

FLORIDA KEYS COMMUNITY LAND TRUST ANNOUNCES ALLIANCE WITH RURAL NEIGHBORHOODS

New partnership will facilitate the building of workforce housing in the Florida Keys under more than \$12 million in CDBG-DR grants provided by Florida Housing Finance Corporation

Big Pine Key, FL (October XX 2020) – The Florida Keys Community Land Trust (Florida Keys CLT), a non-profit organization committed to providing hurricane-resilient houses for working families based in the Florida Keys, announced today that it is entering into a formal alliance with Rural Neighborhoods, a statewide not-for-profit housing developer. The alliance is the natural culmination of months of collaboration between the two entities in their mutual commitment to providing affordable housing to the workers of the Keys. The Florida Keys CLT will gain the award-winning expertise of Rural Neighborhoods, as well as greater capital access and their development team.

“We have been working with Steven Kirk and the Rural Neighborhoods team for the last year as we prepared our successful proposals for government funding for our Seahorse Cottages rental community,” said Maggie Whitcomb, founder of the Florida Keys CLT. “I have never seen a group that combined such extensive knowledge of government processes—and regulation with such a deep and heartfelt commitment to the communities they serve. Our new partnership will allow us to vastly expand and accelerate our building efforts.”

The Florida Keys Community Land Trust will receive over \$12.5M in CDBG-DR grants in 2021 to finance Seahorse Cottages and additional homes on Big Pine Key, which will bring the FKCLT’s inventory to 35 homes. The project will rebuild Seahorse RV Park with storm resilient rental homes for families earning their income in Monroe County.

“The Florida Keys Community Land Trust has worked tirelessly to rebuild housing for the working people of the Keys since Irma destroyed so much in 2017,” said Steven Kirk, President of Rural Neighborhoods. “This organization has devoted itself to serving a neighborhood that was hampered in its rebuilding efforts. Both groups were born in the wake of natural disaster – ours, Hurricane Andrew, theirs, Hurricane Irma – and we are thrilled to partner with them on many successful projects ahead.”

About Rural Neighborhoods

Rural Neighborhoods is an award-winning not-for-profit developer founded in the wake of Hurricane Andrew’s destruction, dedicated to providing decent places to live for working families. Our mission is to eliminate substandard housing, overcrowding and to make rents affordable. From our origins rescuing a single labor camp to revitalizing underserved communities throughout Florida, we follow a growing call to serve new places and people in need. For more information, visit www.ruralneighborhoods.org

About Florida Keys Community Land Trust

The Florida Keys Community Land Trust is a non-profit 501(c)3 established in the aftermath of Hurricane Irma to build storm-resilient homes for working families of the Florida Keys. Through the community land trust model, Florida Keys CLT constructs single-family rental homes built above storm surge and sea level rise for households in Monroe County earning less than 80% AMI. For more information, visit www.affordablekeys.org