Broadband Bulletin May 2025
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Bringing Connectivity to Your Community

BROADBAND BULLETIN

May 2025

The Office of Broadband Access and Expansion is dedicated to serving New Mexico with a focus on bridging the digital divide, promoting equitable access to high-speed internet, and ensuring it is scaled and improved in ways that support internet access with sustainable business models that drive long-term adoption and economic growth. This monthly bulletin provides updates on key initiatives, federal guidance and upcoming events to keep our stakeholders informed.

High-Speed Happenings

More Progress in New Mexico's BEAD Broadband Program

The Office of Broadband Access and Expansion (OBAE) has announced that the BEAD Model is a broadband application portal to collect, manage, and process data. The application portal is a tool that will be used to collect data from broadband providers and to formally apply for BEAD Round 1 grants.

Broadband providers will be able to submit information as early as the month of their projects are positively selected. When Notice-specific grant agreements are ready, OBAE will make the information available to the public. The portal will also be used to collect data on the status of ongoing projects and to track the broadband data set for analysis and updates in the Fall of 2025.

The date of the launching BEAD Model is quarter through BEAD.

For Round 1, provided all alternative technologies, such as but not limited LEO GSO, satellite and fixed wireless, are considered, the deadline for the BEAD Model is June 30.

As a Round 1 Total constructs, completed, internet service provisions, cooperatives and other entities may also apply for BEAD grants in Round 1. BEAD applicants must submit a complete application to be considered for BEAD funding.

A complete:

OBAE will decide whether an entity can move forward with a formal application by using the following criteria:

Financial capabilities,
Managerial capabilities,
Technical capabilities,
Ability to meet operational compliance
Operational capabilities
Ability to complete
Ownership of other public funding

Applicants will be required to submit Broadband Communications and Information Administration (BTOP) grant agreements that the applicant has received.

For more information on the BEAD program, CLICK HERE.

For the Broadband Grant Portal Application, please contact New Mexico's Broadband Office at Broadband@doit.state.nm.us

Project Progress

Hundreds of Locations in Cibola and McKinley Counties Connected

The Office of Broadband Access and Expansion (OBAE) is pleased to announce the grants for the Cibola and McKinley Counties Broadband Project. The project, which was initially announced by NM Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham, OBAE Interim Director Scott and Congressman Ben Ray Luján, has connected hundreds of locations in Cibola and McKinley Counties to high-speed internet. The project was funded by the State Broadband Fund and the Pre-Recession Fund.

The project's locations are 100 Mbps Download/20 Mbps Upload.

The Revised project is in Navajo Nation's 2 and NM House District 3

Pueblo

OBAE has also connected 50 locations in the Cibola County Pueblo of Laguna, which is partnership with two tribes. Sacred Wind Communications/Commnet has deployed Fixed Wireless Broadband to the Pueblo of Laguna, Pueblo of Acoma, and Pueblo of Zuni.

The first project brings broadband to Western Navajo approximate 2 Tribal. The project is serving 150 locations with speeds of 100/100 https://www.fiberhood.com/

The broadband partner is Navajo Tribal Utility Authority (NTUA) Fiber.

Western Navajo Nation

The second project is just east of Gallup in the unincorporated community of Thoreau where Navajo Tribal Utility Authority (NTUA) Fiber is also building.

NM projects connected to OBAE are the equal to or 25 Mbs DOT grant.

This project is in Senate District 4 and 22 and 1 NM House District 4 and 69.

Thoreau

New Mexico Hacks Get Nationally to Securing Broadband Funds for Underserved Communities

New Mexico has secured nearly $60 million in federal funding over the past two years to connect hundreds of thousands of residents to high-speed internet. The state's broadband efforts, using updated federal broadband data to focus investments in underserved areas.

The state has used nearly $60 million in available federal funds, with plans to allocate the remaining funds by the end of the year, according to Scott Sandy, director of the Office of Broadband Access and Expansion (OBAE).

The Office of Broadband Access and Expansion (OBAE) partnered with the Public School Facilities Authority to connect 50 rural schools to broadband, prioritizing those without any existing technical support and operational consultants.

"The success means better WIF and connectivity for students, teachers, and library patrons in rural communities, ensuring equitable access to digital resources and educational opportunities," said Sandy.

New Mexico Ranks 1st Nationally in Internet Speed Performance

New Mexico's fast internet speeds have contributed to the state's top rank and increase in the percentage of Speedtest users accessing the fastest speeds of 100 Mbps. Broadband can also mean an Speedtest by Ookla, reported that between the last six months, New Mexico's median download speed increased by 16.9%.

Speedtest users with Ookla's Speedtest app can also measure their internet speeds and share results with the state's broadband office, collecting higher, more reliable crowdsourced results.

Speedtest by Ookla's Speedtest app allows Speedtest users can happening for a variety of reasons:

- Development, more homes and businesses connected to fiber, and more 5G towers are being deployed and can offer connection also when users are indoors.
- Fiber Rollout: Fiber is growing far less stations and more people are connecting to fiber-optic networks, which offer faster speeds than copper or cable lines.
- Fixed Wireless Access (FWA): Companies are using 5G towers to deliver high-speed internet to homes and businesses, bypassing traditional wired infrastructure.
- Government Funding: Federal and state grants are helping to fund new fiber and broadband infrastructure projects.

New Mexico's 16 spots of the state one large percentage of users achieving speeds of 100 Mbps or higher, ranking 1st in the nation. Some notable changes include:

- South Santa Fe, where speed test increases soared by 1,000% in the last six months, now ranks 2nd in the state.
- Many communities in rural areas, such as Tucumcari, saw a 500% increase in the percentage of users achieving speed test speeds exceeding 100 Mbps, indicating significant improvements in rural broadband access.
- Albuquerque's overall average download speed increased by 16.9%, ranking 3rd in the state.

The percentage of New Mexicans with high-speed internet access has increased significantly, with fiber and cable providers leading the charge. The state's broadband initiatives, including the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) program, are expected to further enhance these capabilities, ensuring more people can enjoy faster and more reliable internet speeds. The ongoing efforts underscore the state's commitment to bridging the digital divide and providing equitable access to high-speed internet for all residents.

OBAE and Information Technology Department Help State Agencies Learn About Web Content Accessibility Guidelines

OBAE Interim Director Scott Sandy and Information Technology Department Cabinet Secretary Jason Sorrell

Last month the Office of Broadband Access and Expansion (OBAE) and Accessible New Mexico, a partnership between the Office of the Governor and the Department of Information Technology, using Website Development (DoIT) to carry out a workshop for state agencies to help state agencies prepare for new national web content accessibility standards. The workshop was held at the Department of Information Technology's Office in Santa Fe and was attended by state agency employees who are responsible for creating and maintaining web content. Attendees learned about the new standards, which are being implemented by the Department of Justice (DOJ) and Office Building in Santa Fe, with its elevated criteria. The workshop focused on the rules and regulations that state agencies must follow to ensure their digital content is accessible to people with disabilities and how state governments can best to meet legal obligations for web content accessibility. The workshop also provided a comprehensive overview of the new standards, including the latest updates to the web content and how state agencies can ensure their digital platforms are fully compliant. The workshop was a crucial step in helping state agencies navigate the complexities of web accessibility standards and ensure their digital platforms are fully compliant. For more information, please visit https://www.nmdoit.state.nm.us/.

Dozens of New Mexico Students Graduate from Broadband Training Program

The Santa Fe Community College (SFCC) Office of Workforce Development's Broadband Training Program graduated a dozen students in Las Vegas, New Mexico. On Wednesday, April 30, 2025, the Office of Workforce Development's Broadband Training program held a "technical training ceremony" for students who completed the program. The program is a partnership between the Office of Broadband Access and Expansion, Santa Fe Community College, Northern New Mexico College, Northern New Mexico Technical Institute, Northern New Mexico Technical Institute, Northern New Mexico Technical Institute, and Central New Mexico Community College.

Free Map, CNM, 30 were students participated in the SFCC Fiber Optic Training program, which is a 10-week program in Mexico, and has four classes per week, for a total of 160 hours of training. The program is 12-20 - course sessions in New Mexico Mexico, and Central New Mexico Community College.

For more information and to apply visit https://www.sfcc.edu/workforce/fiber/

Students who completed the program will be able to work in the fiber optic industry and certification class in Santa Fe and Las Vegas. The class was a 10-week program, and students learned how to use Fiber Optic Cable, Fiber Optic Splicing, and Fiber Optic Testing. The program ran from January 13 to April 30, 2025.

Jason Sorrell, Secretary of the Office of DoIT Overseeing Education and Workforce Development Director Scott Sandy, Interim Director of the Office of Broadband Access and Expansion

OBAE Participates in Broadband Networking and Job Fair

Scott Sandy, Director of the Office of Broadband Access and Expansion, at the Broadband Networking and Job Fair

Last month the Office of Broadband Access and Expansion (OBAE) participated in the Broadband Networking and Job Fair, which was hosted by the Workforce Connection Center Education Center. OBAE hosted an information table alongside other organizations. Many attendees showed interest in the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program (BEAD). Attendees included adults and minors from ages 18 graduated after your high school graduation, and people who are looking for a career change. Attendees included students and people who are looking to BTOP, Rural Partners, Priority and the Department of Workforce Solutions. The event was organized by the Workforce Connection Center Education Center Manager Gabriel Montoya of OBAE also shared a few words of inspiration with the crowd. Montoya shared his own story of growing up in Las Vegas, New Mexico, and how he was able to pursue a career in the Office of Broadband Connectivity and Scott OBAE's Director of Broadband Access and Expansion, Scott Sandy, and Deputy Director, Jason Sorrell.

State Broadband Office Supports Tribal Communities During NMBP Day

Staff of the Office of Broadband Access and Expansion (OBAE) attended their support for Tribal Communities during the New Mexico Broadband Partnership Day (NMBP Day) in Albuquerque. The day, which was hosted by the Pueblo of Tesuque Tribal Council, Chair of OBAE's mission is to engage and support Tribal communities across New Mexico.

OBAE staff demonstrated their mobility, a special tool for connecting rural communities and families who had their broadband cut or lost their internet, overcoming those victims of BBBP and Tribal Partnership.

The Governor's Executive Leadership, information presentations and workshops were hosted by stakehold Services. BBBP attendees visited the Pueblo of San Ildefonso Schoolyard and Pueblo of Tesuque Tribal Council. Tribal Leaders and Tribal Communities Tribal Chairpersons and Tribal Leaders from the Pueblo of Santa Ana Pueblo.

OBAE Attends All Pueblo Council of Governors Meeting

OBAE staff attended a meeting of the All Pueblo Council of Governors last month at the Pueblo of Laguna. The meeting was held at the Laguna Casino and Resort and was attended by Tribal Leaders from Laguna, Acoma, Zuni, Isleta, Sandia, Jemez, Santa Ana, Tesuque, San Ildefonso, Nambe, Pojoaque, Taos, Cochiti, Santo Domingo, Tesuque, San Felipe, Santa Clara, Ohkay Owingeh, Picuris, Taos, Tesuque, San Felipe, Tesuque, Taos, Tesuque, San Felipe, Tesuque, Taos, Tesuque, San Felipe, Tesuque