used to facilitate funding for critical community facilities, such as libraries, fire stations and police stations, which often face unique roadblocks to securing funding.

“Previously this program was only available to nonprofits,” Curtis added. “Recognizing the role Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI) play, the USDA decided to expand this program. We are thrilled to participate in the inaugural expansion and facilitate funding of essential projects in rural communities.”

First Southwest Bank is certified as a CDFI through the U.S. Treasury. This certification recognizes our commitment to important local initiatives such as creating new jobs in rural communities, assisting workers in obtaining higher wage jobs and enhancing financial empowerment for members of underserved communities.

“USDA Rural Development is the only federal agency that focuses solely on the wellbeing of rural communities and we’re fortunate to work with innovative partners like First Southwest Bank and their community fund to help in this effort. The investments they make will help build communities, create jobs and bolster economic development throughout SW Colorado,” said Trudy Kareus, USDA Rural Development Colorado State Director.

Information on First Southwest Bank and its CDFI designation are at www.fswb.com. Information about First Southwest Community Fund can be found at www.firstsouthwestcommunity.org. More information about the USDA Community Facilities program can be found at www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/all-programs/community-facilities-programs, information about the Intermediary Relending Program can be found <http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/intermediary-re lending-program>.

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ABOUT FIRST SOUTHWEST BANK

First Southwest Bank has been serving the San Luis Valley and Southern Colorado for more than 100 years. With seven branches in the area, the bank offers personal and business banking with an emphasis on businesses supporting rural communities. First Southwest Bank is active in the communities it serves aiding more than 40 local organizations. More information about the bank is available at www.fswb.com.