



NEWS RELEASE



United States Department of Agriculture • Rural Development

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RECOVERY ACT BRINGS BROADBAND SERVICES TO RURAL NORTH DAKOTA

USDA Rural Development provides broadband services to eastern North Dakota

BISMARCK, N.D., August 04, 2010 – USDA Rural Development State Director Jasper Schneider today announced the second round of broadband funding through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act's (Recovery Act) accomplishments bringing broadband access to North Dakota's rural communities.

"Deployment of high-speed broadband is 21st century infrastructure that will play a crucial role in building our rural economies," Schneider said. "Farmers will be able to get real-time information, businesses will have access to global markets, and residents will be able to communicate with family and friends, making it more attractive to live and work in all parts of North Dakota."

Today's announcement provides a \$5,524,010 loan and a \$16,572,031 grant to the Griggs County Telephone Company. Griggs County Telephone Company will use Fiber-to-the-Home (FTTH) technology to bring affordable and reliable broadband access and video services to underserved rural areas in eastern North Dakota. Griggs County Telephone's project stands to benefit more than 4,000 people, 406 businesses, and 17 critical community entities in and around Enderlin, Sharon, Glenfield, Sheldon, Finley, McHenry and the rural areas of Cooperstown and Binford, North Dakota. Griggs County Telephone Company estimates that this project will directly create at least 248 jobs upfront and help drive economic development in the community that creates jobs for years to come.

A second project announced today provides a \$713,289 loan and a \$1,625,362 grant to Inter-Community Telephone Company (ICTC), LLC. ICTC will improve broadband connectivity for critical community facilities in the three small underserved communities of Hope, Sanborn, and Tower City, North Dakota. ICTC's project stands to benefit over 850 people, more than 30 businesses, and other community institutions. This project is expected to create 30-40 jobs and help drive the economic development for decades to come.

Across the country, \$1.2 billion will be invested in the 126 broadband infrastructure projects through funding made available through the Recovery Act. An additional \$117 million in private investment will be leveraged, bringing the total funds invested to \$1.31 billion.

"The broadband projects announced today will give rural Americans access to the tools they need to attract new businesses, jobs, health care and educational opportunities," Vilsack said. "The Obama Administration understands that bringing broadband to rural America provides a gateway for businesses and key anchor institutions – such as libraries, schools, public safety and community centers – to provide services to thousands of Americans. These projects will create jobs building these networks, and the completed systems will provide a platform for rural economic growth for years to come."

More information about USDA's Recovery Act efforts is available at www.usda.gov/recovery . More information about the Federal government's efforts on the Recovery Act is available at www.recovery.gov

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