



Introduction to the USDA & Overview of Rural Utilities Service Programs

Presented by

TONY MATLOCK

Telecommunications Program

Rural Development's (RD) Mission

USDA Rural Development

Committed to helping improve the economy and quality of life in rural America.

- Provide **loans, grants, and loan guarantees** that support essential services, such as:
 - Housing
 - Economic Development
 - Health Care
 - First Responder Services and Equipment
 - Water, Electric, and **Telecommunications Infrastructure**



Rural Development Background

Rural Development includes 3 agencies with unique programs and objectives:

- **Rural Utilities Service (RUS)**
- Rural Housing Service (RHS)
- Rural Business-Cooperative Service (RBS)
- Across the three agencies, Rural Development administers over 40 programs.
 - RUS Electric & **Telecommunications** programs are administered by National Office
 - RHS and RBS programs are administered by State & National Offices

RUS Telecommunications Program History

From electricity to broadband...

- 1935** Rural Electrification Administration (REA) created and began providing financing to promote rural electrification
- 1949** REA received authority to finance telephone service in rural communities
- 1995** Evolving from the REA, the Rural Utilities Service (RUS) required all financed telecommunications networks have the capacity to deliver broadband
- 2010 to present** RUS has approved nearly **\$9 billion** in loans and grants to build out broadband infrastructure and expand distance learning and telemedicine services in rural areas

Funding for Rural Broadband

- Telecommunications Infrastructure Loan Program
- Rural Broadband Program
- Community Connect Grant Program
- ReConnect Program



Telecommunications Infrastructure Loan Program

Funding Type	Rural Focus	Funding Thresholds	How to Apply	When Applications are Accepted
Loans/Loan Guarantees	Primarily benefits communities ≤5K	N/A	Submit through the RD Apply online application system	Year-round
Available Funding		Program Updates		
<p><u>FY2019</u> \$690 million available</p> <p><u>FY2020</u> \$690 million available</p> <p><u>FY2021</u> \$690 million available</p> <p><u>FY2022</u> \$690 million available</p> <p><u>FY2023</u> \$690 million available</p>		<p><u>FY2019</u> 12 loans approved: \$181.5 million/10 states impacted</p> <p><u>FY2020</u> 8 loans approved: \$98.6 million/10 states impacted</p> <p><u>FY2021</u> 4 loans approved: \$71 million/3 states impacted</p> <p><u>FY2022</u> 5 loans approved: \$106.2 million/ 6 states impacted</p> <p><u>FY2023</u> 1 loan approved: \$3.8 million/ 1 states impacted 3 loan in process: \$18 million</p>		
<p>https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/telecommunications-infrastructure-loans-loan-guarantees</p>				

Telecommunications Infrastructure Loan Program

Standard Loan Terms include:

- 2 Year Principal Deferral
- Interest Rate at the Cost-Of-Money
- Loan Maturity - Life of the Facilities Financed Plus 3 Years

Staff can assist and review loan applications before submission

Rural Broadband Program

Funding Type	Rural Focus	Funding Thresholds	How to Apply	When Applications are Accepted
Loans/Loan Guarantees/Loan-Grant Combinations	Areas with populations ≤ 20K	TBA in the Federal Register	Submit through the RD Apply online application system	Applications are not accepted at this time
Available Funding		Program Updates		
<p><u>FY2019</u> \$121.7 million available</p> <p><u>FY2020</u> \$91.9 million available</p> <p><u>FY2021</u> \$11.9 million available</p> <p><u>FY2022</u> \$2 million available</p> <p><u>FY2023</u> \$3 million available</p> <div data-bbox="71 1249 1019 1339" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/rural-broadband-access-loan-and-loan-guarantee </div>		<p><u>FY2019</u> 3 loans approved: \$47.8 million</p> <p><u>FY2020</u> Closed</p> <p><u>FY2021</u> Closed</p> <p><u>FY2022</u> Closed</p> <p><u>FY2023</u> The program is closed and will open when a Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) is published.</p>		

Rural Broadband Program

Recent regulatory changes include:

- Lengthening build-out period of the broadband system from 3 to 5 years
- Tying the required broadband lending speeds to the term of the award
- Providing technical assistance and training through grant funding to help applicants intending to serve the most rural areas prepare an application

See [7 CFR 1738](#) published in the [Federal Register](#) on March 12, 2020 for a comprehensive review of the updated content.

Community Connect Grant Program

Funding Type	Rural Focus	Funding Thresholds	Matching Requirement	Broadband Service Speeds	How to Apply	When Applications are Accepted
Grants	Areas with populations ≤ 20K	\$100,000 - \$5,000,000	15% of requested grant amount	Broadband Service: <25/3 Mbps Broadband Grant Speed: ≥100/20 Mbps	Submit through the Community Connect Portal	Applications are not accepted at this time

Available Funding

FY2019

\$33 million available

FY2020

\$29 million available in FY2020 after awarding 8 grants from FY2019 application cycle

FY2021

\$35 million available

FY2022

\$35 million available

FY2023

\$35 million available

Program Updates

FY2019

12 grants approved: \$24.3 million/9 states impacted

FY2020

8 grants approved: \$15.7 million/7 states impacted

FY2021

23 grants approved: \$47 million/15 states impacted

FY2022

4 grants approved: \$10 million/3 states impacted

FY2023

83 Applications received: \$272.9 million

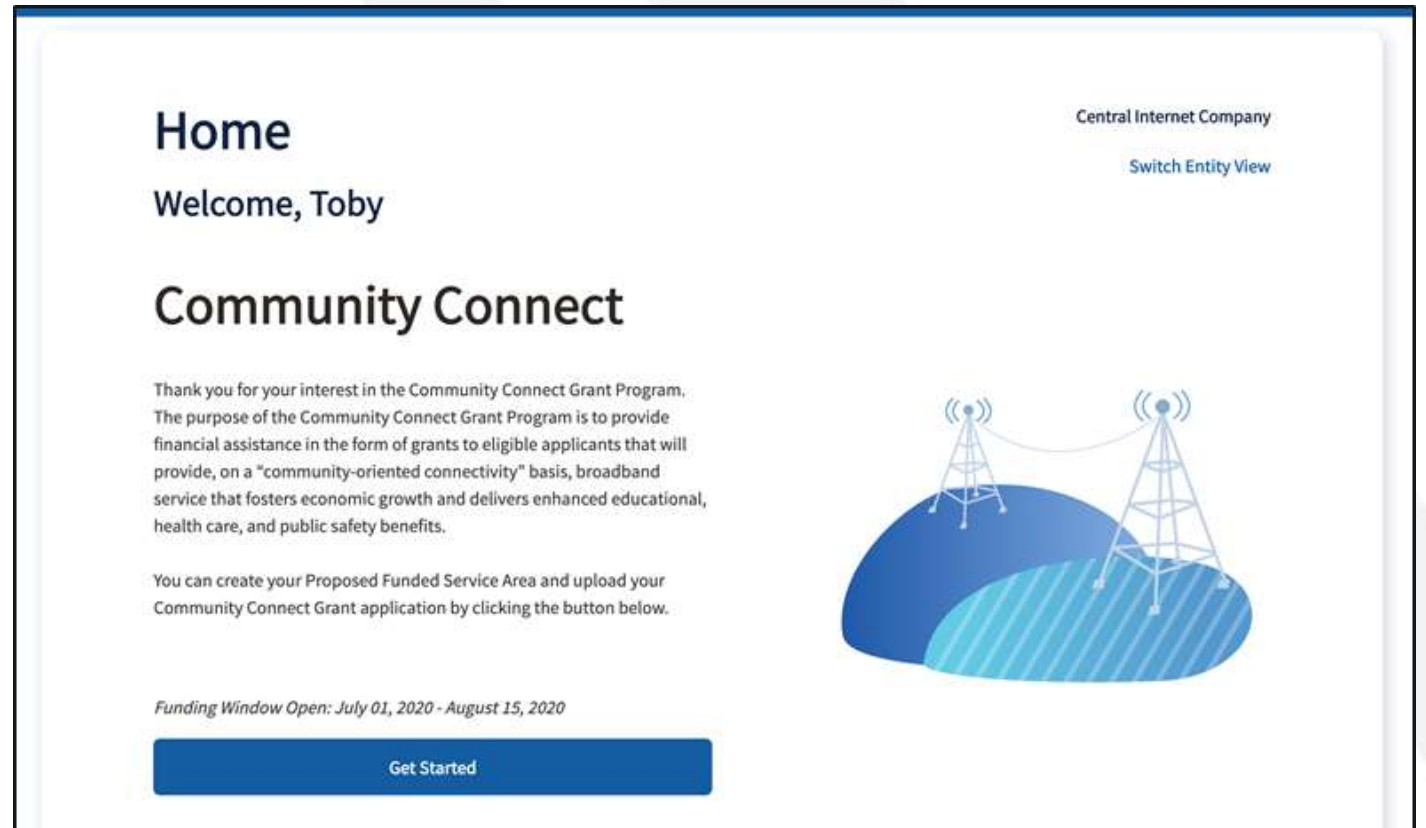
Community Connect Grant Program

Applications are submitted electronically through the new online application system.

Resources are available on the website at:
<http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/community-connect-grants>

Contact Information

Loan Origination and Approval Division
Email: community.connect@wdc.usda.gov
Call: 202-720-0806



The screenshot shows the home page of the Community Connect Grant Program website. The page has a white background with a blue header area. In the top right corner, it says "Central Internet Company" and "Switch Entity View". The main heading is "Home" followed by "Welcome, Toby". Below that is the "Community Connect" section. The text in this section reads: "Thank you for your interest in the Community Connect Grant Program. The purpose of the Community Connect Grant Program is to provide financial assistance in the form of grants to eligible applicants that will provide, on a 'community-oriented connectivity' basis, broadband service that fosters economic growth and delivers enhanced educational, health care, and public safety benefits." Below this text is a blue button labeled "Get Started". To the right of the text is an illustration of two radio towers on a blue, hilly landscape, connected by a line. At the bottom of the page, it says "Funding Window Open: July 01, 2020 - August 15, 2020".

ReConnect Program

Funding Type	Rural Focus	Funding Thresholds	Matching Requirement	Broadband Service Speeds	How to Apply	When Applications are Accepted
Loan/Grants/Loan-Grant Combinations	Areas with populations ≤ 20K	≤\$50 million for loans & loan-grant combinations ≤\$25 for grants	For grant-only: 25% of requested grant amount*	Broadband Service: <100/20 Mbps Broadband Buildout Speed: ≥100/100 Mbps	Submit through the RUS online application system	Applications are not accepted at this time

Available Funding

FY2019

\$550 million available

FY2020

\$655 million available in FY2020 (includes CARES funding)

FY2021

\$635 million available

FY2022

\$2.3 billion received in appropriations

- **\$1.9 billion** received in the Infrastructure Investments and Jobs Act (IIJA)
- **\$436.6 million** received in annual appropriations

FY2023

\$1.15 billion received in appropriations

Program Updates

FY2019 – “Round One”

146 Applications submitted: **\$1.4 billion** requested

FY2020/FY2021 – “Round Two”

172 Applications submitted: **\$1.57 billion** requested

FY2022 – “Round 3”

305 Applications submitted: **\$4.8 billion** requested

FY2022 – “Round 4”

258 Applications submitted: **\$4.3 billion** requested

- **354** active awards: **\$4.7 billion**/42 States and 4 Territories impacted

ReConnect Program

“Rural eConnectivity Program” regulation has been published. Highlights of the new regulation include:

- Broadband speeds, funding limits, scoring criteria, and protected areas will be announced in Federal Register notices or Funding Opportunity Announcements published to the Federal Register
- If awarded, grant funds may be used for eligible preapplication expenses in the first advance request

See [7 CFR 1740](#) published in the [Federal Register](#) on February 26, 2021 for the regulation text.

Broadband Technical Assistance

Funding Type	Rural Focus	Funding Thresholds	Matching Requirement	How to Apply	When Applications are Accepted
Cooperative Agreement	Areas with populations ≤ 20K	<p>\$50,000 - \$1 million for TA Providers and projects supporting cooperatives</p> <p>\$50,000 - \$250,000 for TA recipients</p>	No match required	Submit through the grants.gov online application system	Applications are not accepted at this time.

Available Funding

FY2023

\$20 million

- This BTA FOA used technical assistance funds appropriated under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA).
- Additional funding received through the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023

Program Updates

FY2023

- The first application window for BTA opened on April 19, 2023, and closed on June 20, 2023.
- Applications continue to be reviewed.

Broadband Technical Assistance

The first Broadband Technical Assistance (BTA) FOA has been published.

- BTA refers to activities that support broadband expansion into rural areas and may include project planning and community engagement, financial sustainability, environmental compliance, construction planning and engineering, accessing federal resources, and data collection and reporting.
- Funding will be provided through Cooperative Agreements, allowing federal employees to participate more closely in project activities, often working side-by-side with the cooperator.
- Applicants will be scored based on their project work plan, organizational capacity, performance measures, service to targeted communities, and the rurality and economic need of the communities to be served.

See [the FOA](#) published in the Federal Register on April 19, 2023, for the full text.

Distance Learning and Telemedicine Program

Distance Learning & Telemedicine Grant Program

Funding Type	Rural Focus	Funding Thresholds	Matching Requirement	DLT System	How to Apply	When Applications are Accepted
Grants	Primarily benefits rural areas	\$50,000 - \$1,000,000	15% of requested grant amount	Must include hub and end-user sites	Submit through the Grants.gov	Applications are not accepted at this time
Available Funding				Program Updates		
<p><u>FY2019</u> \$64 million available</p> <p><u>FY2020</u> \$95 million available</p> <p><u>FY2021</u> \$57 million available</p> <p><u>FY2022</u> \$62.5 million received in appropriations</p> <p><u>FY2023</u> \$64.9 million received in appropriations</p>				<p><u>FY2019</u> 147 grants approved for \$45.9 million</p> <p><u>FY2020</u> FOA #1: 116 grants approved for \$71.5 million FOA #2 (obligated in FY2021): 87 grants approved for \$42.8 million</p> <p><u>FY2021</u> 107 grants approved for \$49.9 million</p> <p><u>FY2022</u> 9 grants approved for \$4.3 million</p> <p><u>FY2023</u> 288 Applications submitted: \$170.6 million requested</p>		
https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/distance-learning-telemedicine-grants						

Distance Learning & Telemedicine Grant Program

Distance Learning means a telecommunications link to an end user through the use of eligible equipment to provide educational programs, instruction, or information originating in one area, whether rural or not, to students and teachers who are located in rural areas.

- Provide educational programs, instruction, or information originating in one area, whether rural or not, to students and teachers who are located in rural areas; or
- Connect teachers and students, located in one rural area with teachers and students who are located in a different rural area.

Telemedicine means a telecommunications link to an end user through the use of eligible equipment which electronically links medical professionals at separate sites in order to exchange health care information in audio, video, graphic, or other format for the purpose of providing improved health care services primarily to residents of rural areas.

- Benefits rural residents both in reduced travel and improved access to service

Program Historic Numbers



Telecommunications Programs – All State Investments

Between FY2019 and FY2023, RUS has approved nearly \$9 billion in funding for broadband and distance learning and telemedicine projects that serve rural residents.

Program	Projects Approved	Funds Approved
Telecommunications Infrastructure Program	30	\$457 Million
ReConnect Program	354	\$4.7 Billion
Rural Broadband Access Program	3	\$47.8 Million
Distance Learning and Telemedicine Program	466	\$215 Million
Community Connect Grant Program	47	\$97 Million
Broadband Technical Assistance		
Grand Total	900	\$5.6 Billion

*Table shows award data **at time of obligation** for all programs except ReConnect and BIP, which show present award data.

Updated: 10/4/2022

General Field Representative Coverage - www.rd.usda.gov/contact-us/telecom-gfr



Rural Utilities Service Telecommunications Key Contacts

Assistant Administrator

Laurel Leverrier, Assistant Administrator, Telecommunications
laurel.leverrier@usda.gov / 202.720.9556

Deputy Assistant Administrators

Shawn Arner, Telecommunications Program
shawn.arners@usda.gov / 202.720.9556

VACANT, Portfolio Management & Risk Assessment Division

Randall Millhiser, Loan Origination & Approval Division
randall.millhiser@usda.gov / 202.720.0800

VACANT, Policy & Outreach Division

Alternative Household Data

- Household data is a critical element of the application and is tied to both eligibility and feasibility. When developing an application, the applicant creates both funded and non-funded service area household data for both areas which is generated from Census data and displayed throughout the application. If the applicant believes there is a discrepancy between the household information generated and their internal information, they can provide alternate information.
- In cases where alternative household data is provided, the review team checks the supporting documentation section to substantiate the data by reviewing the information provided and verifying the data source(s) and methodology used by the applicant for determining alternative household numbers. If the information is vague or missing information needed for verification, the review team may reach out to the applicant for clarification. This information is then incorporated into the application and used for the eligibility and feasibility.

Examples of Alternative Household Data

- Existing service area
- 911, state or county addressing information
- Aerial photographs manually counted or using rooftop software. This process will require some level of additional review to ensure only household are counted and the methodology for verification provided.
- Field verification by staff or contractors
- Other 3rd party sources that seem reasonable for having information on the area. o Such sources could include but are not limited to economic development councils, other utility providers, and/or not-for-profit associations.



TONY MATLOCK
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Rural Development | Rural Utilities Service
Telecommunications Program
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20250
www.rd.usda.gov





Questions?

Questions?



Rural Development

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



Opportunities for Broadband Funding: E-Rate

Johnny Roddy, Attorney Advisor
Telecommunications Access Policy Division
Wireline Competition Bureau
Federal Communications Commission

March 6, 2023





E-Rate Program

Funding Telecommunications and Broadband
Services for Schools and Libraries

E-Rate Program Overview

Annual FY 2023 Funding
Cap: \$4.768 billion

Provides funding to help schools and libraries obtain affordable telecommunications and Internet access.

- **Eligible Applicants:** Public and private schools (K-12), libraries, and groups of schools and libraries (e.g., consortia, districts, library systems).
- **Eligible Services:** Schools and libraries are eligible for funding for 20% to 90% of the costs of eligible equipment and services:

Category One: Services that support connectivity **to** schools and libraries. For example, data transmission and Internet access service, including special construction services for network builds.

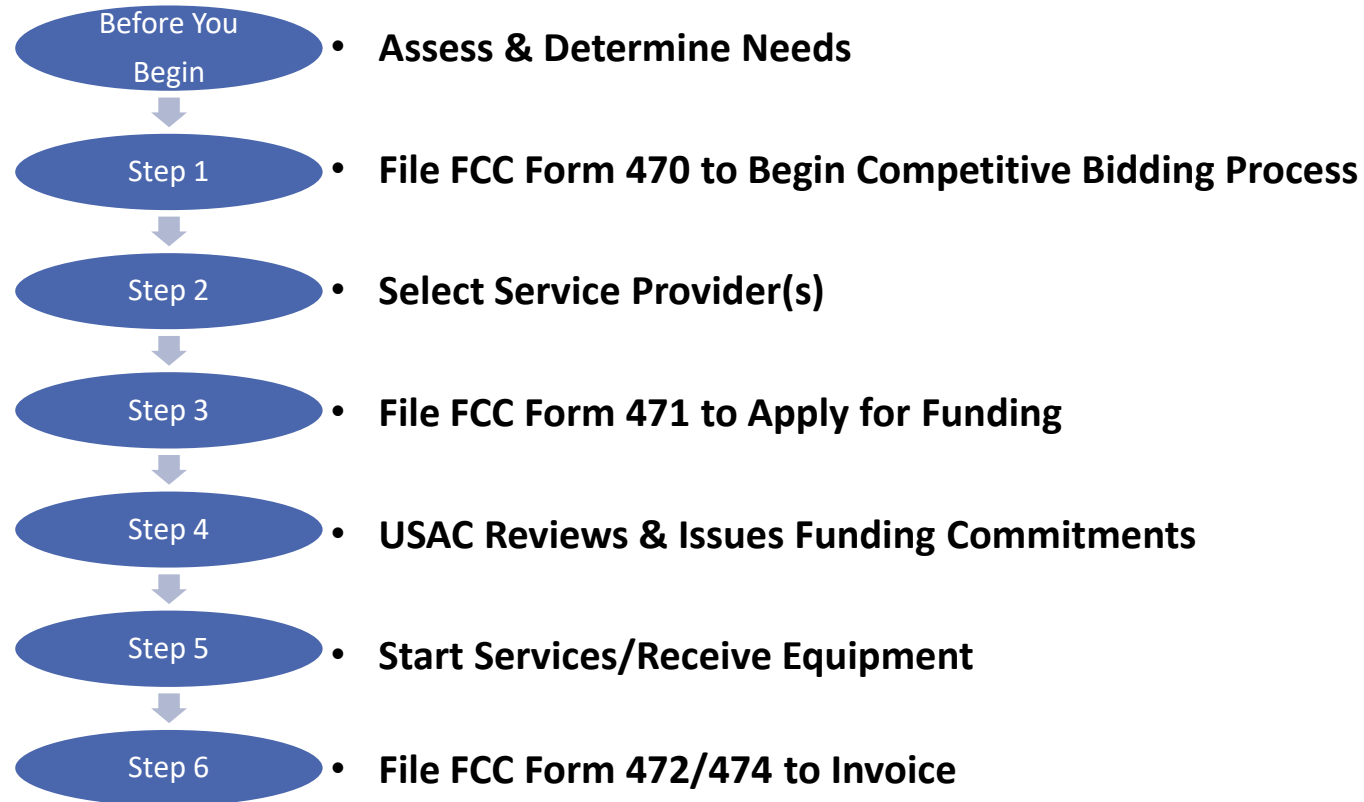
Category Two: Services that support connectivity **within** schools and libraries. This includes internal connections (i.e., routers, cabling, or other equipment needed for a Wi-Fi network); managed internal broadband services, and basic maintenance of internal connections.

**Discount varies based on the school or library's level of poverty, the urban/rural status, and the type of service.*

Impact on Libraries

- The E-Rate program supports libraries of all sizes for a wide variety of connectivity needs.
 - A small library might seek funding to upgrade its Wi-Fi network equipment and purchase monthly service from its local service provider.
 - A larger library system might seek funding for a wide area network that shares data between the library buildings.
 - And in cases where it is the most cost-effective option, libraries and library consortia might seek funding to build the broadband infrastructure themselves (a practice known as “self-provisioning”) or for special construction for services over a third-party’s network to get much-needed connectivity to unserved libraries.
- Since the first program year in 1998, libraries have received over \$2 billion in funding.

The E-Rate Program – Process



When can you apply? January - March 2024

- E-Rate funding is available by funding year:
 - Each funding year runs from July 1st through the following June 30th.
 - For example, funding year 2024 will run from July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025.
- Applicants request funding for the funding year during the application filing window, which is typically open from January – March before the upcoming funding year.
- You can also find further information about how to participate in the E-Rate Program at <https://www.fcc.gov/tribal-libraries> and <https://www.usac.org/e-rate/>.

Recent Tribal Library E-Rate Changes

The FCC has also focused its efforts on encouraging greater Tribal participation in the E-Rate program, particularly amongst Tribal libraries.

January 2022 - First, the FCC amended its rules to include “Tribal library” in its definition of “library,” clarifying that Tribal libraries are eligible for E-Rate support.

What constitutes a Tribal library eligible for E-Rate support?

- Tribal Governments can designate a library as a Tribal library (Ex: through a Tribal Resolution).
- Tribal libraries should demonstrate three basic characteristics of a library:
 - (1) **regularly scheduled hours;**
 - (2) **staff;** and
 - (3) **materials** available for library users.
- Tribal libraries may also work with the state library administrative agency where they are located.

Recent Tribal Library E-Rate Changes

July 2023 - The FCC also unanimously voted to amend its rules to enhance the E-Rate program for Tribal Libraries through program simplification and increased access to funding with the Tribal E-Rate Order, including:

- Making Tribal College or University Libraries eligible for E-Rate if they act as a public library in their community
- Increasing Category Two funding opportunities (e.g., Wi-Fi network funding).
- Creating a competitive bidding exemption for libraries seeking \$3,600 or less for Category Two equipment and services.
- Creating a safe harbor to simplify E-Rate required cost-allocations.
- Adding a Tribal representative to the USAC Board of Directors.

Tribal College and University Libraries

Since the E-Rate program was established in 1997, funding was limited to eligible elementary and secondary schools as well as libraries with budgets separate from any schools, including colleges and universities.

In the 2023 Tribal E-Rate Order, the FCC made an exception, and found that Tribal College and University Libraries that also serve as public libraries, are eligible for E-Rate support.

- This funding is limited to eligible equipment and services to the library, not the rest of the college or university.
- Tribal College and University Libraries must have a dedicated library staff, regular hours, and a collection available for public use, to be eligible.

Increased C2 Funding for Tribal Libraries

Category Two (C2) equipment and services support connectivity **within** schools and libraries (e.g., routers, cabling, or other equipment needed for a Wi-Fi network).

The 2023 Tribal E-Rate Order increases Tribal libraries' access to Category Two funding in two ways:

- Increased the maximum discount rate from 85% to 90% of the pre-discount price.
- More than doubled the minimum 5-year Category Two funding floor budget from \$25,000 to \$55,000 for Tribal libraries.

Only Tribal libraries are eligible for the increased amounts of Category Two support.

E-Rate Simplification and Streamlining

New Competitive Bidding Exemption for Libraries

- Libraries seeking up to \$3,600 in pre-discount funding for Category Two equipment and services are exempt from the competitive bidding requirements.
 - This is in addition to the existing competitive bidding exemption for E-Rate applicants seeking up to \$3,600 in pre-discount funding for commercially available Internet service at speeds of at least 100 Mbps down and 10 Mbps up.
- This means a library can receive funding for up to \$3,600 in Internet equipment like cabling, routers, switches, and other equipment for maintaining Internet connections within the library, as well as Internet service at a cost of up to \$300 per month *without* going through the E-Rate competitive bidding process.

E-Rate Simplification and Streamlining

Cost Allocation Guidance

The 2023 Tribal Library Order simplified several cost-allocation requirements for the E-Rate program.

- Safe Harbor: If 90% of the E-Rate funded Internet service is for an eligible use, the remaining portion is presumed ancillary, and does not require any cost allocation.
- Minimal use of the Internet service by ineligible users will not require libraries to cost-allocate the costs for this ineligible usage on their funding application.
- Clarified that cabling “drops” or “jacks” installed as part of a local area network primarily serving an eligible purpose (i.e., distributing broadband throughout the school or library building) are eligible for E-Rate support and do not require cost-allocation.

Enhancing Tribal-FCC Communication

USAC Board of Directors

- The 2023 Tribal E-Rate Order requires a representative from the Tribal communities to be added to USAC's Board of Directors, the first change of membership of the Board of Directors since its creation.
- On September 26, 2023, the Bureau issued a Public Notice seeking nominations for the Tribal community USAC board member. Nominations are due by Monday, November 20, 2023. Additional information can be found at: <https://docs.fcc.gov/public/attachments/DA-23-903A1.pdf>

Definition of Tribal

- To ensure that Tribal libraries have access to the increased Category Two funding, the 2023 Tribal E-Rate Order adopted a definition of Tribal for the E-Rate program based on feedback from Tribal stakeholders and commenters.
“An entity is ‘Tribal’ for purposes of E-Rate funding if it is a school operated by or receiving funding from the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE), or if it is a school or library operated by any Tribe, Band, Nation, or other organized group or community, including any Alaska native village, regional corporation, or village corporation (as defined in, or established pursuant to, the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S.C. § 1601 et seq.)) that is recognized as eligible for the special programs and services provided by the United States to Indians because of their status as Indians.”

Questions?

E-Rate Resources and Contacts

Further information on the E-Rate Program can be found at:

- <https://www.fcc.gov/tribal-libraries>
- <https://www.usac.org/about/tribal-nations/usf-programs/e-rate-program/>
- [Subscribe to USAC's E-Rate Tribal Newsletter](#)

A helpful resource for getting started: [Toward Gigabit Libraries Toolkit](#)

Federal Communications Commission (FCC)

**Telecommunications Access Policy
Division, Wireless Competition Bureau**

Johnny Roddy

Johnny.Roddy@fcc.gov

Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC)

USAC E-Rate Customer Service

Call: (888) 203-8100

Hours: M-F, 8 am - 8 pm ET

TribalTraining@usac.org

FCC National Broadband Map

March 6, 2024

Kimia Nikseresht, Assistant Counsel
Broadband Data Task Force
Federal Communications Commission



Broadband Data Collection (BDC): New Approach to Mapping Broadband Availability

- The FCC historically collected broadband deployment data at the census-block level. Large geographic scale meant a generalized view of deployment.
- More reliable and consistent broadband availability data are critical to efforts to target public funds to connect unserved and underserved communities.
- Congress directed the FCC to develop processes and procedures to collect, verify, and publish more granular data in the Broadband Deployment Accuracy and Technological Availability (DATA) Act.
- The first draft of the new Map was published in November, 2022.

WHAT'S ON THE NATIONAL BROADBAND MAP?

The National Broadband Map consists of 2 datasets, both of which can be challenged:

FABRIC LOCATIONS

- **What is it?**
 - The Fabric is a dataset of all locations in the United States and Territories where fixed broadband internet access service is or could be installed.
- **Who creates it?**
 - The Fabric is developed by CostQuest in consultation with the FCC and in accordance with FCC rules.
- **Challenges and updates timeline?**
 - The Fabric is updated twice per year.
 - Fabric challenges are accepted on an ongoing basis and successful challenges will be reflected in future Fabric releases.
- **What's on the current map?**
 - Version 3 of the Fabric is the base of the current map.

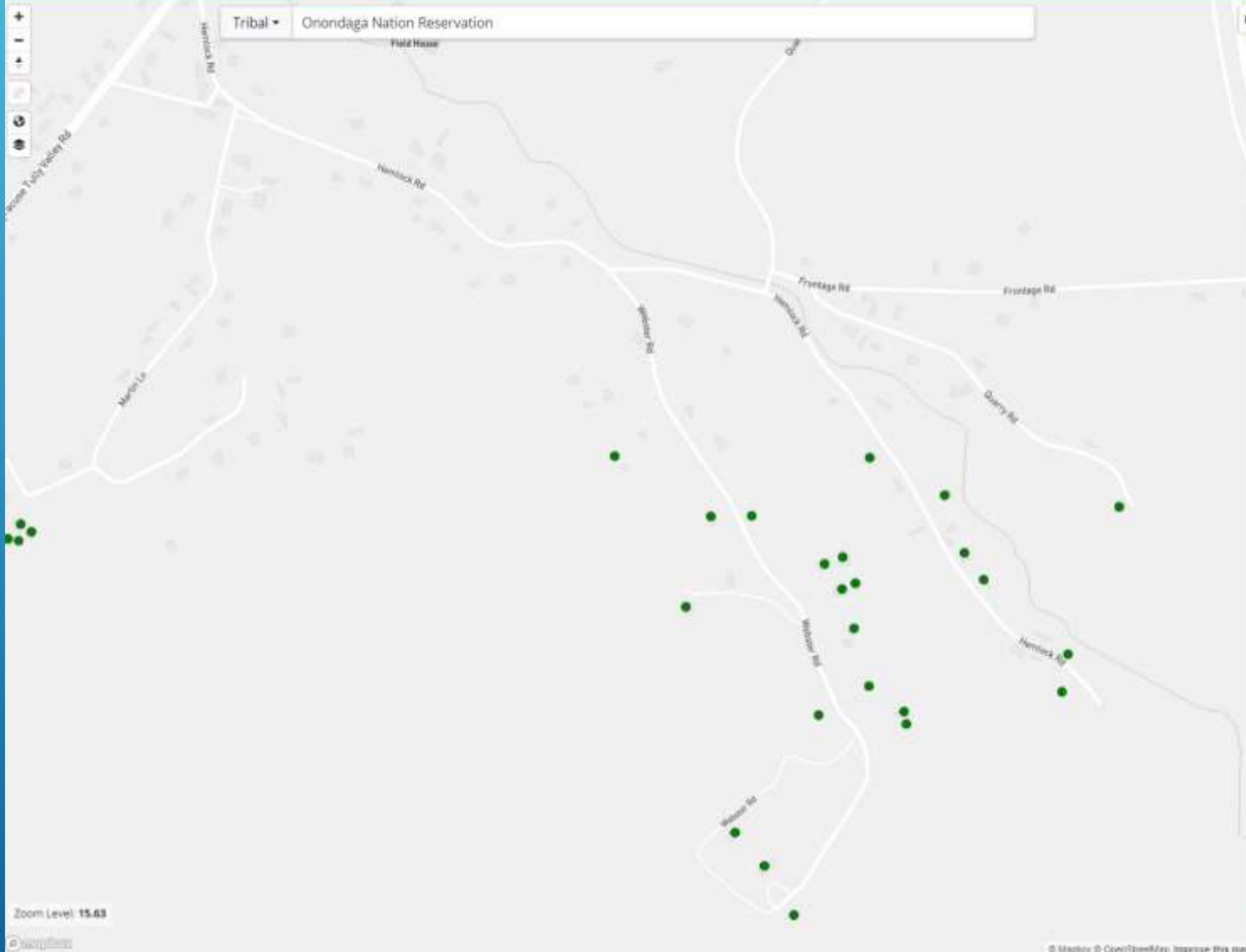
BROADBAND AVAILABILITY

- **What is it?**
 - Broadband availability data shows what broadband services, if any, are available at locations included in the Fabric, as reported by internet service providers every 6 months.
- **Who creates it?**
 - Internet service providers report their availability data to the FCC every 6 months.
- **Challenges and updates timeline?**
 - Broadband availability data is updated every 2 weeks to reflect challenge outcomes.
 - Challenges are accepted and resolved on an ongoing basis.
- **What's on the current map?**
 - The map shows availability data as-of June 30, 2023, and reflects resolved availability challenges.



National Broadband Map: Improvements in Tribal Areas

- Tribal lands within the continental United States have seen significant increases in the number of BSLs since the initial release of the Fabric.
- Nationally a net increase of nearly 75,000 locations
- Most location changes between versions of the Map come from the vendor, rather than challenges.
 - The Fabric is developed using over 200 data inputs and the work is ongoing.
 - Focusing on Tribal areas where Census data indicates the BSL counts are still too low
- The Commission is not seeking underlying data from challengers (e.g. tax records), just latitude/longitude information.

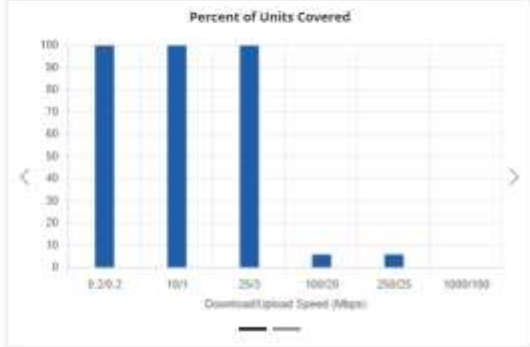


Fixed Broadband Mobile Broadband Combined

Onondaga Nation Reservation

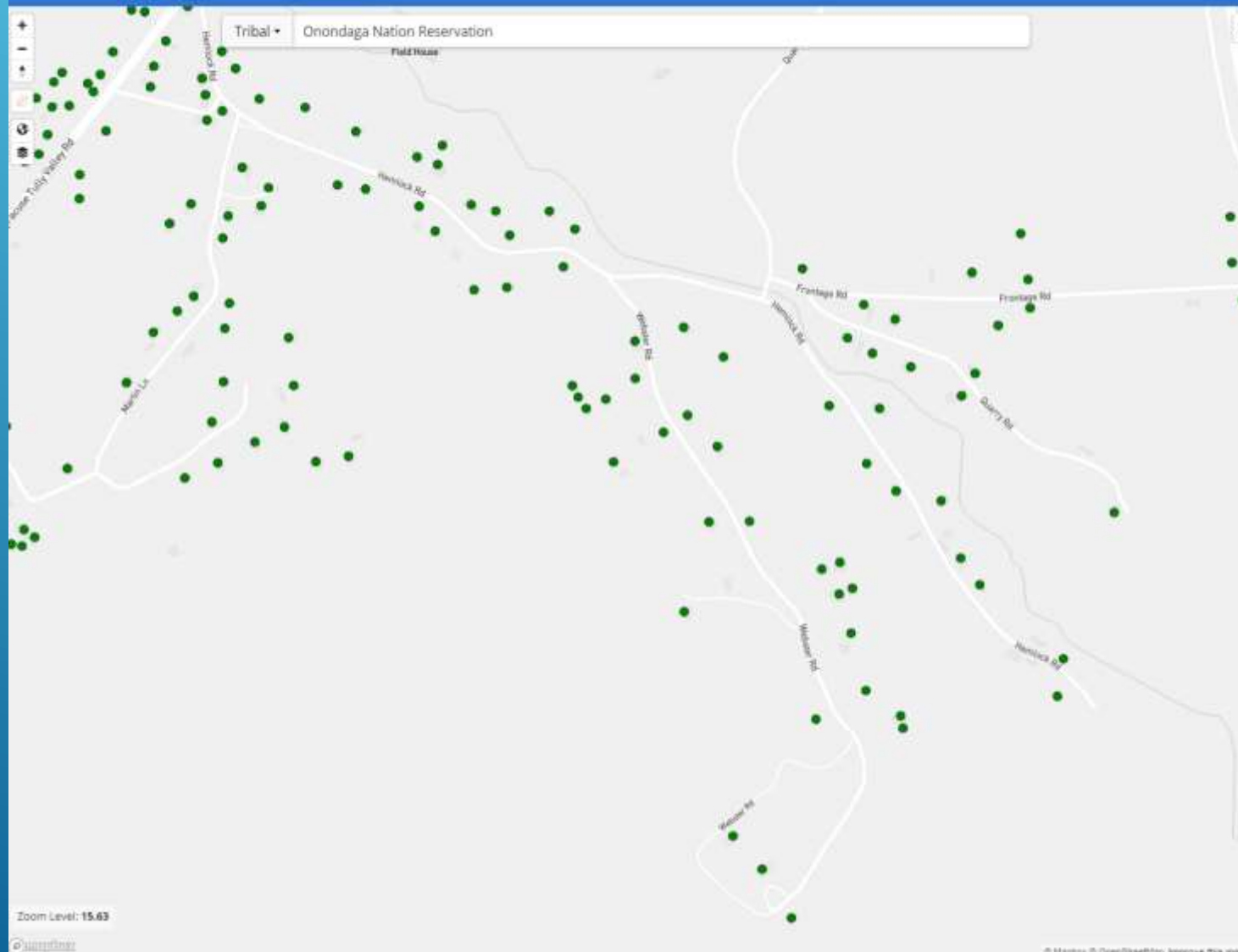
Broadband

Type: Residential
 Technology: Any Technology
 Speed: 25/3 Mbps or greater
 Data As Of: Jun 30, 2022 (Last Updated: 10/2/23)



Map Legend

- Coverage available
- Coverage not available
- Not a mass market location

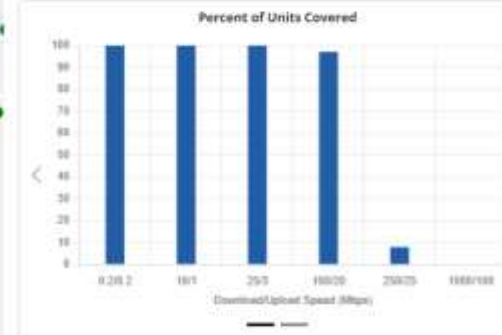


Fixed Broadband | Mobile Broadband | Combined

Onondaga Nation Reservation

Broadband

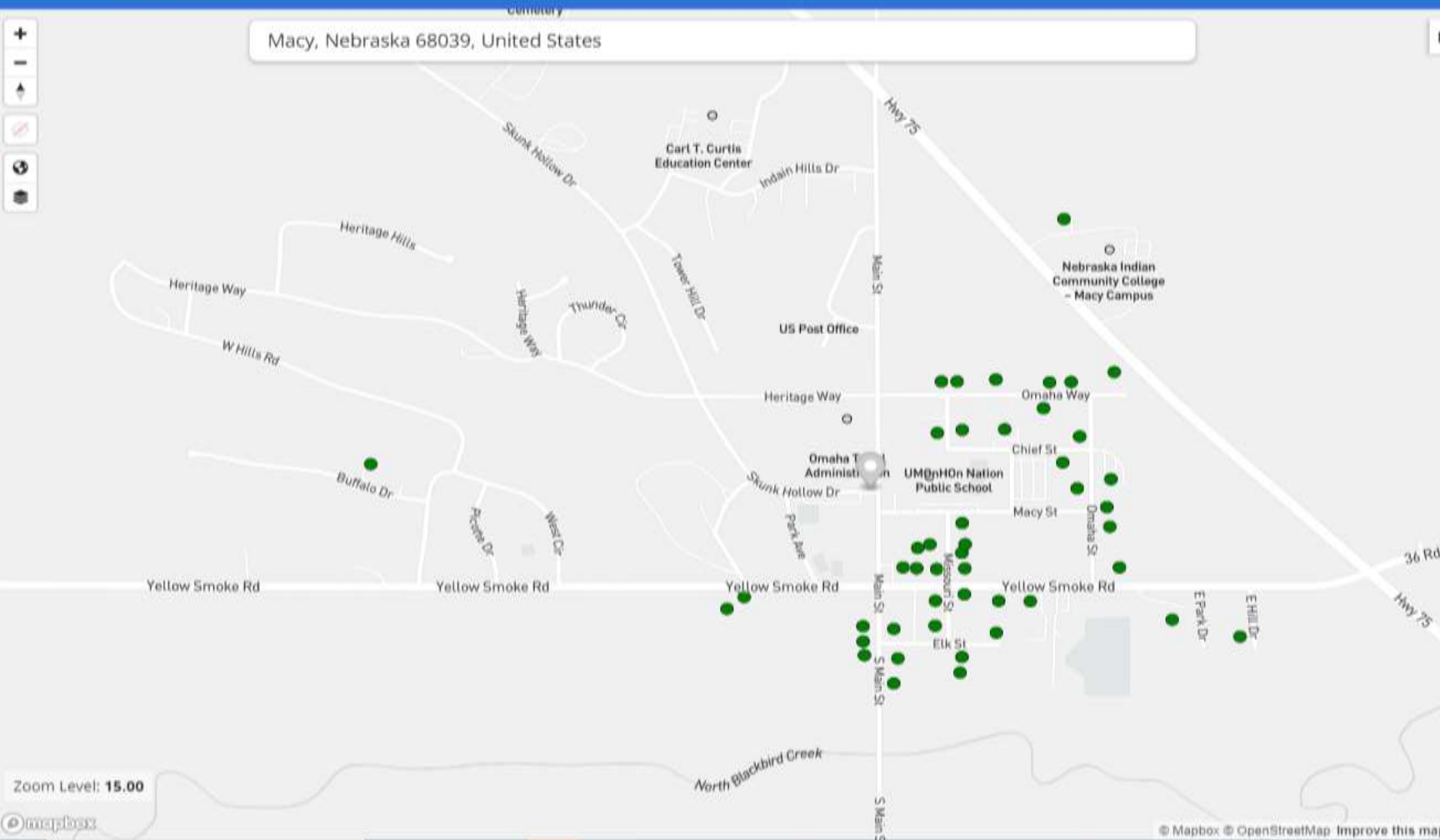
Type: Residential
 Technology: Any Technology
 Speed: 25/3 Mbps or greater
 Data As Of: Dec 31, 2022 (Last Updated: 10/24/23)



Map Legend

- Coverage available
- Coverage not available
- Not a mass market location

Macy, Nebraska 68039, United States



Fixed Broadband Mobile Broadband

Selected Location

Macy, Nebraska 68039, United States

No location data.

Broadband

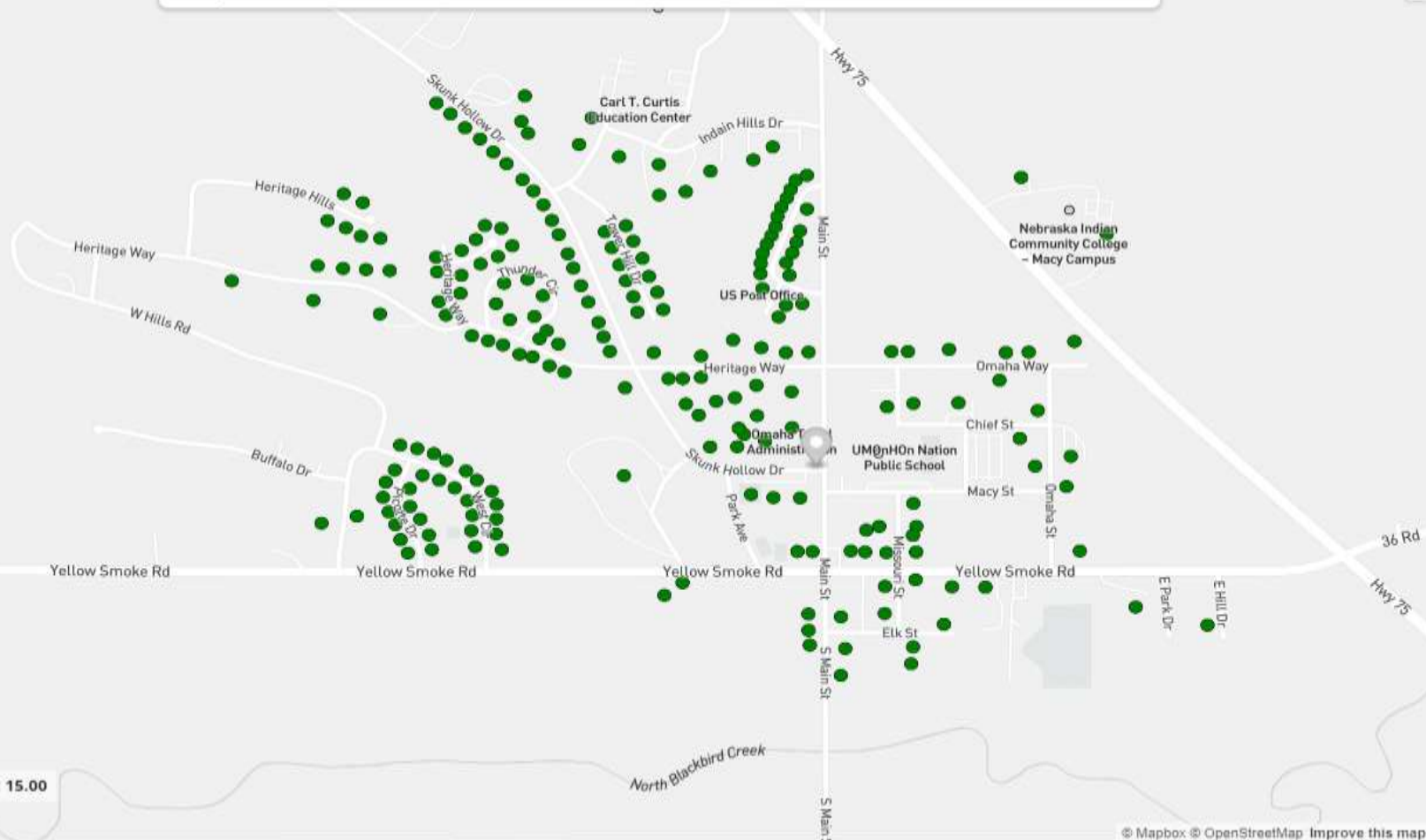
Type	Residential
Technology	Any Technology
Speed	25/3 Mbps or greater
Data As Of	Jun 30, 2022 (Last Updated: 10/2/23)

Click a location on the map to view broadband coverage information.

Map Legend

- Coverage available
- Coverage not available
- Not a mass market location

Macy, Nebraska 68039, United States



Fixed Broadband Mobile Broadband

Selected Location

Macy, Nebraska 68039, United States

No location data.

Broadband

Type	Residential
Technology	Any Technology
Speed	25/3 Mbps or greater
Data As Of	Dec 31, 2022 (Last Updated: 9/26/23)

Click a location on the map to view broadband coverage information.

Map Legend

- Coverage available
- Coverage not available
- Not a mass market location

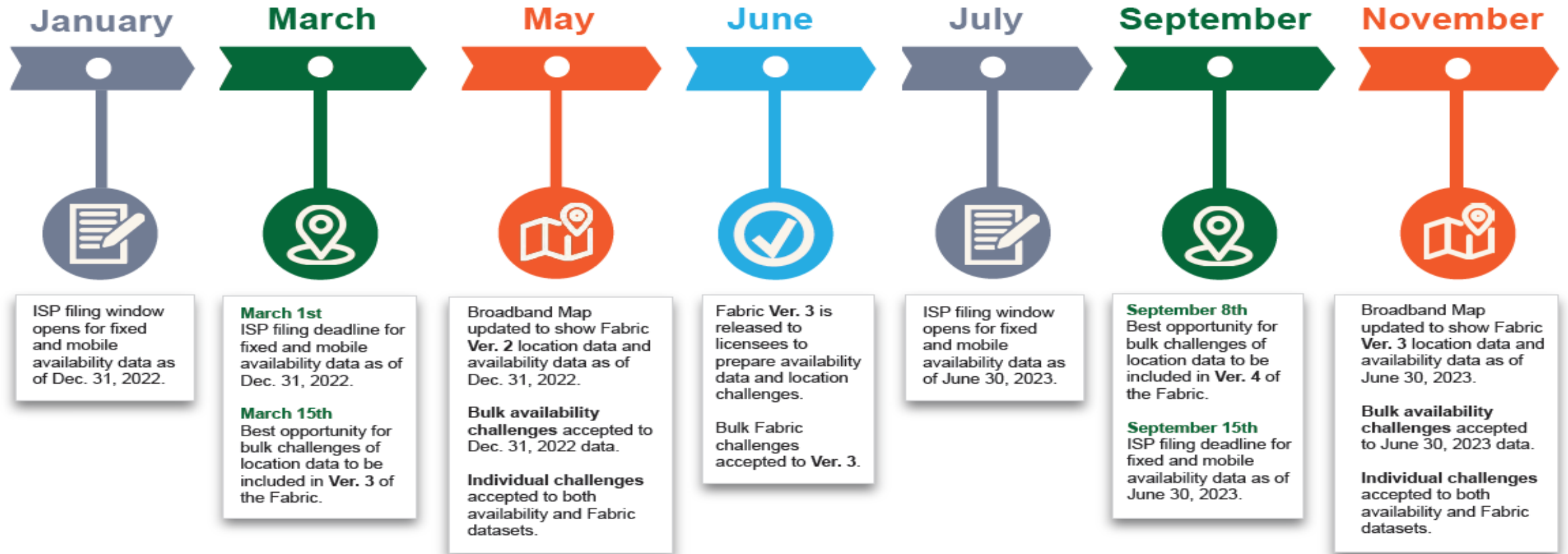
Zoom Level: 15.00



© Mapbox © OpenStreetMap Improve this map



National Broadband Map: 2023 Key Dates



National Broadband Map: Location Challenges

Location points are part of a dataset called the Broadband Serviceable Location Fabric.

What can be challenged?

- Wrong address
- Wrong unit count
- Wrong placement on the map
- Misidentified as non-Broadband-Serviceable
- Missing location

The screenshot displays the FCC National Broadband Map interface. The map shows a residential area in Washington, DC, with a blue location pin at 45 L St NE. The right-hand panel provides details for this location, including its status as 'Served' and a 'Location Challenge' flag circled in red. Below this, a table lists broadband providers and their availability challenges.

Provider	Technology	Down (Mbps)	Up (Mbps)	Chall.
Comcast Corporation	Cable	1200	35	
Hughes Network Systems, LLC	GSO Satellite	25	3	
Space Exploration Technologies Corp.	NGSO Satellite	120	25	
Verizon Communications Inc.	Copper	10	1	
Verizon Communications Inc.	Fiber to the Premises	940	880	
Viasat, Inc.	GSO Satellite	30	3	
T-Mobile USA, Inc.	Licensed Fixed Wireless	25	3	

Broadband Data Collection: Working with the Fabric

- First, you should execute a licensing agreement to access the Fabric dataset.
- Review the tutorial videos on what the Fabric is and how to open and work with the file.
- Develop a strategy for analyzing and validating the Fabric data for your jurisdiction to determine whether a challenge is warranted.
- If you discover that there are locations not included in the Fabric, confirm that these locations align with FCC's definition of a BSL, or broadband serviceable location, before including in a challenge.
- Prepare to submit your challenge data into the BDC system by formatting the data according to the requirements laid out in the Fabric bulk challenge data specification.

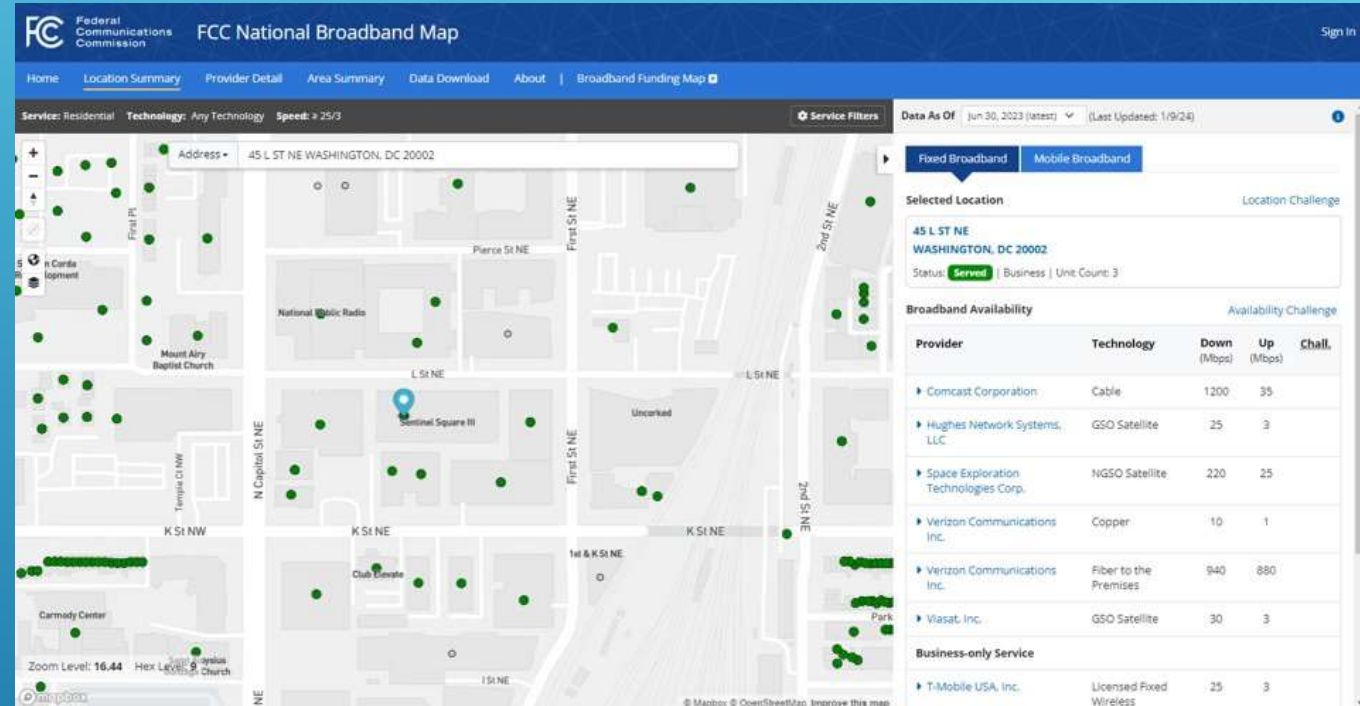
- www.fcc.gov/broadbanddata/fabrichelp



Availability on the National Broadband Map

Fixed broadband service is “available” at a location if the:

- provider has, or previously had, a connection in service to the location.
- provider could initiate service through a routine installation within 10 business days of a request with no extraordinary charges or delays attributable to the extension of the provider’s network.



National Broadband Map: Fixed Availability Challenges

Codes identifying the category of or reason for a bulk fixed availability challenge:

- 1 – *Provider Failure to Schedule Install Within 10 Days of Request for Service*
- 2 – *Provider Failure to Perform Install Within 10 Days of Request for Service*
- 3 – *Provider Demand for Connection Charges That Exceed Its Standard Installation Charge*
- 4 – *Provider Denial of Request for Service*
- 5 – *Reported Service Type Not Offered*
- 6 – *Reported Speed Not Available for Purchase*
- 7 – *Subscribed Speed Not Achievable [Individuals only can select this option (on the map), but it won't create a challenge]*
- 8 – *Signal Not Available (Satellite / Fixed Wireless only)*
- 9 – *Provider Demand for Additional Construction (Satellite / Fixed Wireless only)*
- 10 – *Missing Provider [this will not create a challenge, but will be considered as crowdsource data]*

National Broadband Map: Bulk Fixed Availability Challenges

There are three options:

1. **Knowledge of Infrastructure** - could be based on knowledge of where network facilities and plant exist
2. **Information Collected from Individual Consumers** – collecting information from individual consumers about the broadband services available, and not available, to them
3. **Other**

For formatting assistance, including sample template files that you may use, see: <https://help.bdc.fcc.gov/hc/en-us/articles/10390523851803-How-to-Format-Bulk-Fixed-Challenge-and-Crowdsourc-Data>



National Broadband Map: Mobile Availability Challenges

- Challengers may dispute the availability of mobile broadband service using on-the-ground speed test data.
- Speed test data may be submitted using the FCC's Speed Test app (or another third-party speed test app approved by the FCC's Office of Engineering and Technology).
- Alternatively, bulk availability challengers may submit speed test data collected using their own hardware and software provided it meets FCC's requirements.



Broadband Data Collection: Resources

For More Information:
www.fcc.gov/BroadbandData





Opportunities for Broadband Funding: Universal Service Programs

Johnny Roddy, Attorney Advisor
Telecommunications Access Policy Division
Wireline Competition Bureau
Federal Communications Commission

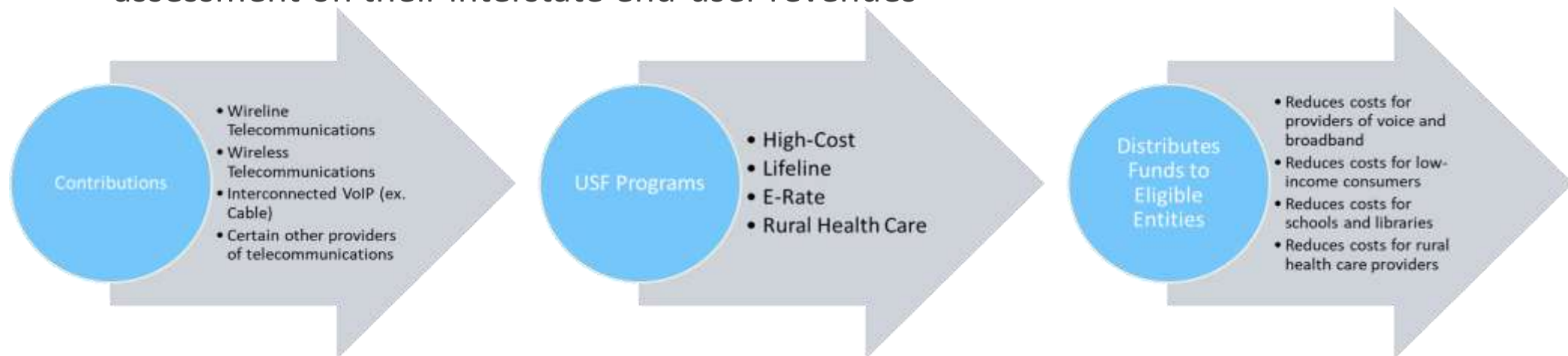
March 6, 2023



Universal Service Fund (USF)

Universal service is the principle that all Americans should have access to communications services.

- Pursuant to Section 254 of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, the FCC established the **Universal Service Fund** in 1997 to subsidize telecom services for low-income consumers, rural health care providers, schools and libraries, and consumers in high-cost areas.
- The Universal Service Fund is paid for by contributions from telecom providers based on an assessment on their interstate end-user revenues



USF Programs - Roles

The **Federal Communications Commission (FCC)** is responsible for oversight of the USF, including policy decisions.

The **Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC)** is an independent, not-for-profit organization designated by the FCC as the permanent administrator of the USF and its four programs.



Lifeline Program

Affordable Services for Low-Income Consumers

A solid blue horizontal bar at the bottom of the slide.

Lifeline Program

Eligible low-income households receive a discount on their monthly broadband or telephone bill of between \$5.25 and \$9.25 (depending on service type).

Each eligible household can receive one Lifeline benefit.

Consumers must meet one eligibility criterion described below and apply through the Lifeline National Verifier:

- Income at or below 135% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines
- Participate in Medicaid
- Participate in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Participate in Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Participate in Federal Public Housing Assistance (FPHA)
- Participate in Veterans Pension or Survivors Benefit

Lifeline Program Enhanced Tribal Benefit

Lifeline offers an enhanced benefit to consumers who live on qualifying Tribal lands:

- Up to \$25/month extra is available for subscribers on qualifying Tribal lands (up to \$34.25 per month total).
- Up to \$100 “Link Up” benefit to connect telecommunications services from a carrier receiving High Cost support on qualifying Tribal lands. Available once per residential address.

Additional eligibility options for consumers living on Tribal lands who also participate in:

- Bureau of Indian Affairs General Assistance (BIA-GA)
- Tribally Administered Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- Tribal Head Start (must meet qualifying income standard)
- Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR)



Rural Health Care Program

Connecting Health Care Facilities Across America

A solid blue horizontal bar spans the width of the slide at the bottom.

Rural Health Care Program

- The **Rural Health Care (RHC) program** provides funding to eligible health care providers for telecommunications and broadband services needed to deliver health care.
 - Telecommunications Program funds voice and other telecommunications services.
 - Healthcare Connect Fund (HCF) Program funds broadband services, network equipment, and related costs.
- **Eligible applicants:** Must be a non-profit or public health care provider located in a rural area as defined by the FCC. Eligible health care providers must meet [program requirements](#).



High-Cost/Connect America Fund

Expanding Access to Modern Communications
Networks in High-Cost Areas

High-Cost Program

- The federal universal service High-Cost program (including the Connect America Fund and the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund) is designed to ensure that consumers in rural, insular, and high-cost areas have access to modern communications networks capable of providing voice and broadband service, both fixed and mobile, at rates that are reasonably comparable to those in urban areas.
- The program fulfills this universal service goal by allowing eligible carriers who serve these areas to recover some of their costs from the federal USF.

High Cost Program: How It Works

- The FCC determines which areas of the country are eligible for funding under the standards for each new program.
- Through different support processes, eligible service providers are authorized for support in deploying and maintaining network infrastructure in those areas and providing service meeting required performance standards.
- Service providers report progress on deployment and required service quality.
- USAC monitors compliance with build-out obligations.

FCC Form 481

- All eligible telecommunications carriers (ETCs) participating in High Cost and/or Lifeline programs must file Form 481 annually.
- Form 481 collects financial and operational information used to validate carrier support.
- Tribal Officials can download and view FCC Form 481 data submitted by carriers that serve their lands using the 54.314 System in E-File.
- New! USAC's [Tribal Access to FCC Form 481 User Guide](#)

FCC Form 481 – Tribal Engagement Requirements

- Carriers are required to certify that they have addressed the following items in annual discussions with the Tribes they serve:
 - A needs assessment and deployment planning with a focus on Tribal community anchor institutions
 - Feasibility and sustainability planning
 - Marketing services in a culturally sensitive manner
 - Rights of way processes, land use permitting, facilities siting, environmental and cultural preservation review processes
 - Compliance with Tribal business and licensing requirements

Enhanced A-CAM Tribal Requirements

- Enhanced A-CAM program will provide universal service high-cost support to participating carriers for deployment of 100/20 Mbps or faster broadband service to all locations served by the program, including some of the most difficult-to-reach areas of the country
- Enhanced A-CAM support offers are expected to be made and accepted in Fall 2023
- Within 90 days of the offer of Enhanced A-CAM support, a carrier that accepted an Enhanced A-CAM offer must initiate engagement with all Tribal governments in its service area
- The Commission expects Enhanced A-CAM carriers to take reasonable steps necessary to obtain Tribal consent that meets the Broadband Equity Access and Deployment Program (BEAD) requirements
- If a state awards BEAD funding to another service provider to serve locations subject to an Enhanced A-CAM authorization, the Enhanced A-CAM provider and Tribal government can notify the FCC that they mutually forego the Enhanced A-CAM deployment obligations for those locations
 - If such a notification is made, an Enhanced A-CAM recipient's support and deployment obligations will be adjusted accordingly

Questions?



Resources

RHC & Lifeline Program Resources

LIFELINE

Consumer Guides

- <https://www.fcc.gov/lifeline-consumers>
- <https://www.lifelinesupport.org/>

Program Details

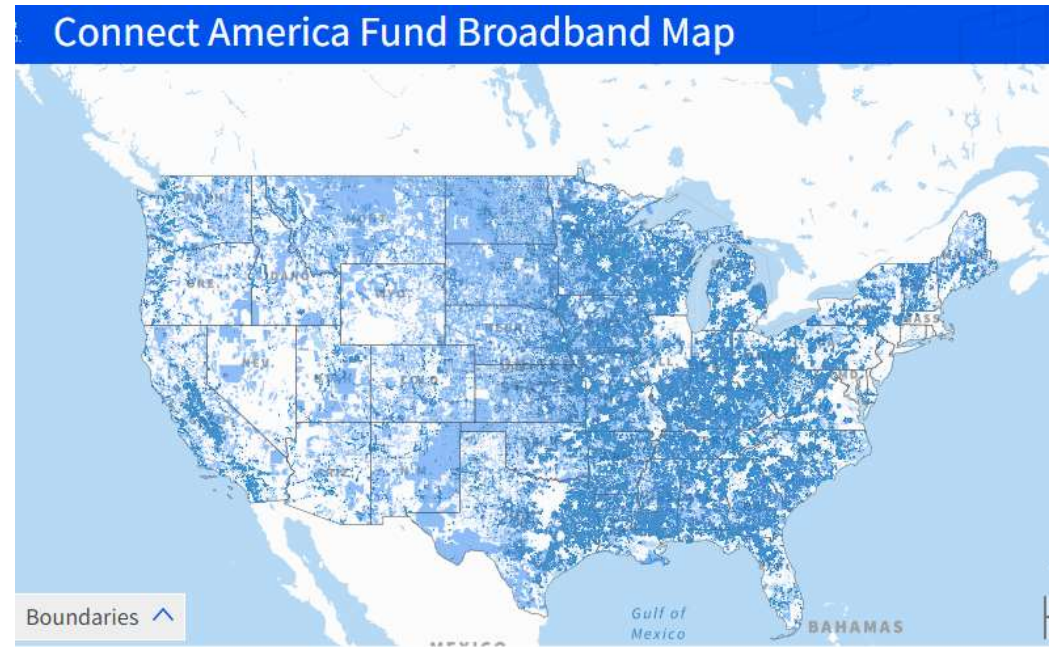
- <https://www.fcc.gov/general/lifeline-program-low-income-consumers>
- <https://www.usac.org/lifeline/>

RHC

- <https://www.usac.org/rural-health-care/>
- <https://www.fcc.gov/general/rural-health-care-program>

Connect America Fund Resources

- <https://data.usac.org/publicreports/caf-map/>
- <https://www.usac.org/high-cost/>
- <https://www.fcc.gov/general/connect-america-fund-caf>
- <https://www.fcc.gov/auction/904>
- <https://www.usac.org/high-cost/annual-requirements/file-fcc-form-481/>





Enhanced Competition Incentive Program and Tribal Nations

March 2024

Stephanie Asous, Attorney-Advisor
Wireless Telecommunications Bureau

* This presentation and its contents are for informational purposes only; the Commission's rules in part 47 of the Code of Federal Regulations and the Commission's previous Reports and Orders adopting those rules represent the binding rules and determinations of the Commission.

Overview:

- **Introduction**
- **ECIP and How it Works**
- **List of Spectrum Bands Available for ECIP**
- **Qualifying Entities and Tribal Nations Eligibility for ECIP**
- **Other Program Requirements**
- **ECIP Benefits for Parties to a Transaction**
- **How Tribal Nations Can Participate**
- **Further Information**

Introduction

- An FCC authorization is needed to provide wireless service
- One way the FCC authorizes spectrum use is to issue licenses for particular bands over geographic areas
 - Wireless licensees are required to meet construction obligations
 - Wireless license terms expire, typically after 10 or 15 years, with an option to apply for renewal
 - Wireless licensees can sell and lease their authorizations (in full or in part) on the secondary market

Enhanced Competition Incentive Program (ECIP)

- Launched in February
- Creates incentives for FCC wireless licensees to enter into secondary market deals with Tribal Nations, small wireless carriers, and those committing to serve rural areas

How ECIP Works

- FCC wireless licensees and qualifying partners enter into private sale or lease arrangements
- Parties seek FCC approval of the transaction, and to participate in ECIP
- FCC staff review the pending transaction for ECIP eligibility
- If eligible, both parties to the transaction receive benefits from ECIP
- Details about ECIP eligibility are in the following slides

ECIP Spectrum Bands

- ECIP is available in over 40 spectrum bands
- Bands include:
 - 2.5 GHz
 - 600 MHz
 - 700 MHz
 - Midband: 3.45 GHz, 3.5 GHz, and 3.7 GHz
- See *ECIP Report and Order* at Footnote 32 for the comprehensive list

Qualifying Entities: Parties Eligible for ECIP Transactions with Wireless Licensees

- Tribal Nations (no matter their location, or the type of land area involved)
- Small carriers
- Those committing to serve rural areas (which can also include Tribes)

Tribal Nations Eligibility for ECIP

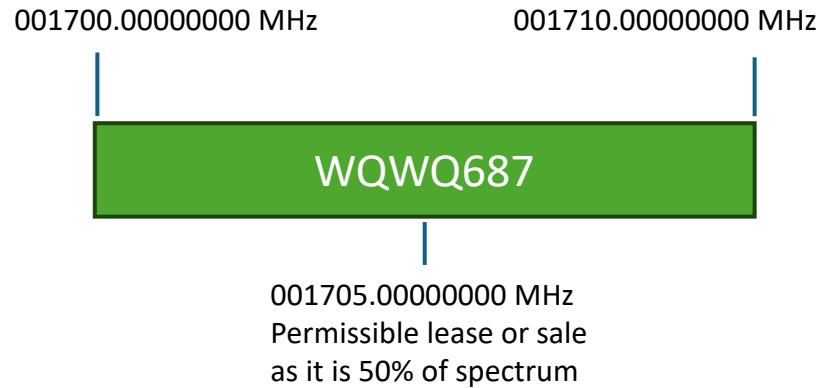
- Federally recognized Tribes and Alaska Native Villages
- Consortia of Federally recognized Tribes and Alaska Native Villages
- Entities majority owned and controlled by Federally recognized Tribes and Alaska Native Villages

Other Program Requirements

- Premise: Current licensees sells or leases geographically licensed spectrum (in whole or in part) on the secondary market to qualifying entity
- If parties enter into a lease, a minimum five-year lease term is required for ECIP
- An ECIP transaction must include a minimum of 50% of the licensed spectrum
- An ECIP transaction must meet a minimum geography threshold of 25% of licensed geographic area, and 10% of the area for licenses larger than 30,000 square miles

Minimum Spectrum Example:

- 10 MHz in WQWQ687 license
- Must lease or sell at least 5 MHz



Minimum Geography Example:

- 26,104.4 sq. mi. in WQWQ687 license
- Must lease or sell at least 6,526.1 sq. mi.



Permissible lease or sale as it is 7,000 sq. mi. (or 26.8%) of license geography

ECIP Benefits for Parties to a Transaction

- Access to spectrum
- 5-year license term extension for all parties to the transaction
- 1-year construction period extension (if existing construction requirements are outstanding)

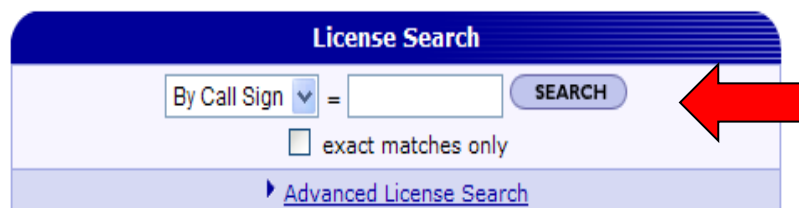
How Tribal Nations Can Participate

- Program is ongoing – no end date by which to file an ECIP eligible transaction
- Consult ULS license records to ascertain potential transaction partners holding eligible wireless spectrum in geographic areas of interest
- Engage with wireless spectrum licensees in relevant spectrum bands
- Consider offers from licensees who wish to engage in transactions

License Search

[? HELP](#)

The ULS License Search enables you to search for a wide range of licenses in the Universal Licensing System. The License Search here provides access to the most basic attributes of a license. You can also specify more attributes combinations with the [Advanced Search](#) and search within services like [Amateur](#) using service-specific criteria. Please be aware that some combinations of search criteria may result in a longer wait.



License Search

By Call Sign ▾ = **SEARCH**

exact matches only

[Advanced License Search](#)



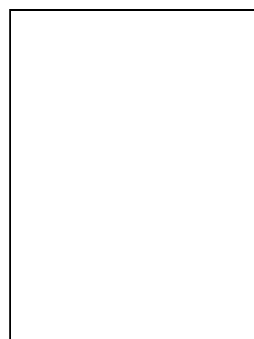
Advanced Search

Want to search for licenses of any radio service code based on combinations of general license attributes?

 [Advanced License Search](#) 

Advanced License Search includes:

- ▶ Licensee State, ZIP, and Name
- ▶ Dates (Grant, Last Action, etc)
- ▶ License Status
- ▶ Radio Service Code
- ▶ And more.



Service Specific Search

Want to search for licenses within a service using criteria relevant to that specific service?

- [Aircraft](#)
- [Amateur](#)
Vanity Call Signs, Operator Class, and more.
- [Commercial/Restricted Permits](#)
Operator Class, COLEM, and more.
- [GMRS](#)
- [Ship](#)
MMSI#, Ship Name, and more.

Specialized Search

Want to use customized criteria to search for a license within all relevant services?

- [Market Based](#)
Search by auction number, markets, channel block and more.
- [Site Based](#)
Search by station class, frequency, Antenna Structure Registration (ASR) number, and more.
- [Facility ID](#)
Search by Facility Identification Number for Broadcast Auxiliary Licenses.
- [Geographic](#)
Search by coordinates, county/state, address and frequency information.
- [Buildout Deadline](#)
Search by Buildout Deadline information, auction, radio services, and more.
- [Lease Specific](#)
Search by Lease information.

License Detail

Status All Active Expired
 Canceled Terminated Termination Pending



Authorization Type All Regular STA
 Developmental Demonstration

Additional search criteria include License Details, Date Information and Frequencies. To limit your results to active authorizations, select Active

Date Information

Date Type Select a date type v
Select a fixed date range v
Date From to 9/23/2019
(Date Format: MM/DD/YYYY)

Frequencies

Frequency All Frequencies
 Exact MHz
 Range MHz to MHz

Customize Your Results

Results Display 10 v matches per page sorted by Call Sign v in ascending v order
 Exact Matches Only
 Exclude Leases

RESET

Select Geosearch to search by State/County, Address or Coordinates



GEOSEARCH

SEARCH

*Please be aware that some combinations of search criteria may result in a longer wait.

Specified Search
The following search criteria will be applied in addition to any information specified below.
Radio Service AT
[Modify Search Criteria](#)

Geographic Search Criteria

Include Nationwide Area of Operations
 Include Continental Area of Operations
 Include Licenses with a Mobile Area of Operations
 Exclude Leases

State/County
You may search on state, county, or both. Use the state list to filter the list of counties. Please be aware that scrolling on multiple states or counties may result in slower search results.

States(x)
Oklahoma
Oregon
Pennsylvania

County(x)
OK - Okfuskee
OK - Oklahoma
OK - Okmulgee

Address

Street
City
State
ZIP Code
Radius Kilometers

Coordinates
This search is based on NAD 83 coordinates ([convert from NAD 83](#)).

Latitude ° ' "
Longitude ° ' "
Radius Kilometers

Frequencies

All Frequencies
Frequency Exact MHz
 Range MHz to MHz

To search for active licenses, select the state and applicable county or counties. You can select multiple criteria within a dropdown box by using your shift and/or control key




Click search

Search Results

[New Search](#)
[Refine Search](#)
[Printable Page](#)
[Query Download](#)
[Map Licenses](#)

Specified Search						
State = Oklahoma County = OKFUSKEE, OKLAHOMA Radio Service = AT Status = Active Exclude Leases						
Matches 1- 15 (of 15)						
PA = Pending Application(s) TP = Termination Pending L = Lease						
Page 1						
Call Sign/Lease ID	Name	FRN	Radio Service	Status	Expiration Date	
1 WQVN829 L	Cellco Partnership	0003290673	AT	Active	04/08/2027	
2 WQVN830 L	Cellco Partnership	0003290673	AT	Active	04/08/2027	
3 WQVN831 L	AT&T Wireless Services 3 LLC	0023910920	AT	Active	04/08/2027	
4 WQVN832 L	AT&T Wireless Services 3 LLC	0023910920	AT	Active	04/08/2027	
5 WQVN996 L	AT&T Wireless Services 3 LLC	0023910920	AT	Active	04/08/2027	
6 WQVP246	Cellco Partnership	0003290673	AT	Active	04/08/2027	
7 WQVP348	New Cingular Wireless PCS, LLC	0003291192			2027	
8 WQVP438	T-Mobile License LLC	0001565449			2027	
9 PA WQWQ687	Northstar Wireless, LLC	0023917453			2027	
10 PA WQWQ939	SNR Wireless LicenseCo, LLC	0023907074			2027	
11 PA WQWQ940	SNR Wireless LicenseCo, LLC	0023907074	AT	Active	10/27/2027	
12 PA WQXW450	Advantage Spectrum, L.P.	0023909104	AT	Active	07/05/2028	
13 PA WQXW519 L	Advantage Spectrum, L.P.	0023909104	AT	Active	07/05/2028	
14 WQYB214	AT&T Wireless Services 3 LLC	0023910920	AT	Active	04/08/2027	
15 WRCV384	USCOC OF GREATER OKLAHOMA, LLC	0002840296	AT	Active	04/08/2027	
Call Sign/Lease ID	Name	FRN	Radio Service	Status	Expiration Date	
Page 1						

* Please note search results do not return licenses that contain geometry data issues.

MAIN		ADMIN		MARKET		MAP	
PA This license has pending applications: 0009244905 , 0008819716 , 0008386332 , 0007943454 , 0007477042							
Call Sign	WQWQ687	Radio Service	AT - AWS-3 (1695-1710 MHz, 1755-1780 MHz, and 2155-2180 MHz)				
Status	Active	Auth Type	Special				
Rural Service Provider Bidding Credit							
Is the Applicant seeking a Rural Service Provider (RSP) bidding credit?							
Reserved Spectrum							
Reserved Spectrum							
Market							
Market	BEA125 - Oklahoma City, OK	Channel Block	B1				
Submarket	0	Associated Frequencies (MHz)	001700.00000000-001710.00000000				
3.7 GHz License Type		3.7 GHz Linked License					
Dates							
Grant	10/27/2015	Expiration	10/27/2027 				
Effective	10/27/2015	Cancellation					
Buildout Deadlines							
1st	10/27/2021	2nd	10/27/2027				
Discontinuance Dates							
1st		2nd					
Notification Dates							
1st		2nd					
Licensee							
FRN	0023917453 (View Ownership Filing)	Type	Limited Liability Company				
Licensee							
Northstar Wireless, LLC 1 Doyon Place Suite 300 Fairbanks, AK 99701-2941 ATTN Allen M Todd		P:(907)459-2000 F:(907)459-2060 E:todda@doyon.com					
Contact							
Northstar Wireless, LLC 1 Doyon Place Suite 300 Fairbanks, AK 99701-2941 ATTN Allen M Todd		P:(907)459-2000 F:(907)459-2060 E:todda@doyon.com					

Q&A

Further Information:

www.fcc.gov

www.fcc.gov/uls

[ECIP Report & Order](#) - FCC Document 22-53

Contact Stephanie Asous via email Stephanie.Asous@fcc.gov



Working with the FCC

Lloyd Collier, Attorney Advisor

Cara Voth, CGB Deputy Bureau Chief

Office of Native Affairs and Policy

Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau

Federal Communications Commission

Agenda

What is the FCC's Mission?

What is the FCC's Governance and Structure?

How Does the FCC Fulfill its Mission?

- Key FCC Bureaus and Offices

What is Federal Rulemaking?

FCC Rulemaking – Why and How

- How the FCC Seeks Public Comment
- Why Should Tribal Nations File Comments?
- Types of Filings
- What to Include in Comments?
- How to File?

Strategies for Tracking FCC's Work

What is the FCC's Mission?

The Federal Communications Commission is an independent agency overseen by Congress

- Responsible for implementing and enforcing America's communications law and regulations
- Regulates interstate and international communications by wire and radio in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and U.S. territories
- Covers wireline and wireless communications, broadcast TV and radio, as well as satellite, and cable TV

FCC's Governance and Structure

Five Commissioners

- President selects one Commissioner to be Chair

Divided into Bureaus and Offices

- 7 Bureaus: e.g., Consumer and Governmental Affairs (includes ONAP), Media, Wireless, and Enforcement
- 10 Offices: e.g., General Counsel, Legislative Affairs, Managing Director, Engineering and Technology

How Does the FCC Fulfill its Mission?

The FCC establishes and enforces rules based on the substantive areas outlined in the Communications Act, as amended, to:

- Promote competition, innovation and investment in broadband services and facilities
- Support the nation's economy by ensuring an appropriate competitive framework for the unfolding of the communications revolution
- Encourage the highest and best use of spectrum domestically and internationally
- Revise media regulations so that new technologies flourish alongside diversity and localism
- Provide leadership in strengthening the defense of the nation's communications infrastructure

Key FCC Bureaus and Offices

Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau (CGB)

- Office of Native Affairs and Policy (ONAP); Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) outreach and outreach grant programs

Wireline Competition Bureau (WCB)

- Universal Service Fund (USF); ACP regulatory issues

Wireless Telecommunications Bureau (WTB)

- Spectrum Access; Spectrum Licensing; Historic Preservation issues

Media Bureau, Tribal Radio Priority

Public Safety: FirstNet, Emergency Alert System, 911

Enforcement Bureau - investigates and enforces the provisions of the Communications Act, and the FCC's rules

What is Federal Rulemaking?

Rulemaking is a process for developing and issuing rules. The rulemaking process can lead to the issuance of a new rule, an amendment to an existing rule, or the repeal of an existing rule

In the rulemaking process, all Federal agencies must adhere to the Administrative Procedure Act (APA), which sets forth basic requirements for notice and comment rulemaking, including:

- A minimum length of time agencies must provide for public notice and comment (usually at least 30 days)

FCC also has its own FCC-specific rules for rulemaking procedures.

FCC Rulemaking – Why and How

The FCC follows the Administrative Procedure Act (APA) when developing and issuing rules and makes rules for three main reasons:

- Congress requires the FCC to make a rule
- The FCC identifies a problem (e.g., an industry behavior that adversely affects consumers) or a need to clarify existing rules)
- A person or organization files a Petition for Rulemaking asking the FCC to make or change a rule

How the FCC Seeks Public Comment

The FCC considers policies (and may adopt rules) by asking for public comment through these types of notices:

- Notice of Inquiry (NOI) – asks questions about issues; no rules proposed
- Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) – specific questions and proposals for final rules
- Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (FNPRM) – specific questions and proposals for modifying or adopting additional rules
- Public Notice (PN) – used to announce certain actions; also used to seek comment or data on more limited issues (more like an NOI; no rules are proposed)

Why Should Tribal Nations File Comments?

FCC's notice and comment rulemaking process

- Rules Must be Based on Record Evidence
- Public Comments Strengthen the Process
- Provides Transparency
- Provides Different Perspectives

Tribal comments are important

- Help shape policies and rules
- Provide Tribal perspectives
- Helps preserve appeal rights

Type of Filings

Public Comments

Two rounds: Initial & Reply

Comment deadlines announced in different ways (e.g., in actual notice, by Fed Reg publication)

- Tip: Sign up for ONAP's email list to stay informed

Letter format or more structured

Ex Parte Letters

“Permit-but-disclose” anytime during open proceeding including after comment period (up until Sunshine Period for open meeting)

- Submit any handouts and/or summary of discussions from meetings with FCC staff
- File within two business days
- Becomes part of decision record

Types of Filings

continued

Examples: Structured Comment Letter Style Comment

Before the
Federal Communications Commission
Washington, D.C. 20554

In the Matter of)
)
Transforming the 2.5 GHz Band) WT Docket No. 18-120

COMMENTS OF THE CHICKASAW NATION

The Chickasaw Nation, by counsel, hereby submits these comments in response to the *Notice of Proposed Rulemaking* (“NPRM”) in the above-captioned proceeding.¹ For the reasons stated herein, the Chickasaw Nation supports the Federal Communications Commission’s (“FCC” or “Commission”) proposal to open up priority filing windows, first to existing licensees, second to rural Tribal Nations and third to new educational entities. However, the Chickasaw Nation urges the Commission to ensure that the proposed Geographic Service Area (“GSA”) expansion does not result in a land grab for nationwide carriers without a local presence in rural areas. Rather, the Commission should strongly consider focusing on the entities with a local presence, such as local operators with existing licenses, the Tribal Nations and educational entities. Finally, the Chickasaw Nation asserts that the proposed holding period for lessees of newly-acquired EBS licenses would stunt the deployment of needed broadband in rural areas.

I. Background

The Chickasaw Nation is a federally recognized sovereign Indian nation headquartered in Ada, Oklahoma.² The Chickasaw Nation extends across 13 counties in south-central Oklahoma

AK-CHIN INDIAN COMMUNITY Community Government

43517 W. Palms & Nail Road • Muskogee, Alaska 99574 • Telephone: 520-868-1000 • Fax: 520-868-1001



August 31, 2018

Mariene H. Dortch, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary
445 12th Street, SW, Room TW-B2204
Washington, D.C. 20554

Re: Comments regarding FCC Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (Proceeding 18-120)

Dear Secretary Dortch,

The Ak-Chin Indian Community would like to thank the FCC for the opportunity to provide comment on proposed rulemaking that would make unused portions of the 2.5 GHz band (2486-2500 MHz) available to Native nations in rural areas.

In general, rural Native nations have inadequate access to broadband service, creating a disparity that grows daily as society becomes increasingly dependent on internet-based communications. Expanding access to the 2.5 GHz band will enable the federal government to fulfill its trust responsibilities to sovereign Native nations while strengthening tribal self-determination. The Ak-Chin Indian Community would like to make the following recommendations regarding disbursement of unused portions of the 2.5 GHz band:

- Native nations should be granted a local priority filing window to obtain spectrum before other entities, including current licensees seeking to expand.
- For Native nations, the geographic service area should be marked by reservation boundaries rather than census tracts or counties.

Types of Filings

continued

Example:
Ex parte letter

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October 5, 2018

VIA ELECTRONIC FILING

Ms. Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 Twelfth Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20554

Re: Notice of Ex Parte, Transforming the 2.5 GHz Band, WT Docket No. 18-120

Dear Ms. Dortch:

On Wednesday, October 3, 2018, Clifford Agee and Josh Snow of Trace Fiber Networks, wholly-owned subsidiary of the Chickasaw Nation, and their counsel, Clare Liedquist, Molly O'Connor and the undersigned with Herman & Whiteaker, LLC, met with John Schauble, Catherine Schroeder,¹ Nancy Zaczek, Nadja Sodos-Wallace, Blaise Scinto and Jonathan Campbell with the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau and Matthew Duchesne, Sayuri Rajapakse, and Janet Sievert with the Office of Native Affairs and Policy of the Federal Communications Commission ("FCC" or "Commission"). During the meeting, the parties discussed the importance of the *Transforming the 2.5 GHz Band* proceeding, particularly for Tribal Nations such as the Chickasaw Nation.

Mr. Agee described the lack of broadband access to many Chickasaw Nation citizens and

What to Include in Comments?

- Include anything you want the FCC to rely on in its decision-making process
 - Specific examples, evidence, and data are helpful
 - Illustrative stories demonstrating the real-world impacts
 - Confidential treatment is possible
- Initial comments respond to the NOI/NPRM/FNPRM
- Reply comments respond to initial comments
- *Ex parte* filings supplement the record OR must detail non-public meetings or presentations

What to Include in Comments? *continued*

List and file in all relevant docket numbers

- From the first page of NOI/NPRM/FNPRM
- Also online at <https://www.fcc.gov/ecfs/browse-popular-proceedings>
- ONAP can help

**Before the
Federal Communications Commission
Washington, D.C. 20554**

In the Matter of)
)
Transforming the 2.5 GHz Band) WT Docket No. 18-120

COMMENTS OF THE CHICKASAW NATION

How to File?

FCC's Electronic Comment Filing System (ECFS):

<https://www.fcc.gov/ecfs/filings>

Paper filings are still possible

- Must include signed original comment and four copies
- More details here:
<https://www.fcc.gov/consumers/guides/how-comment#paper>

Public access for all filings.

- All public filings are searchable & can be downloaded through ECFS

How to File? *continued*

Headlines

Daily Digest

February 21, 2017 - News Release
Reminder to Small Businesses: SBA's Office of the National Ombudsman

February 16, 2017 - Sunshine
FCC To Hold Open Commission Meeting Thursday, February 23, 2017

February 16, 2017 - Speech
Chairman Pai Remarks at Future of Radio and Audio Symposium

February 15, 2017 - News Release
FCC Settles Investigation Of Relay Service Providers

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47 CFR

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How to File? *continued*

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Proceeding	Subject	Comment/Reply	Last 30 days
10-90	In the Matter of Connect America Fund A National Broadband Plan for Our Future High-Cost Universal Service Support. - Apr 21, 2010	Add New Filing or Express Reply	1215
14-171	Lifeline Compliance Filings - Oct 3, 2014	Add New Filing or Express Reply	845
14-28	Protecting and Promoting the Open Internet - Feb 19, 2014	Add New Filing or Express Reply	459
16-421	STREAMLINING DEPLOYMENT OF SMALL CELL INFRASTRUCTURE - Dec 21, 2016	Add New Filing or Express Reply	157
06-36	CPNI Compliance Certification Annual Filing - Feb 1, 2006	Add New Filing or Express Reply	93
02-6	In the Matter of Schools and Libraries Universal Service Support Mechanism - Jan 18, 2002	Add New Filing or Express Reply	74
11-42	In the Matter of Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service Lifeline and Link Up Lifeline and Link Up Reform and Modernization. - Mar 1, 2011	Add New Filing or Express Reply	64



How to File? *continued*

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fcc.gov/ecfs/filings/standard

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Federal Communications Commission

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Standard Filing | Express Comment | Non-Docketed Filing

Submit a Standard Filing

1 FILING — 2 REVIEW — 3 CONFIRMATION

*Proceeding(s): Select the FCC Proceeding(s) to which your filing refers

REQUIRED

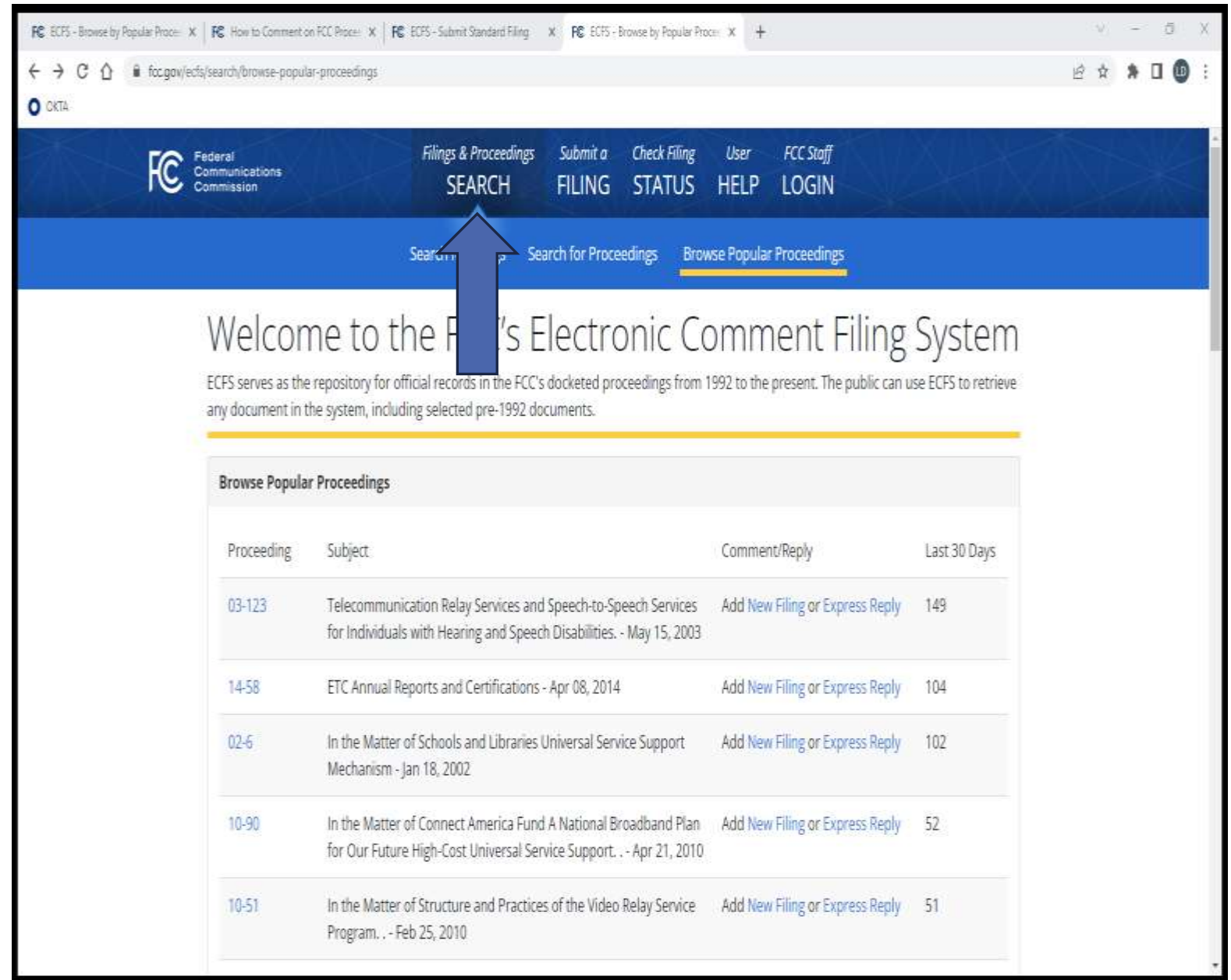
*Name(s) of Filer(s): Enter the name(s) of the persons or entities whose views the filing represents

REQUIRED

Law Firm(s): Optional

Attorney/Author/Submitter Name(s): Add the names of any individuals who authored or assisted the filer with this filing submission (Optional)

How to File? *continued*



The screenshot displays the FCC's Electronic Comment Filing System (ECFS) website. The top navigation bar includes the FCC logo and links for 'SEARCH', 'FILING', 'STATUS', 'HELP', and 'LOGIN'. Below the navigation bar, there are links for 'Search for Proceedings' and 'Browse Popular Proceedings'. The main heading reads 'Welcome to the FCC's Electronic Comment Filing System'. Below this, a paragraph explains that ECFS serves as the repository for official records in the FCC's docketed proceedings from 1992 to the present. The 'Browse Popular Proceedings' section is highlighted with a yellow bar and contains a table with the following data:

Proceeding	Subject	Comment/Reply	Last 30 Days
03-123	Telecommunication Relay Services and Speech-to-Speech Services for Individuals with Hearing and Speech Disabilities. - May 15, 2003	Add New Filing or Express Reply	149
14-58	ETC Annual Reports and Certifications - Apr 08, 2014	Add New Filing or Express Reply	104
02-6	In the Matter of Schools and Libraries Universal Service Support Mechanism - Jan 18, 2002	Add New Filing or Express Reply	102
10-90	In the Matter of Connect America Fund A National Broadband Plan for Our Future High-Cost Universal Service Support. . - Apr 21, 2010	Add New Filing or Express Reply	52
10-51	In the Matter of Structure and Practices of the Video Relay Service Program. . - Feb 25, 2010	Add New Filing or Express Reply	51

Strategies for Tracking FCC's Work

- Sign up for ONAP blasts by sending email request to Native@fcc.gov
- Watch for new proceedings on the FCC's main page or Bureau pages
- Sign up for FCC's Daily Digest (<https://www.fcc.gov/proceedings-actions/daily-digest>)
- Set up an RSS Feed (<https://www.fcc.gov/ecfs/help/rss>)
- Attend FCC's monthly open meetings, which can be livestreamed, (<https://www.fcc.gov/document/fcc-announces-tentative-agenda-november-open-meeting-9>)

Still Have Questions?

Contact ONAP Staff:

- Bambi Kraus, Chief, Bambi.Kraus@fcc.gov
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Email ONAP's general mailbox: Native@fcc.gov

Questions?

