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New Manufacturer Moves to Rabun County

CLAYTON, June 10, 2009— The Development Authority of Rabun County is pleased to announce that a new manufacturer has chosen to locate its production facilities in Clayton. Initial employment will provide 10 new positions during 2009 but company projections are for a potential employment of 200 to 300 people within 3 years.

Ecoshel Prefabricated Building Systems, LLC is a manufacturer of a proprietary (patent pending) cedar shingle panel. Ecoshel is the only shingle panel that uses true shingles, and can be used for roofing as well as siding applications. The product is easy to install and includes built-in ventilation that extends the life of the shingles and prevents mold and decay within the structure. “This Old House” featured Ecoshel as the “new smarter cedar shingle.” The Ecoshel product is made from salvaged cedar, and is environmentally superior to fiber-cement, vinyl, and asphalt products. Ecoshel is often selected by green builders for programs such as the LEED certification program.

The company recently completed its trial production period in December 2008, having sold approximately 50,000 square feet of its product with numerous additional orders on hold. It plans to begin production at its facility in Clayton in July.

“We chose Rabun County because we were drawn to its quality of life and to the quality of its workforce,” said Bryan Kirkey, founder of Ecoshel. “We are looking forward to joining this beautiful community.”

The Development Authority assisted Ecoshel with its startup operations by providing a low-interest loan from its revolving loan fund, intended as gap financing to help new employers in purchasing equipment for start up and expansion operations. It then worked with the Chamber of Commerce to secure Ecoshel’s participation in the Rabun County job fair on June 5, 2009 to assist in finding and hiring its new employees.

“Our community is proud to be the new home for Ecoshel,” said Sean Brady, Executive Director of the Development Authority and Chamber of Commerce in Rabun County. “Ecoshel’s sustainable and efficient approach to building construction is a perfect fit to our environmentally-focused community. The Development Authority is proud to play a role in bringing this new employer to our community and the Chamber of Commerce looks forward to supporting and growing Ecoshel’s business going forward.”

The Development Authority of Rabun County is a county-funded board whose mission is to develop new businesses, industry, and infrastructure within Rabun County. The Rabun County Chamber of Commerce is a privately-funded nonprofit business association whose mission is to support and grow its members’ business.