



STATE OF NEW MEXICO
OFFICE OF BROADBAND ACCESS AND EXPANSION

MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM
Governor

KELLY SCHLEGEL
Broadband Director

Indian Affairs Committee - October 5, 2022

Office of Broadband Access and Expansion (OBAE) Update and Accomplishments

OBAE met key milestones for submitting proposals for federal funding, including

- Digital Equity Planning (July 18),
- BEAD Planning (August 15),
- ARPA (September 24), and
- Middle Mile (September 30).

Other key accomplishments include:

- Released Notice of Funding Opportunity on August 8, 2022, for the Connect New Mexico Pilot Grant program.
 - Three application windows for communities to apply for up to \$10 million for broadband projects: September 2022, December 2022, and February 2023.
 - Hosted four webinars to support applicants with the process.
- OBAAE and the Connect New Mexico Council submitted the initial Digital Equity and Data Collection Report to the Legislative Finance Committee (LFC) on October 1, required by HB 10.
- On track to submit a detailed Broadband Plan and Digital Equity and Inclusion Plan in 2023.
- Developed a Middle Mile and Last Mile Strategy based on five pillars.
- Coordinated with Public School Facilities Authority (PSFA) for a Statewide Education Network (SEN) and Pueblo Education Network (PEN) to serve as the foundation for the middle mile.
- Director Kelly Schlegel visited candidate nodes and aggregation points at higher ed locations:
 - secured agreement for new node locations, and
 - submitted a GEER II application to fund the node facilities and ensure adequate electricity, cooling, and generator.

OBAAE is pursuing broadband solutions that are inclusive of workforce and economic development, education, and healthcare. OBAAE has developed a plan for four rural clinics to obtain connectivity for telehealth appointments.

Tribal-specific initiatives and additional progress

Indian Affairs Department (IAD):

- Conducted a Pueblo broadband study during the pandemic to establish foundational tribal needs and priorities.
- Collaborated on a tribal survey with the New Mexico Broadband Collective to identify broadband progress and technical assistance needs, for example, grant writing
- Supported the appointment of three tribal representatives to the Connect New Mexico Council (CNMC).
 - CNMC established a Tribal Working Group in August 2022
- Tribes were encouraged to submit a letter of interest for NTIA Digital Equity Planning funds in July 2022 - awards will be announced soon.
- Tribal broadband opportunities were presented at the Government-to-Government Summit in the fall of 2022.
- OBAE established a contract for a Tribal outreach specialist (Steph Poston) to support Tribal Broadband outreach and engagement.
- The inaugural New Mexico Tribal Broadband Convening, the first in a series, was hosted in September 2022:
 - 20 tribes and pueblos were represented, and 74 attendees participated.
 - IAD collaborated outreach for the Tribal Broadband Convening and a representative from IAD participated.
 - Representatives from the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), the Department of Transportation, Department of Information Technology, New Mexico State Library, Connect New Mexico Council, and the Broadband Collective also participated.
 - A report to attendees was initiated to establish a foundation for consistent communication.
- A tribal outreach contact database and list-serve were developed to support regular communications and updates starting in September.
- Two data collection and data/mapping meetings with FCC representatives have been facilitated to support community members in accessing, analyzing, and challenging federal broadband data, which can directly affect future funding opportunities.
- 24 Native students participated in the Santa Fe Community College PROTEC Fiber Optic Technician Certification boot camp training pilot.

Tribal Funding Awards Update include:

June 2022 – Four Broadband Equity Grants were awarded to tribal projects through Broadband Equity Fund established by the New Mexico Community Foundation on behalf of the Broadband Collective:

- **Picuris Pueblo (Taos County) \$59,904** – To develop, install and operate a high-speed broadband service that would be 100 percent owned and operated by the pueblo.

- **Pueblo of Cochiti (Sandoval) \$40,500** – To expand the pueblo’s IT department, which currently comprises two people and the completion of fiber to homes of Cochiti Pueblo residents. The pueblo consists of approximately 1,800 residents, all of whom are served by a single T1 connection.
- **Pueblo of Laguna Utility Authority (Cibola County) \$71,596** – To continue to expand the reach of broadband in the Laguna Pueblo community. The COVID-19 pandemic necessitated a need for a network upgrade, as the current system serves 500 pueblo members.
- **Yee Ha’oolniidoo (San Juan and McKinley Counties) \$75,000** – To primarily bridge the digital divide in the Navajo communities of Ramah and Sheep Springs. This grant will support a community planning process, broadband needs assessment and strategic plan.

August 2022 – Five NTIA Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program Grants announced in first phase of awards for tribal projects in New Mexico, totaling over \$146 million for state Broadband Infrastructure deployment. The NTIA Tribal Connectivity Program awards were announcement at an event at Isleta Pueblo with tribal leadership, Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham, and Senator Ben Ray Lujan.

- **Jicarilla Apache Nation Power Authority \$6,935,801**
- **Mescalero Apache Telecom, Inc. \$43,943,116**
- **Pueblo of Isleta \$26,033,973**
- **Santa Fe Indian School \$57,298,683**
- **Santo Domingo (Kewa) Pueblo \$12,775,577**

In fall 2021, NTIA awarded Taos Pueblo a grant for Planning, Feasibility, and Sustainability Studies (Taos County) \$477,817.00.

September 2022 – The National Digital Inclusion Alliance (NDIA) awarded a **Digital Navigator grant to Jemez Pueblo \$382,752.**

Initiatives in process

- Scheduling ongoing series of tribal broadband convenings and tribal meetings.
- Planning next tribal convening on digital inclusion centered around the notification of grantees/digital equity planning awardees – October 21, 2022, virtual.
- Hiring full-time, permanent tribal liaison.
- Launching tribal broadband communications plan and ongoing outreach and updates to tribal broadband list-serve.
- Cultural competency training for OBAE and CNMC teams in working with and supporting NM Tribes.