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## County Awards Federal HOME Funding to Rehab Covenant Villas in Belle Glade

**For immediate release: September 19, 2013**

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First, there was Hurricane Wilma in 2005, and then the economic downturn -- two major factors in the gradual deterioration of apartments at Covenant Villas, a 144-unit rental apartment community in Belle Glade. But thanks to the recent award of \$500,000 in federal funding by the Board of County Commissioners, major renovations can now get underway.

The rehabilitation project was selected to receive U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development HOME Investment Partnerships Program loan financing through a competitive bid process issued by the Department of Economic Sustainability.

Owner, manager and developer of the project is NOAH Development Corp., a nonprofit organization with a 25-year history of helping to provide decent, affordable rental homes to low-income residents of Belle Glade, including residents with special needs, farm workers, and the elderly.

Cash flow from rents has diminished over recent years, limiting NOAH's ability to undertake maintenance and repairs. As a result, more than 80 units at Covenant Villas are now vacant. This funding will enable NOAH to reconstruct the dilapidated units and get them rented, which will increase cash reserves and enable NOAH to make the remaining needed repairs.

"Safe and decent affordable housing is particularly critical for the Glades, which suffers from high poverty and unemployment," said District 6 County Commissioner Jess Santamaria. "This project furthers the county's commitment to improve housing conditions and overall quality of life issues."

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