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SWITZERLAND COUNTY BEGINS REGIONAL STUDY
RESEARCH TO MEASURE REGIONAL WORKFORCE/ECONOMY

Switzerland County, IN (Thursday, March 13, 2008) –

The Switzerland County Economic Development Corporation has initiated a new research project that could change the way that Switzerland County looks at itself and its surrounding region.

The goal of the project is to establish a “Greater Switzerland County” statistical region that will enable the community to better understand and market its regional workforce and economy. This project has gained new importance since the completion of Kentucky Highway 1039 has considerably shortened the drive time to many surrounding areas.

Being able to identify the County’s regional economy and present it to prospective businesses is critically important. For example, when a business opens in Switzerland County or the surrounding area, it will draw employees from other surrounding counties and states. This is especially true of larger employers that require a variety of training backgrounds. When prospective businesses ask for economic and demographic data, they want to know how large of a pool of workers they will have to draw from and, in some cases, what potential markets they may have for their product. However, when workforce and economic data is presented by the state, universities, or other data resources, it is most often presented on a county by county basis. This gives prospective businesses an inaccurate and often negative view of the workforce and regional economy that would be available to them when locating in Switzerland County.

When regions are established in the area, usually for the administration of State and Federal programs, Switzerland County typically finds itself as an appendage on the outer edge of a region. For these reasons, it is important for the County to develop a statistical region that has Switzerland County as its center.

The fact that this region will fall into three states creates challenges for data collection, uniformity, and comparison. This project will be time-consuming but the information gathered will be critical for effective planning and marketing.

For 2008, the focus of the project will be establishing what counties go into the region and gathering the basic preliminary data. A more detailed analysis and report will then be released in 2009.

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