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NET RMA Announces Priority Project Winners

(Tyler, TX) – For the second year in a row, the North East Texas Regional Mobility Authority (NET RMA) will give back to the East Texas region by awarding funds to Kaufman County in the amount of \$77,817 for intersection improvements at SH 243/FM 2727, Upshur County in the amount of \$250,000 for a feasibility study for the construction of a loop around Gilmer, and Wood County in the amount of \$172,183 for the development of water, sewer and natural gas infrastructure in support of the Northeast Texas Poultry Complex (Sanderson Farms). Last year, the NET RMA was honored to award Gregg County \$400,000 in funds towards the reconstruction and improvement of intersection US 259 at Hawkins Parkway and is thrilled to be able to give back to the community once again. The check presentation ceremony for Upshur County is to be held on June 15th at 10:00 AM on the third floor of the Upshur County Courthouse.

Funds generated by revenues from Toll 49 in 2016 were carefully allocated to these counties by NET RMA’s Long-Range Planning Committee. Committee members met and scored each county’s priority project application based upon several key factors: regional significance, local and political support, local financial support, economic development potential, and potential revenue production. The projects with the highest scores were then selected to receive funding. “The mission of the NET RMA is to increase mobility in East Texas. When we can give back to a community that has supported us; that’s when we feel most satisfied,” said Chris Miller, Executive Director of the NET RMA. “We are thrilled to be at a point where we can consistently give back to the very counties that have supported the Agency over the years,” said current NET RMA Chair Linda Thomas, “This was one of our goals from the start—to keep revenues local and to reinvest those funds in a meaningful way.”

In each instance, the NET RMA's funding and support will greatly help accelerate the projects development, thus achieving its goal of increasing mobility in the East Texas Region. Specifically, Upshur County's proposal submitted by Judge Fowler presents its own set of unique benefits. A feasibility study for the construction of a loop around Gilmer will help improve congestion on the US 271 corridor, safety (especially in school zones), as well as open new economic development opportunities within the community. This study will also identify the possible routes, benefits and conceptual costs for a Gilmer loop. "Upshur County is pleased to have been awarded funds for this project by the NET RMA. As the traffic through Gilmer has increased along US 271, Texas 154, Texas 155, and Texas 300, we need to look at ways to ensure the safety of the school zones along US 271 as well as reducing the congestion through Gilmer. This grant will be an excellent example for how the counties can work with the NET RMA on regional projects.", said Larry Morse, a NET RMA board member representing Upshur County. John Cloutier, Long-Range Planning Committee Chair stated, "It is quite a milestone to see this Regional body start to have a visible effect on its Member Counties, big and small. The philosophy of local control magnifying community investment works".

About the North East Texas Regional Mobility Authority (NET RMA)

The NET RMA is an independent government agency created to accelerate the development of transportation projects in North East Texas. Our mission is to implement transportation solutions that will enhance the quality of life and the economic environment in our area. The NET RMA is governed by a 19-member board of directors that represent each of the member counties: Bowie, Kaufman, Cherokee, Gregg, Harrison, Panola, Rusk, Smith, Titus, Upshur, Wood and Van Zandt. Texas RMAs were made possible through an initiative passed by State Legislature in 2001. The NET RMA was established in October 2004.

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